

City Childrens Centre Education Review

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19 May 2011

To the Parents and Community of City Children's Centre

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on City Children's Centre.

City Children's Centre is a purpose-built, early childhood facility located in the Napier City business area. It is one of two community-based centres administered by the Napier Community Childcare Centres Trust Incorporated. The Trust is responsible for Governance while the supervisor oversees the day-to-day operations of both centres.

City Children's Centre has a positive reporting history with ERO and continues to strive for excellence and high quality education and care for children. Managers and educators are dedicated to increasing capability in all the areas identified as good practice in the September 2007 ERO report. The programme, assessment practice, interactions and learning environment were identified and have been sustained as areas of strength.

Effective partnership with all families, including Māori, remains of paramount importance. Managers, educators and ERO, agree that centre personnel continue to develop their use of te reo Māori within the programme to ensure that Māori children and their non-Māori peers are exposed to a range of situations where te reo Māori is used.

Children flourish and are happy and settled within a stimulating child-initiated programme that responds to their strengths, interests and needs. Teachers respond to children's communication with curiosity, interest and attention. Infants, toddlers and young children

express themselves confidently. They enjoy each other's company and are developing skills at sustaining cooperative play. Children are competent and capable learners who make decisions about their play in collaboration with peers and teachers.

Managers and educators take reasonable steps to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and adults.

Future Action

ERO is likely to review the service again in three years.

When ERO has reviewed an early childhood centre we encourage management to inform their community of any follow up action they plan to take. You should talk to the management or contact person if you have any questions about this evaluation, the full ERO report or their future intentions.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the centre or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT REVIEWS

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve quality of education for children in early childhood centres; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the Government.

Reviews are intended to focus on outcomes for children and build on each centre's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting is based on four review strands.

- Quality of Education – including the quality of the programme provided for children, the quality of the learning environment and the quality of the interactions between staff and children and how these impact on outcomes for children.
- Additional Review Priorities – other aspects of the operation of a centre, may be included in the review. ERO will not include this strand in all reviews.
- National Evaluation Topics – This strand contributes to the development of education policies and their effective implementation. The information from this strand is aggregated by ERO for its national evaluation reports. Topics for investigation are changed regularly to provide up-to-date information.
- Compliance with Legal Requirements – assurance that this centre has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of centre performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to positive outcomes for children and useful to this centre.

Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a centre is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this centre.

Disclaimer

Individual ERO school and early childhood centre reports are public information and may be copied or sent electronically. However, the Education Review Office can guarantee only the authenticity of original documents which have been obtained in hard copy directly from either the local ERO office or ERO Corporate Office in Wellington. Please consult your telephone book, or see the ERO web page, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>, for ERO office addresses.

1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report:City Children's Centre

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

City Children's Centre is a purpose-built, early childhood facility located in the Napier City business area. It is one of two community-based centres administered by the Napier Community Childcare Centres Trust Incorporated. The Trust is responsible for Governance while the supervisor oversees the day-to-day operations of both centres.

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Effective partnership with all families, including Māori, remains of paramount importance. Managers, educators and ERO, agree that centre personnel continue to develop their use of te reo Māori within the programme to ensure that Māori children and their non-Māori peers are exposed to a range of situations where te reo Māori is used.

Children flourish and are happy and settled within a stimulating child-initiated programme that responds to their strengths, interests and needs. Teachers respond to children's communication with curiosity, interest and attention. Infants, toddlers and young children express themselves confidently. They enjoy each other's company and are developing skills at sustaining cooperative play. Children are competent and capable learners who make decisions about their play in collaboration with peers and teachers.

Managers and educators take reasonable steps to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and adults.

Future Action

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2 Review Priorities

The Focus of the Review

Before the review, the management of City Children's Centre was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the centre to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the management and staff. This discussion focused on existing information held by the centre (including self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to positive outcomes for children at City Children's Centre.

All ERO education reviews in early childhood focus on the quality of education. For ERO this includes the quality of:

- the programme provided for children;
- the learning environment; and
- the interactions between children and adults.

ERO's findings in these areas are set out below.

The Quality of Education

Background

Since the previous ERO report significant staff changes have occurred. Consequently, managers and educators have focused on establishing a strong team culture and continuing to provide high quality education and care for children and their families.

