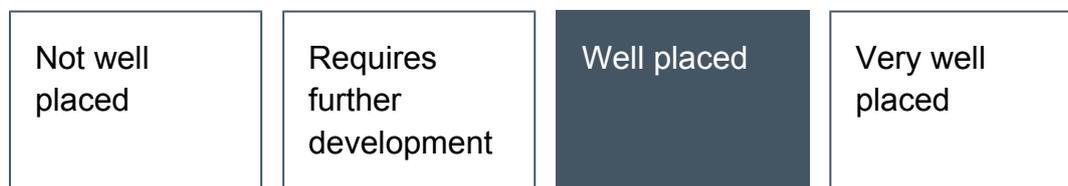


Tree Town Early Childhood Centre and Preschool Education Review

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Evaluation of Tree Town Early Childhood Centre and Preschool

How well placed is Tree Town Early Childhood Centre and Preschool to promote positive learning outcomes for children?



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

Background

Tree Town Early Childhood Centre and Preschool is a privately owned, all-day education centre located in Cambridge. It is licensed for 65 children including 15 under the age of two years. At the time of this review, there were 91 children on the roll, including 10 who are identified as Māori.

Children learn and play in three age-related areas, each overseen by a head teacher. The licensee/owner has established a long-standing and well-respected teaching team who warmly welcome children and their families into the centre. She has supported teachers to gain their qualifications, and all are now qualified and registered. Support staff and educators regularly undertake professional learning and development.

The centre has had a positive reporting history with ERO and has made progress in response to the recommendations in the 2011 ERO report. Significant refurbishments of the outdoor play spaces in each of the areas have enhanced learning opportunities for children. The centre enjoys positive relationships with the local schools and community.

The Review Findings

Teachers plan and prepare interesting and stimulating environments and programmes for children across the centre. Babies benefit from primary care-giving relationships which are

unhurried and responsive to their own rhythms, and meet the requests of their parents. Children can safely explore their environment, both independently and alongside others, in a family-like setting.

Teachers effectively support and extend children's interests and promote their independence. Children with diverse needs are skilfully managed and included. Care routines and meal times are sensitively managed, and nurture and comfort are readily offered. Teachers model rich language and respond to the verbal and non-verbal cues of children. Children were observed to be confident communicators.

The centre provides children with good quality, age-appropriate resources and equipment which teachers attractively present to encourage children to play and learn. Children have good opportunities to engage in creative activities and imaginative play. Literacy, mathematics and science are strongly evident across the centre and there is an increasing focus on the natural world and sustainable practices. Teachers respond to children's interests and preferences, and encourage them to lead learning in their preferred ways. Children are sensitively supported as they transition into and within the centre, and on to school.

Children and their families regularly enjoy events and celebrations of learning that teachers organise and share with them. Aspects of children's learning and development are well recorded in learning portfolios and on centre walls. Portfolios are accessible to children so that they can revisit their learning. Teachers use the learning stories to help inform their planning.

Te reo and tikanga Māori are taught through waiata, karakia and everyday conversations. Teachers and children could further explore aspects of Māori history and mythology in relation to the local area and context. They could also show children's culture and identity in the learning portfolios.

Centre leaders have established respectful and responsive relationships with children and their families. They regularly share information about the care and learning that is happening for children. Leaders work effectively and collaboratively with their teams of teachers ensuring that each age-related area runs smoothly. They model professional learning and enthusiasm, and share their practice and values. Teachers reflect on their practice as part of their professional learning and development.

The centre licensee/owner works closely with her leadership team and has developed shared understandings that inform decision making, reflection and improvement. She encourages leadership in others and supports teacher training and professional development. There are

clear policies and procedures that guide centre operations and support a safe inclusive culture for children. Parents are regularly surveyed, and their ideas and suggestions are used to inform decisions about how to improve outcomes for children.

The centre leaders and teachers are currently reviewing the centre philosophy. This should help them better align the philosophy with centre practice.

Key Next Steps

ERO and the centre leaders agree that to improve their strategic and annual planning, an appropriate framework needs to be developed that:

- clearly links to the Ministry of Education (MOE) guidelines and regulations
- aligns to centre philosophy, practice and operations
- is informed by indicators of good practice
- is evaluated in terms of progress and ongoing areas for further improvement.

Continued next steps include:

- developing clear criteria and understandings for high-quality teaching practice linked to ERO's indicators and other early childhood education guidelines
- providing robust feedback to teachers in relation to agreed criteria
- achieving greater consistency in the quality of assessment and planning processes.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Tree Town Early Childhood Centre and Preschool 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 Tree Town Early Childhood Centre and Preschool will be in three years.

Dale Bailey
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern
Northern Region

18 February 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	Cambridge	
Ministry of Education profile number	30086	
Licence type	Education & Care Service	
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008	
Number licensed for	65 children, including up to 15 aged under 2	
Service roll	91	
Gender composition	Boys 46 Girls 45	
Ethnic composition	Māori	10
	NZ European/Pākehā	73
	Indian	2
	South East Asian	2
	Other European	3
	Other	1
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +	
	0-49% 50-79% 80%+	
Based on funding rates		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:4
	Over 2	1:7
		Meets minimum requirements
		Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	December 2014	
Date of this report	18 February 2015	

Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2011
	Education Review	October 2008
	Education Review	October 2005

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.