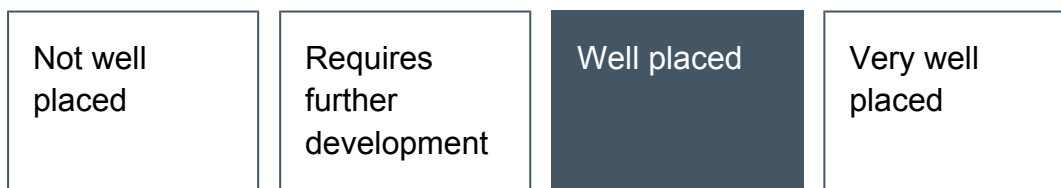


# Pohutakawa Early Learning Centre Education Review

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## Evaluation of Pohutakawa Early Learning Centre

How well placed is Pohutakawa Early Learning Centre to promote positive learning outcomes for children?



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

### Background

Pohutakawa Early Learning Centre is a privately owned early childhood service. It is one of two under common private ownership. The centre is licensed for 29 children, including 10 aged up to two years.

The three owners are trained early childhood teachers. Together, they take responsibility for governance, working with the teaching team to plan strategic direction. The educational leader has responsibility for day-to-day operation, curriculum design, and for the monitoring of teaching, learning and health and safety requirements. All teachers are registered. Membership of the teaching team has been consistent over the last few years

The December 2013 ERO report found significant development was needed particularly in relation to: teachers shared understanding of effective early childhood teaching practice; philosophy development; teacher appraisal; the management skills of the team leader; understanding and use of self review; and the quality of the curriculum.

Since that time, the teaching team has received targeted support through a Ministry of Education funded programme, Strengthening Early Learning Opportunities (SELO) and a range of other professional learning opportunities. Significant progress has been made. Previous issues have been addressed. Good quality outcomes for children are evident.

## The Review Findings

Teachers are kind, caring and responsive, engaging well with children to support their settling and perseverance in play. They demonstrate shared understanding of the agreed philosophical values underpinning teaching and learning.

The centre environment is spacious and well resourced. The wide range of learning materials is suitably organised and attractively displayed. A large indoor adventure playground provides opportunities for challenging physical play. Investigation of science and nature is well facilitated through the forest programme undertaken daily on the adjacent council reserve. Allowing children free access to the full range of centre learning materials throughout the day would extend opportunities for child-led play. Review and further development of provision for creative art is also a suitable development step.

The programme is supportive of children's interests, needs and emerging ideas. Literacy, mathematics and science are well integrated into activities. Good support is provided for children with additional needs. Infants and toddlers are well cared for. Home routines, rituals and cultural expectations are followed to support their wellbeing. A carefully considered approach supports children's transition into the centre.

Children have well developed opportunities to participate in and celebrate te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. Teachers deliberately incorporate appropriate bicultural practices and values in the programme. Support from local iwi and hapū and up-to-date Ministry of Education resources have been accessed to inform their approach. The team has identified the need to continue to work with local Māori to build their understanding of te ao Māori in a local context. A development plan is in place.

Good quality assessment practice supports planning for learning. Teachers are noticing, recognising and responding to individual children's emerging interests. Group plans support working together. Useful evaluation promotes improved outcomes. Development steps should include increasing the focus on dispositional learning and showing how children's progress is being facilitated over time.

Parent/whānau relationships are valued. Families' aspirations for their children's learning are sought. The educational leader agrees that specific acknowledgment of these in plans for learning is a next step.

Teachers' membership of a local cluster group is strengthening their approach to supporting children's transition to primary school. Continuing the development of relationships with schools should support the sharing of information about individual children and learning programmes.

Teachers work together cohesively. The educational leader and assistant supervisor are fostering a culture of good team work, reflection and improvement. Teachers are encouraged to lead aspects of centre development. Opportunities for professional learning are keenly sought and valued as a shared resource.

The appraisal process aids reflection on some teaching competencies and includes goal setting and regular feedback. To improve the rigour of the approach, there should be clear links to the Practising Teacher Criteria, identification of teacher development goals, and focused observations and feedback about teachers practice linked to their goals. The endorsement process for the issue of practising certificates for provisionally registered teachers is sound. Fully registered teachers need to collect evidence to how they are meeting the Practising Teacher Criteria.

Self review has been strengthened. A planned process is linked to agreed priorities. It supports identification of progress and development steps. Improved outcomes for children are the result. An increased focus on evaluation, rather than inquiry, and the identification of more specific success indicators should add further rigour to the approach and strengthen decision making.

The owners provide suitable governance for the service. They are very involved in centre operations. The carefully developed strategic plan and philosophy are focused on outcomes for children and set clear direction for the service. A cycle to support the timely review of policy guidelines is needed. Development of governance policies should support improved sustainability and the review of practice.

### Key Next Steps

The teaching team should continue to develop the:

- bicultural perspective in the programme
- approach to assessment
- the use of the environment to strengthen opportunities for child-led learning
- team's understanding and use of self review for improvement.

The owners agree that they should further develop the appraisal process.

### Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Pohutukawa Early Learning Centre 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 Pohutukawa Early Learning Centre will be in three years.

Joyce Gebbie  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

3 November 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                             | Masterton   |     |                                  |
| Ministry of Education profile number | 45658   |     |                                  |
| Licence type                         | Education & Care Service                              |     |                                  |
| Licensed under                       | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 |     |                                  |
| Number licensed for                  | 29 children, including up to 10 aged under 2          |     |                                  |
| Service roll                         | 47  |     |                                  |
| Gender composition                   | Boys 26, Girls 21                                     |     |                                  |
| Ethnic composition                   | Māori   | 17  |                                  |
|                                      | Pākehā  | 22  |                                  |
|                                      | Samoan  | 3   |                                  |
|                                      | Other ethnic groups                                   | 5   |                                  |
| Percentage of qualified teachers     | 80% +   |     |                                  |
|                                      | 0-49% 50-79% 80%+                                     |     |                                  |
| Based on funding rates               |   |     |                                  |
| Reported ratios of staff to children | Under 2   | 1:3 | Better than minimum requirements |
|                                      | Over 2  | 1:8 | Better than minimum requirements |
| Review team on site                  | September 2015  |     |                                  |

Date of this report                      3 November 2015

Most recent ERO report(s)            Education Review                      December 2013

### 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.