Areas of strength

Programme

Children enthusiastically participate in an exciting programme, based on their strengths and interests. Educators support children to develop their interests in depth and complexity. Good practice includes:

- children confidently making choices about where and who they wish to play with;
- encouraging infants and toddlers to be adventurous and investigate their surroundings;
- use of deliberate, successful teaching strategies to guide and scaffold children's developing competencies;

- educators fostering independence and sensitively supporting children's growing responsibility for self care;
- successfully weaving literacy and numeracy learning into the programme;
- flexible routines designed to meet the needs of individual children, rather than the convenience of adults;
- providing children with healthy and inviting meals prepared on the premises;
- planning, evaluation and assessment of children's learning informed by noticing, recognising and responding to their interests;
- children's attractive individual education profiles containing narratives of learning and photographic documentation;
- parents contributing family stories, creating strong links between home and centre to provide a continuity of learning; and
- educators fostering children's love of learning through curiosity and child-initiated play, in alignment with centre philosophy.

Learning environment

The centre is divided into three separate developmental areas, infants, toddlers and kindergarten. Toddlers and kindergarten children share an outdoor environment. Older children support those younger as tuakana/teina.

Individuals learn through a wide range of child-centred experiences that engage them in sustained, meaningful and enjoyable experiences. These opportunities support children's emerging sense of self, creativity and expressiveness.

Educators construct an environment that provides;

- space for children to develop as risk takers and problem solvers;
- high quality, age-appropriate resources;
- a variety of tactile and messy experiences;
- exciting outdoor spaces to investigate;
- children with a sense of ownership of their surroundings; and
- a relaxed, and purposeful atmosphere.

Educators are respectful, calm and responsive. They regard children as competent learners.

Interactions

The programme is underpinned by the concept of respect, empowerment and meeting the needs of each individual child. Educators nurture and build positive and trusting relationships with children and their families. Consequently:

- children relate well to others through respectful and reciprocal relationships;
- educators know children well and recognise them in the context of their family;
- adults respond to babies' verbal and non-verbal cues with nurture and attention;
- infants, toddlers and young children are secure, safe and trusting;
- babies enjoy genuine one-to-one engagement with their key care giver;
- centre practices are inclusive and parents are welcomed and their contributions and requests are valued and addressed;
- children enjoy each other's company and adults teach them the necessary skills of negotiation and group participation; and
- educators work closely as a team, are collaborative, caring and helpful towards each other and model these attributes to children.

Area for development and review

Managers and teachers use their well developed self-review processes to guide ongoing improvement and change to further enhance outcomes for children.

3 National Evaluation Topic

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole through its national reports. This information will be used as the basis for long term and systemic educational improvement.

Partnerships with whānau of Māori children in early childhood services

As part of this review ERO evaluated the extent to which:

- this service understands and values the identity, language and culture of Māori children and their whānau, particularly when the child and whānau transition to the service;
- managers and educators have built relationships with whānau of Māori children; and
- this service works in partnership with whānau of Māori children.

Background

Centre philosophy embraces biculturalism and acknowledges tangata whenua as the people of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Areas of strength

Communication

Whānau of Māori children are consistently, warmly welcomed into the centre and made to feel comfortable. They are invited to stay with their child for as long as their transition into City Children's takes. Education evenings, one-on-one discussions with parents and social events are some of the many ways educators relate to whānau of Māori children and all families.

Participation

All parents are invited to, and do, comment on policy and procedure review. They have good opportunities to participate in conversations about their children's interests and home experiences. Whānau share their aspirations for their children in formal and informal ways and support managers and educators to extend their knowledge and practice of te ao Māori.

Areas for development and review

Improved te reo Māori

Educators acknowledge that they should use te reo Māori more confidently and consistently, across the centre, to assist children to increase their knowledge and practice of the language. ERO's external evaluation affirms this next step for development.

4 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff of City Children's 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:

- administration;
- health, safety and welfare;
- personnel management; and
- financial and property management.

During the review, ERO looked at the service's documentation, including policies, procedures and records of recent use of procedures. ERO also checked elements of the following areas that have a potentially high impact on outcomes for children:

- emotional safety (including behaviour management, prevention of bullying and abuse);
- physical safety (including behaviour management, sleeping and supervision practices; accidents and medication; hygiene and routines; travel and excursion policies and procedures);
- staff qualifications and organisation; and
- evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake.

5 Future Action

ERO is likely to review the service again in three years.

Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

About the Centre

Location	Napier
Ministry of Education profile number	55087
Type	Education and Care Service
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 1998
Number licensed for	45 children, including up to 15 aged under 2
Roll number	57
Gender composition	Girls 32 Boys 25
Ethnic composition	NZ European/ Pākehā 37 Māori 17 Other ethnic groups 3
Review team on site	March 2011
Date of this report	19 May 2011
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review September 2007 Education Review October 2004 Accountability Review December 2000