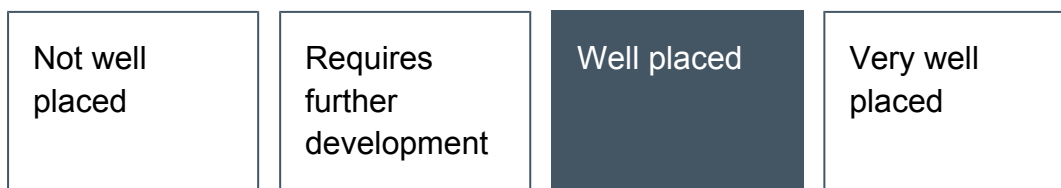


Taihape Kindergarten Education Review

- 2 Information about the Early Childhood Service
- 3 General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

Evaluation of Taihape Kindergarten

How well placed is Taihape Kindergarten to promote positive learning outcomes for children?



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

Background

Taihape Kindergarten is one of 14 kindergartens administered by the Whanganui Kindergarten Association. The kindergarten is licensed for 40 children. A mixture of town and country children can attend between 1 and 5 days a week. Sessions operate from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm with an extra hour to 3:30 pm for 10 children who wish to stay longer.

Six qualified and registered teachers bring different strengths, interests and abilities to the team.

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.

There has been significant progress made in relation to the recommendation in the previous September 2012 ERO report to further develop the bicultural programme.

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

The Review Findings

Children are highly engaged in a curriculum that is initiated by them and where their contributions are valued. They demonstrate confidence as competent thinkers and explorers, able to take risks and to be challenged, with a strong sense of belonging.

The kindergarten's philosophy is evident in practice. It focuses on the priorities of literacy, Māoritanga, creativity and moving-to-learn. These are embedded in the programme and teaching practice that has a focus on positive learning outcomes for children.

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.

Children enthusiastically participate in a daily moving-to-learn programme that supports physical and cognitive development.

Whānau are welcomed and valued for their contributions. There is a sense of akō as teachers, parents and children learn alongside one another.

Children with additional needs are well supported in an inclusive environment where children engage in co-operative play and support one another. External agencies, whānau and teachers work in partnership to support children's progress and development.

Teachers know children well and are responsive to their skills, interests and needs. Teachers communicate visually, orally and through signing to promote children's language development. They have positive, sensitive and responsive relationships with children, taking time to genuinely listen to children and to explore deeper conversation.

Assessments of learning in children's portfolios make links to the curriculum priorities. Rich narratives show learners' engagement, emerging interests and learning over time. The successful implementation of an online assessment tool is providing immediate communication and sharing of learning experiences between the kindergarten, whānau and wider community. Teachers revisit these with children and their families. Teachers are using parent aspirations to inform assessment, planning and programme evaluations and wider internal evaluation.

There has been considerable progress made to strengthening the bicultural curriculum identified in the previous ERO report. Teachers have made a strong commitment to growing their confidence and understanding of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori which are incorporated in

the programme. Language, culture and identity of Māori are celebrated. Established links with local iwi support teachers in their work and have contributed to children's oral language development through waiata and retelling of legends.

Children and their whānau are well supported in their transitions to school. There are ten schools in the Taihape area. Most families live within their own school community. The head teacher has identified the need to strengthen networks with local schools to support children's transitions.

A well-structured framework is providing teachers with a clear understanding of the purpose and process of internal evaluation. Teachers use research to support their theories. 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. Continuing to strengthen the evaluative aspect of self review is an agreed next step.

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.

Key Next Steps

The senior teachers, head teacher, staff and ERO agree to continue to strengthen internal evaluation.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Taihape 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 Taihape Kindergarten will be in three years.

Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

16 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	Taihape	
Ministry of Education profile number	5270	
Licence type	Free Kindergarten	
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008	
Number licensed for	40 children	
Service roll	59	
Gender composition	Girls 34, Boys 25	
Ethnic composition	Māori	26
	Pākehā	30
	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	November 2015	
Date of this report	16 December 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	September 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.