

Job Title:	National Playgroup Advisor
Function:	Community Services
Reports to:	Head of Community Services
Last review date:	February 2026

He huanui oranga mo ngā mokopuna whakatipuranga roto i ngā hapori heke iho, heke iho -
Setting the path of wellness in our communities for the early years, for generations to come.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket – who we are and what we are about

Whānau Āwhina Plunket is a charity organisation and the largest service supporting the health and wellbeing of tamariki under-five and their whānau in Aotearoa. We're proud to visit over 80% of all newborn babies in Aotearoa and to support pēpē, tamariki and their whānau.

We aim to be a cohesive and effective national organisation grounded in evidence and best practice, with the needs of New Zealand whānau and families at the centre of everything we do.

Our Whānau Āwhina Plunket Goals are:

Pae Ora: Healthy Futures:

- **Mauri Ora:** Healthy babies and children
- **Whānau Ora:** Healthy confident families
- **Wai Ora:** Healthy environments and connected communities

We are on a pro-equity journey where we strive to give life to Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of Tino Rangatiratanga, partnership, active protection, equity and options in our mahi/work to ensure healthy tamariki, confident whānau and connected communities.

As a Tangata Tiriti organisation we are guided by the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We are committed to building strong and respectful relationships with Māori communities. We include Māori worldviews in our decision-making processes to ensure that our actions are aligned with Māori aspirations for Hauora. This is reflected in our policies, processes, structures and governance.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket Values

In this role you will be expected to operate in a way that embodies and demonstrates Whānau Āwhina Plunket values as follows:

- **Māia** – to be courageous and lean into discomfort and challenge as we walk the path of pro-equity
- **Tūhono** – to connect and stand in relationship in calm and safe spaces (āhuru Mōwai)
- **Manaaki** – to care, love, nurture, support and mana enhancing. Respects mana atua, mana tīpuna, mana whenua, mana tangata
- **Māhaki** – to be humble as we share our knowledge experience to understand and learn from each other and foster trust.

Overview of the Community Services Team

The Community Services team is a vital part of the wider Service Delivery function, which brings Whānau Āwhina Plunket's trusted support to tamariki and whānau across Aotearoa. We work alongside our clinical colleagues, volunteers, and community partners to strengthen whānau and community wellbeing and help families achieve their aspirations.

Our team supports the delivery of local, regional, and national initiatives that help tamariki and whānau to thrive. We connect community needs, insights, and opportunities with Plunket's national direction, ensuring services are meaningful, welcoming, and responsive, particularly for our priority populations. Together, we are building a legacy of care, connection, and equitable outcomes that will support whānau for generations to come.

We prioritise tamariki and whānau experiencing the greatest inequities. This includes Māori, Pacific, Asian and rural families to ensure our services reach those who need them most. Our priority populations are central to our service design and are reflected in our key performance indicators, ensuring our work remains focused on improving equity and outcomes where they matter most. Our team uses internal insights, local data, and community feedback to guide targeted, culturally grounded service delivery that responds to whānau aspirations.

We lead and support a diverse range of programmes, events, services, and activities that foster deep connection with local communities. We work collaboratively to understand local needs and respond through innovative projects, strong partnerships, and meaningful volunteer involvement.

Volunteers play a vital role in extending Plunket's reach and strengthening our connection to communities. They lead and support local programmes and activities, bringing passion and lived experience to their mahi. Our paid Community Services kaimahi provide leadership and structure by recruiting, preparing, and supporting volunteers, ensuring roles are clear and safe, and creating environments where volunteers feel valued, confident, and set up for success. Together, we uphold Plunket's commitment to whānau-centred support and equitable access.

Purpose of the Position

The National Playgroup Advisor provides national system leadership and stewardship for playgroups across Whānau Āwhina Plunket.

The role is responsible for designing, maintaining and continuously improving the national playgroup framework, including service models, standards, processes, quality and assurance. The National Playgroup Advisor ensures playgroups are consistent, safe, high-quality and sustainable, while allowing appropriate local flexibility to respond to whānau and community context.

A key focus of the role is providing programme oversight of a national programme of work to support the Ministry of Education (MoE) certification of all Plunket playgroups, and holding responsibility for national MoE funding processes, including the preparation and submission of funding applications.

The role supports regions through guidance, assurance and oversight, rather than direct delivery or management of services which remains with Community Services Managers.

Key Dimensions of the Position

Delegations: The position's full delegations are set out in the Schedule of Delegations and may be amended from time to time.

