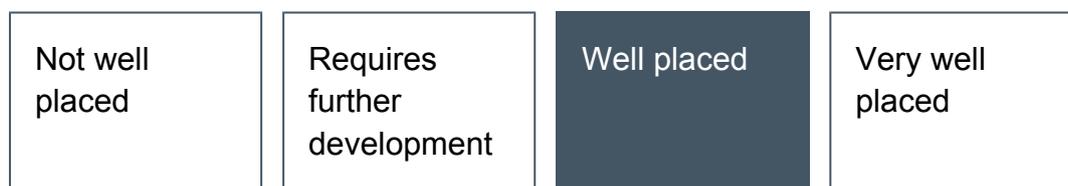


Maxwell and Districts Preschool Education Review

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Evaluation of Maxwell and Districts Preschool

How well placed is Maxwell and Districts Preschool to promote positive learning outcomes for children?



ERO's findings that support this overall judgement are summarised below.

Background

Maxwell and Districts Kindergarten (formerly Maxwell and Districts Preschool) is now one of 14 kindergartens administered by the Whanganui Kindergarten Association. The kindergarten is licensed for 30 children. Sessions operate from 8:45 am to 1:45 pm.

A new teaching team has been employed since the centre reopened as a kindergarten in January 2015. Both teachers are qualified and registered. They are very experienced and bring different strengths, interests and abilities to the kindergarten. They are assisted by a teacher aide.

The governing body is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction for the organisation. The day-to-day running of the association is the role of the general manager, who is responsible to the board. Two senior teachers are employed to support the learning and development of teachers. Two cultural advisors were recently appointed to support teachers to realise potential and support success for Māori and Pacific children.

This review was part of a cluster of seven kindergarten reviews in the Whanganui Kindergarten Association.

The Review Findings

The kindergarten curriculum responds well to children's needs. Routines support their strong

sense of belonging. The programme operates at an unhurried pace, enabling children to inquire, discover and explore.

Children have many opportunities to take leadership roles. They are challenged, motivated and empowered to learn. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of children and work alongside them to support their interests.

The newly implemented philosophy is developed in consultation with families and is evident in practice. It focuses on the priorities of whanaungatanga, individuality, cultural heritage, te reo me ngā tikanga Māori and competent and confident learners. These curriculum priorities are embedded in the programme and teaching practice.

Children with additional needs are well supported in an inclusive environment. Children engage in co-operative play and support one another.

The 'Priorities for Children's Learning' kindergarten initiative is guided by the senior teachers' response to the recent ERO National Evaluation report. A comprehensive, sound and strategic framework is used to strengthen planning, assessment and evaluation processes in each kindergarten.

Teachers' interactions with children are warm, respectful and affirming. They spontaneously respond to children's learning interests and needs. There is a strong focus on family engagement.

Wall displays effectively document the learning and planning happening for children. Children's attractively presented portfolios provide a record of teaching and learning over time. They document key learning events and ways in which teachers have noticed and responded. Teachers collaboratively contribute to assessment through regular planning meetings.

Opportunities for children to revisit their learning experiences with each other and with teachers and whānau are promoted. References to the kindergarten priorities are strongly evident. Inclusion, diversity and children's identity are woven into assessment.

Whānau contributions are welcomed and valued. There is a sense of akō as teachers, parents and children learn alongside one another. Teachers should continue to make parent contributions more visible in children's assessment portfolios.

Teachers show a strong commitment to te reo me ngā tikanga Māori which are incorporated into the programme. The language, culture and identity of Māori children are celebrated. Links with local iwi and the community are being established to enhance partnerships.

Children and their whānau are well supported as they transition into kindergarten and on to school. There is a focus on strengthening links with local schools.

A well-structured framework provides teachers with a clear understanding of the purpose and process of internal evaluation. They are making good use of self review to evaluate the impact of teaching and programmes on children's learning, guide improvement and sustain effective practices. Internal evaluation is influenced by whānau aspirations and underpinned by shared values and beliefs. It reflects a commitment to the bicultural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand and is appropriately linked to the kindergarten priorities for children's learning.

The teaching team is highly collaborative and reflective and has able leadership. The experienced head teacher is growing leadership capability in the kindergarten.

Team professional learning opportunities are aligned with teacher appraisals. A useful appraisal process supports teachers to reflect on their practice in relation to professional teaching requirements. The leadership team is in the process of implementing a revised approach across the association. This should include focused observations of teachers' practice in relation to their professional goals. Once the new approach is fully implemented, evaluation of its impact on teachers' development is a next step for the association.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Maxwell and Districts Kindergarten 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.

Next ERO Review

When is ERO likely to review the service again?

The next ERO review of Maxwell and Districts Kindergarten will be in three years.

Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

15 December 2015

The Purpose of ERO Reports

The Education Review Office (ERO) is the government department that, as part of its work, reviews early childhood services throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. ERO's reports provide information for parents and communities about each service's strengths and next steps for development. ERO's bicultural evaluation framework Ngā Pou Here is described in SECTION 3 of this report. Early childhood services are partners in the review process and are expected to make use of the review findings to enhance children's wellbeing and learning.

2 Information about the Early Childhood Service

Location	Whanganui	
Ministry of Education profile number	50030	
Licence type	Free Kindergarten	
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008	
Number licensed for	30 children aged over 2 years	
Service roll	24	
Gender composition	Girls 14, Boys 10	
Ethnic composition	Māori	2
	Pākehā	20
	Other ethnic groups	2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +	
	0-49% 50-79% 80%+	
Based on funding rates		
Reported ratios of staff Over 2 to children	1:10	Meets minimum requirements
Review team on site	October 2015	
Date of this report	15 December 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	First review under the Whanganui Kindergarten Association	

3 General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

ERO's Evaluation Framework

ERO's overarching question for an early childhood education review is 'How well placed is this service to promote positive learning outcomes for children?' ERO focuses on the following factors as described in the bicultural framework Ngā Pou Here:

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 arotake – self review and of whanaungatanga – partnerships with parents and whānau.

ERO evaluates how well placed a service is to sustain good practice and make ongoing improvements for the benefit of all children at the service.

A focus for the government is that all children, especially priority learners, have an opportunity to benefit from quality early childhood education. ERO will report on how well each service promotes positive outcomes for all children, with a focus on children who are Māori, Pacific, have diverse needs, and are up to the age of two.

For more information about the framework and Ngā Pou Here refer to ERO's Approach to Review in Early Childhood Services.

ERO's Overall Judgement and Next Review

The overall judgement that ERO makes and the timing of the next review will depend on how well placed a service is to promote positive learning outcomes for children. The categories are:

- Very well placed – The next ERO review in four years
- Well placed – The next ERO review in three years
- Requires further development – The next ERO review within two years

- Not well placed - The next ERO review in consultation with the Ministry of Education ERO has developed criteria for each category. These are available on [ERO's website](#).

Review Coverage

ERO reviews are tailored to each service's context and performance, within the overarching review framework. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to positive outcomes for children and useful to the service.