

# Tamariki | Children

## Potential Coalition Parties Policies Reviewed



New Zealand Council Of  
Christian Social Services

### **Social Welfare**

#### ***Bootcamps***

One of National's big election policies was the announcement of a '\$25 million-a-year policy for combating youth crime which would target serious offenders, including sending them to boot camps'. There is clear alignment from ACT with David Seymour in a Radio New Zealand article at the end of 2022 saying he welcomed the idea of a "secure facility for kids who breach electronic monitoring". With Winston Peters commenting in the media of a 'boot camp policy steal' after National's announcement but expressing that 'they only work if run correctly' this could be an area where all three parties find common ground. ACT's proposal for 17-year-old offenders to once again be dealt with by the adult justice system rather than the youth justice system is also a source of harmony between the parties. This is potentially helped by the overwhelming opposition by Police prior to the change coming into effect in 2019.

#### ***Oranga Tamariki***

National are on record that the Oranga Tamariki Oversight Bill 'must be scrapped' and have assured voters they will 'deliver better outcomes for children in state care.' This includes reinstating the Children's Commissioner. ACT are calling for 'a more humane and accountable Oranga Tamariki' and have several specific changes included in their policies. This includes dividing Oranga Tamariki social worker duties into a mentor and a child protection officer role. They are also calling to transfer youth justice functions from Oranga Tamariki to Corrections and increased public accountability of the Oranga Tamariki Chief Executive. ACT are also seeking to reduce the power of Oranga Tamariki's head office and instead give it to communities. Within their first 100 days ACT have committed to removing Oranga Tamariki - Section 7AA which says, 'it's more important a child is placed with its iwi than anything else'. Finally, ACT have also committed to establishing an accessible and child-friendly monitoring system independent from the Government. New Zealand First have not shared specific policies regarding Oranga Tamariki.




### **Education**

One of the big election topics was around education and the falling rates of achievement compared to students in other countries.

There are some clear areas where all three parties have expressed agreement, though the details may differ, either through policy or in the lead up to the election. These include dissatisfaction with the curriculum refresh that Labour started in 2021, truancy, changes needed for NCEA and the importance of a 'back to basics' approach that emphasizes reading, writing and maths.

ACT's commitment to Partnership schools, first introduced as part of their confidence and supply agreement with National after the 2011 election looks to be a concession that National could be willing to make again. Their ideas to create Student Education Accounts where parents can choose where to spend their \$250,000 education allocation and education funding goes directly into the hands of parents and the proposed teacher excellence payments appear less likely.

Interestingly, NZ First has specific policy regarding the improvement of education sector support for children with dyslexia, dyspraxia, and autism, to deliver Learning Support Coordinators to all schools in New Zealand, and to increase the funding and support of children identified as high needs.

EDUCATION POLICIES			
<b>Curriculum</b>	Rewrite Primary & intermediate curriculum	Repeal Curriculum changes MOE curriculum approvers (not writers)	Review curriculum Remove critical race theory & de-colonialism
<b>Tuancy</b>	No specific policies	Comprehensive policy incl. truancy officers for schools and potential fines for parents	Address truancy
<b>Teachers</b>	Required Professional Development for current teachers, exit exam for Year 0-8 trainee teachers	Incentive & reward system for teachers who provide excellence	Lessen admin for teachers so there is more time for sport
<b>NCEA</b>	No specific policies	Secondary Schools can opt out of NCEA Fund all qualifications at the same rate	Select Committee into NCEA
<b>Other</b>	Ban cellphone use at school	Partnership school model (incl. public schools able to convert)	Better funding & pathways for STEM

### **Curriculum**

There is common ground between National and New Zealand First with both calling for education to ‘get back to basics’ with minimum time mandated in schools for reading, writing and maths. National’s policy is to rewrite the curriculum for Primary and Intermediate where New Zealand First are calling for a review but with specific parts to be removed (critical race theory and de-colonialism). They are also advocating for there to be no teaching about relationships, gender, or sexuality. This was something National Party leadership supported on the campaign trail with Nicola Willis commenting at a public meeting “Here is how I feel about sexual education. That’s the job for me and my husband to do with our kids, based on our values and our views of the world . . .I want my education system focused on teaching my children how to read, how to write and how to do maths.”

ACT’s proposes to open the curriculum out ‘to tender’, with schools able to pick and choose elements that meet their needs. This differs significantly from both National and New Zealand First’s stricter national standards approach to education, especially at a Primary school level.

### **Tuancy**

Though National have been vocal about New Zealand suffering in a ‘truancy crises’ they have no truancy policies. ACT and NZ First have both prioritized addressing truancy, but where NZ First does not detail specifics, ACT has specific policy, including truancy officers for each school, funding to be based on school attendance (rather than enrolment as it is currently) and a traffic light system for truancy that includes fines for parents.

### **NCEA**

Though National have been critical of the results from the NCEA pilot, no specific policies have been announced in the lead up to the election. ACT and NZ first have been openly critical with David Seymour calling for schools to be able to not only choose alternatives to NCEA which are internationally recognized but also for these to be

funded equal to NCEA funding. ACT's Education policy calls for the three levels of NCEA to be replaced with the current University Entrance requirements. New Zealand First are calling for a select committee into NCEA.

### ***Staffing and Oversight***

There is no clear inter-party alignment regarding ACT's proposal to incentivize and reward teachers for excellence. National ruled this out in 2017 but it remains a clear goal for ACT. ACT is also eager to reform the Ministry of Education and 'strip it back to basics' wanting to 'depoliticize curriculum writing,' drastically reduce staff and change the way schools are funded. ACT's goal is to put education funding directly into the hands of parents and this differs from both Nationals current and past approaches.