Functional relationships: *To follow are the main positions that this role will coordinate with; they are not meant or intended to be exhaustive, exclusive or limiting:*

Internal:

- Head of Community Services
- Community Services Managers
- Community Services Coordinators and playgroup kaimahi
- National Volunteer Advisor
- National Injury Prevention Manager
- Clinical leaders and kaimahi
- People and Culture, Finance, Strategy, Property, Communications and other corporate teams

External:

- Ministry of Education (including national and regional relationship management in partnership with Community Services Managers)
- Sector partners and playgroup networks
- Community organisations

Key accountabilities

National Playgroup System Stewardship

- Provide national leadership for the design and stewardship of Whānau Āwhina Plunket's playgroup service model
- Establish and maintain clear national standards, guidance and expectations for playgroup delivery
- Ensure playgroup systems and frameworks support equity, inclusion and whānau-centred practice
- Balance national consistency with appropriate local flexibility

Programme Oversight – MoE Certification and Funding

- Provide programme oversight for a national programme of work to support MoE certification of all Plunket playgroups
- Develop and maintain a clear national approach, milestones and assurance framework for certification
- Lead the preparation and submission of MoE funding applications at a national level, including Special Grants and other relevant funding streams
- Ensure all required MoE funding documentation is complete, accurate, and submitted within required timeframes
- Establish and maintain a consistent national approach to MoE funding processes and requirements
- Work with Community Services Managers to support readiness and implementation, recognising that delivery responsibility and local relationships sit within regions
- Monitor progress, risks and dependencies across certification and funding, and provide regular reporting and advice

- Monitor funding performance, risks and opportunities, and provide advice to support improved financial sustainability of playgroups
- Provide guidance to regions to support accurate data collection and inputs required for funding applications
- Ensure the programme is delivered in a way that is realistic, staged and sustainable

Quality, Assurance and Risk

- Monitor national playgroup quality, performance and compliance
- Identify emerging risks, inconsistencies or areas of concern and recommend mitigation strategies
- Support a proactive approach to assurance, continuous improvement and learning
- Ensure playgroup practice aligns with certification requirements, organisational risk, health and safety and safeguarding expectations

Equity, Te Tiriti and Pae Ora

- Ensure playgroup systems and models support improved access and outcomes for priority populations
- Embed Te Tiriti principles and Te Ao Māori into playgroup design and guidance
- Support culturally grounded and community-led approaches to playgroup delivery
- Use data and insight to inform equitable service design and improvement

Advice, Guidance and Capability Support

- Provide expert system-level advice and guidance to regions on playgroup practice including advising on risks, compliance and funding requirements and areas requiring improvement
- Develop tools, resources and guidance to support consistent implementation
- Support shared learning and good practice across regions
- Act as a subject-matter advisor for MOE playgroups across Plunket

Quality, Health & Safety

- Manages own personal health and safety, and take appropriate action to deal with workplace hazards, accidents and incidents
- Ensures own and others' safety at all times and observe health and safety practices in all workplace activities
- Understands the responsibility individuals and their manager play in health and safety
- Team training is up-to-date and all team members can demonstrate actions in an emergency that are specific to the workplace and are designed to keep individuals safe
- Complies with relevant safety legislation, policies, procedures, safe systems of work and event reporting
- Identifies and report all incidents, accidents, and near misses in accordance with policy

Position Description and Scope of Duties

The job holder is expected to perform such other duties as can reasonably be regarded as incidental to the position description, and such other duties reasonably within their experience and capabilities as may be from time to time assigned following consultation.

Once appointed a programme of work will be developed with the appointee that will set out the specific tasks and time frames to achieve the key deliverables for this position. Progress will be monitored through Plunket's Performance and development programmes.

Person Specification

Qualifications and experience

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in early childhood, community services, education or social services
- At least three years working in an advisory or systems design role
Experience in system design, service development or quality/assurance roles
- Experience providing national-level leadership for a service model, programme, or system operating across multiple regions or sites
- Strong understanding of playgroup or early-years community-based services

- Experience working with regulatory frameworks and compliance environments (desirable)
- Experience working with Māori and diverse communities
- Experience leading or overseeing national programmes of work, ideally involving staged rollout and readiness across regions.
- Experience monitoring dependencies, risks and interrelated workstreams, and adapting plans in response.

Skills and attributes

- Strong systems thinking and ability to design scalable frameworks
- Ability to lead programmes through influence rather than authority
- High level of organisational and programme oversight capability
- Ability to analyse performance data, quality information and risk indicators to identify patterns and insights
- Excellent relationship-building and communication skills
- High level of cultural competence and commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Ability to embed culturally responsive and inclusive practice into standards, guidance and assurance processes
- Alignment with Whānau Āwhina Plunket's uara and commitment to whānau wellbeing

I have read and understood the above position description and accept all the above responsibilities incorporated herein.

Role title

Date

Manager role

Date

