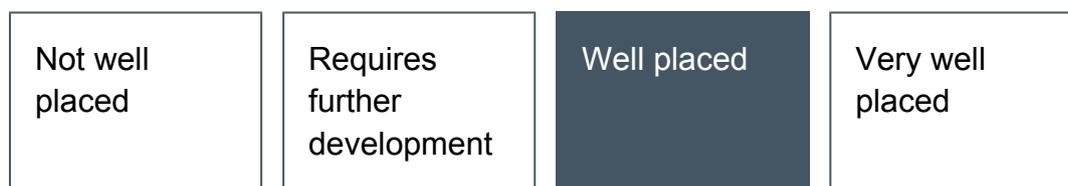


St John's Hill Kindergarten Education Review

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Evaluation of St John's Hill Kindergarten

How well placed is St John's Hill Kindergarten to promote positive learning outcomes for children?



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

Background

St John's Hill Kindergarten is situated in Whanganui. It is one of 14 kindergartens administered by the Whanganui Kindergarten Association. The kindergarten is licensed for 40 children. It offers morning, afternoon and full day sessions operating from 8:30am to 3:30pm, with children starting from two and a half years of age. All teachers are qualified and registered with a range of teaching experiences.

The governing board 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 success for Māori and Pacific children.

There has been sustained progress in relation to areas of improvement identified in the October 2012 ERO review. This has been well supported by focused professional learning and development.

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

The Review Findings

The kindergarten's philosophy focuses on the priorities of confidence, practical life skills, creativity and problem solving, social competence and a sense of belonging. These are evident in inclusive and respectful practices that support the relationships teachers have with children and their families.

Children are well supported in a programme where they recognise themselves as competent and capable learners. They are active, enquiring and empowered to be independent. Their wellbeing and whānau aspirations are at the heart of decision making.

There are rich opportunities for children to develop their social skills. Teachers model supportive relationships and positive interactions. They encourage children to explore, challenge themselves and lead their play. Children with additional needs are well supported within the inclusive, welcoming environment.

The 'Priorities for Children's Learning' kindergarten initiative is guided by the senior teachers' response to a recent ERO national evaluation report. This comprehensive, sound and strategic framework is used to strengthen planning, assessment and evaluation processes in each kindergarten and is guiding the programme with a focus on positive learning outcomes for all children.

The programme is influenced by the aspirations parents and whānau have for their children. Teachers and families work in partnership to foster children's sense of belonging. Parents are encouraged to be active learners and support their children's learning. The kindergarten enriches its curriculum through its good links with the wider community.

Portfolios effectively show the progression of children's learning and children's individual and group interests. Revisiting whānau aspirations within the learning stories is an agreed next step.

Te reo me ngā tikanga Māori are incorporated in teacher practice and routines. Leaders and teachers are committed to further developing the curriculum to promote success for Māori children. ERO affirms this focus.

Children and their families are carefully transitioned into, through and from St John's Hill Kindergarten. Very good links with local schools are part of a well-established transition programme.

A collaborative team culture is well supported by a shared approach to leadership. Teachers work collaboratively as a team, they reflect on their practice and their input is valued. As part of a shared approach to leadership, there are opportunities for teachers to take on key roles.

Appraisal effectively supports teachers' professional learning and development. Priorities for children's learning, Practising Teacher Criteria, Professional Standards and Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners are well aligned in the process.

A well structured framework is providing teachers with a clear understanding of the purpose and process for self review. 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 practice. Leaders and teachers have identified the importance of further embedding the self-review framework to strengthen the quality of teaching to promote outcomes for all children.

Key Next Steps

The senior teacher, head teacher, staff and ERO agree on the following key next steps to:

- refine aspects of assessment practice
- strengthen teachers' knowledge and understanding of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori
- further embed understanding and use of self-review processes.

The senior management team of the Whanganui Kindergarten Association is continuing to build teacher's capability to be more responsive to Māori and Pacific children's culture, language and identity to enhance culturally responsive practices. ERO affirms this direction.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of St John's Hill 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 St John's Hill Kindergarten will be in three years.

Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

13 October 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 | 5247 | |
| Licence type | Free Kindergarten | |
| Licensed under | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | |
| Number licensed for | 40 children, aged over 2 | |
| Service roll | 62 | |
| Gender composition | Boys 42, Girls 20 | |
| Ethnic composition | Māori | 3 |
| | Pākehā | 56 |
| | Other ethnic groups | 3 |
| 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 | August 2015 | |
| Date of this report | 13 October 2015 | |
| Most recent ERO report(s) | Education Review | October 2012 |
| | Education Review | June 2008 |
| | Education Review | September 2003 |

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.