

Newtown Community Creche Education Review

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1 Evaluation of the Service

How well placed is the service to promote positive outcomes for children?

Newtown Community Crèche continues to develop its capacity to promote positive outcomes for children. Progress is supported by good governance, external support and the commitment of teachers.

Context

Newtown Community Crèche, a parent cooperative, is situated in the central Wellington suburb of Newtown. The elected management committee works in close association with the head teacher and staff to provide an early childhood service for infants, toddlers and pre-school children from the local community.

The November 2009 ERO report found that the centre had made significant progress since ERO's 2008 review and had addressed the areas for improvement identified in the report. There has been little change in centre staffing since the 2009 review.

The Review Findings

The principles and goals of Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum, are emphasised in the programme which recognises the importance of children learning through play. Children have a range of opportunities to engage in physical, dramatic and creative activities. Parents and whānau communicate their aspirations and goals for children's learning through committee processes as well as through conversations with teachers.

Children learn and interact happily. They have fun at play which is usually child-initiated. Teachers engage in one-to-one responsive interactions with them. They are respectful, warm, nurturing and encourage children's social skills and independence. Teachers sometimes use questioning and conversations well to extend learning, language and children's interests.

- The head teacher should explore ways that teachers can improve their interactions with children to extend children's thinking and learning.

Teachers are trialling a primary care-giving approach for working with infants and toddlers. They maintain a calm and gentle pace in which younger children have space and time to lead their learning.

- Teachers have identified that they need to focus on ways to better support children in their transitions into, within and out of the centre. ERO agrees with this direction.

Some aspects of te ao Māori are reflected in the centre environment and some staff demonstrate commitment to developing their knowledge and use of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori.

- All teachers should consider how their curriculum, teaching and assessment can better reflect the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. They should ensure that the curriculum responds to the cultural backgrounds of the children and the aspirations of their parents and whānau.

Teachers document children's learning and effectively record their strengths and interests in assessment profile books. A new planning format is likely to assist them to better respond to group interests.

- Teachers need to further develop their assessment, planning and evaluation practices. This should ensure planned and deliberate teaching is aligned to individual and group needs, and that complexity and challenge are added to children's learning.

The service is effectively governed by committed parent representatives. Clear strategic documents, informed by consultation with parents, whānau and teachers, guide operations. These include the charter, management and teaching philosophies, clear goals and useful action plans. Current planning highlights a key goal to further develop engagement with the wider community. The chairperson provides strong leadership, is knowledgeable about early childhood education and strategic management and is committed to improving outcomes for children.

The committee values and resources professional learning and development for teachers. Further administrative support is planned to improve organisational processes and systems.

The teaching philosophy has recently been reviewed. It emphasises respectful teaching and reflects Te Whāriki. The head teacher and staff are focused on improvement and there is regular review of aspects of the centre's environment and programmes.

An in-depth and well-considered appraisal system has been introduced following ERO's recommendations from the previous report. The head teacher has responded well to new learning provided by external providers.

- The performance management system should be further strengthened by ensuring that teachers' action plans for the coming year have strong link with the centre's strategic goal.

Management and ERO agree that further work is needed to increase the usefulness and robustness of self-review:

- teachers should seek appropriate support to establish a sound process for evaluative self review
- the head teacher should explore ways to effectively evaluate teachers' practice, identify areas for development to improve teaching and learning
- there needs to be better alignment between self review, appraisal goals, strategic planning and professional learning and development.

The Purpose of an ERO Report

Education reviews in early childhood services focus on the factors that contribute to positive outcomes for children. We work with early childhood services to identify their strengths and the areas they need to review and develop. Early childhood services take part in the review process and are expected to make use of the findings to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.

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2 Legal Requirements

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Newtown Community Crèche completed an ERO Centre Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they attested that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

- curriculum
- premises and facilities
- health and safety practices
- governance, management and administration.

During the review, ERO looked at the service's systems for managing the following areas that have a potentially high impact on children's wellbeing:

- emotional safety (including positive guidance and child protection)
- physical safety (including supervision; sleep procedures; accidents; medication; hygiene; excursion policies and procedures)
- suitable staffing (including qualification levels; police vetting; teacher registration; ratios)
- evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake.

All early childhood services are required to promote children's health and safety and to regularly review their compliance with legal requirements.

3 Next Review

When is ERO likely to review the early childhood service again?

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

Joyce Gebbie
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Central Region (Acting)

26 March 2013

Information about the Early Childhood Service

Location	Newtown, Wellington		
Ministry of Education profile number	60212		
Licence type	Education and Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	30 children, including up to 10 aged under 2		
Service roll	47		
Gender composition	Male 24 Female 23		
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	29	
	Māori	6	
	Other ethnic groups	12	
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:4	Exceeds minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:7	Exceeds minimum requirements
Review team on site	December 2012		
Date of this report	26 March 2013		
Most recent ERO reports	Supplementary Review November 2009 Supplementary Review September 2008 Education Review August 2007		

General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

About ERO Reviews

The Education Review Office (ERO) is the New Zealand government department that reviews schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

Review focus

ERO's education reviews in early childhood services focus on the factors that contribute to positive learning outcomes for children. ERO evaluates how well placed the service is to make and sustain improvements for the benefit of all children at the service. To reach these findings ERO considers:

- Pou Whakahaere – how the service determines its vision, philosophy and direction to ensure positive outcomes for children
- Pou Ārahi – how leadership is enacted to enhance positive outcomes for children
- Mātauranga – whose knowledge is valued and how the curriculum is designed to achieve positive outcomes for children
- Tikanga whakaako – how approaches to teaching and learning respond to diversity and support positive outcomes for children.

Within these areas ERO considers the effectiveness of self review and partnerships with parents and whānau.

Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of service performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to positive outcomes for children and useful to the service.