



Waiwhetu Kohanga reo.

Most schools now offer courses in Maori language and studies, and Maori cultural clubs are being accepted as a necessary part of the school curriculum, on the same basis as subjects like music.

There is also increasing use of Maori or Samoan or other minority languages

at official functions, such as school assemblies.

Mr Kaa said that on a regional level the section organises courses in Maori studies for teachers.

He said the section tries to encourage a "respect for the difference" between different cultural groups in New Zea-

land.

Mr Kaa said the section is also involved in trying to make other groups aware that there are people in New Zealand besides the Europeans.

He pointed to libraries with their European cultural base having nothing culturally familiar to the Maori or Islanders.

He said the section is trying to encourage a more "inclusive" attitude among librarians, such as having displays about various cultures, so minority groups will feel they have access to this resource.

The section is partly responsible for making Multi-cultural Studies a compulsory subject at Teachers Training Colleges, said Mr Kaa.

From 1984 each student teacher will have 100 hours a year of multi-cultural studies, of which Maori will be a major component.

This means that from next year each new teacher will have some knowledge of Maori culture and values, said Mr Kaa.

He said the Maori and Island Education section was set up in 1955, but the pick-up came in 1974 with the appointment of education inspectors to the section.

The section presently comprises a director, four education inspectors and two administrative staff.

The problem at the moment is essentially one of resources, in the section as well as in schools, said Mr Kaa. If there were a further allocation of resources to Maori education, priority would be given to increasing the number of Itinerant Teachers of Maori and to providing more in-service training of Maori for teachers, he said.

But further funding is a "political decision," he said.

Mr Kaa said the Maori community is becoming increasingly vocal in its demands for change, because there are more Maoris with the knowledge and skill to operate the European systems of communication.

There are also the activists who criticise the system from outside, he said.

By promoting the study of Maori language and culture in schools, the section hopes to develop a sense of identity and self-worth in Maori children.

The section also tries to help non-Maoris appreciate the ways and culture of the Maori.

"It is the right of every New Zealander to have access to the Maori language," he said.

This gives people the choice:

As Willy Kaa and his colleagues in the Maori and Island Education section work for change in the education system, they may be encouraged in a recent statement by Governor-General Sir David Beattie: "We are not one people... we are one nation of many peoples."

