



**Ruawai Kindergarten
Ruawai**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Ruawai Kindergarten

Ruawai

9 September 2015

1 Evaluation of Ruawai Kindergarten

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

Not well placed	Requires further development	Well placed	Very well placed
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ERO's findings that support this overall judgement are summarised below.

Background

Ruawai Kindergarten provides six hour sessions for up to 30 children over the age of two years. The kindergarten operates in a purpose-built, modern facility adjacent to the local primary school in rural Ruawai. Children play together in a mixed-age group.

Many children attending the Kindergarten identify as NZ European/Pākehā, with a smaller number from Māori backgrounds. Most of the children's families are from the surrounding agricultural areas.

The kindergarten's 2012 ERO report identified positive aspects of the programme, including the skilled integration of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, into the programme. It also highlighted developing relationships with families. ERO recommended that teachers should strengthen evaluation systems to identify the impact of teaching on children's learning.

The kindergarten operates as part of the Northland Kindergarten Association. The Association provides governance, leadership and policy frameworks to meet operational and management expectations. Association personnel assist teachers to maintain good standards of health and safety and to improve the quality of educational programmes. The Association's *Pūmanawatanga* Plan reflects a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and support for the development of bicultural practices across the organisation.

This review was part of a cluster of 10 kindergarten reviews in the Northland Kindergarten Association.

The Review Findings

The kindergarten's move to the new site has been a revitalising force for children and teachers. The centre is spacious, and the outdoor area is providing new opportunities for children's play. Teachers continue to plan for further good use of the playground, with a stronger focus on environmental sustainability and respect for nature. Many examples of child voice and children's creative work are displayed to indicate the value teachers' place on children's ideas and thinking.

Children choose and guide their own play. They talk enthusiastically with friends and adults and are respectful and careful of others' feelings. Tuakana/teina relationships are visible. Teachers use strategies from professional learning to support children to play together respectfully. These positive strategies are allowing children to develop sound self-management skills.

Teachers provide good quality education and care for children. From their first positive transitions into the kindergarten, teachers strive to give children a sense of belonging, wellbeing and confidence. As a result of these careful transitions, children and their families appear self assured and happy. Teachers record useful information about individual children's learning while at kindergarten. This information can be used as children move to school.

Children enjoy the kindergarten's plentiful resources and play in ways familiar to their home lives. Teachers work close to children, supporting their play when necessary and engaging them in conversation. Teachers recognise and use children's interests as a starting point for planning programmes. They could now consider ways of increasing children's learning based on what they already know by broadening the scope of learning programmes.

Children have many opportunities to hear and use te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. Teachers' have a significant and visible commitment to te ao Māori (the Māori world). They promote it in ways that are meaningful to children, their parents and themselves. They also support children's knowledge and understanding of waiata, mihi whakatau and karakia. Children clearly demonstrate their familiarity with the language and protocols, sometimes using te reo Māori in their games. Teachers have benefitted from the support provided by Association personnel and have expressed their intent to continue this development.

Teachers invite parents/whānau to discuss their aspirations for their children and to contribute to programmes. This is encouraging a sense of ownership and inclusion for families.

The Northland Kindergarten Association provides effective governance for kindergartens. Its long-term direction focuses on making decisions to improve learning outcomes for children. Positive strategies include:

- good support and guidance by Association personnel to improve the quality of kindergarten programmes and teaching practice, particularly the development of bicultural practices and integration of *Te Ao Māori* into programmes in ways meaningful for children
- effective teacher appraisal and professional learning and development that contributes to improved teacher skills, knowledge and practice, especially in supporting children's social competence, and strengthening the quality of assessment documentation
- significant investment in property and environment upgrades to promote children's exploration and investigation
- a focus on distributed leadership practices amongst kindergarten teaching teams to utilise teachers' individual and collective strengths.

Association leaders are considering ways to enhance teacher appraisal and self review processes. ERO recommends that the Association strengthens systems to ensure that all health and safety requirements are being implemented.

Key Next Steps

To build on existing good practices ERO suggested, and teachers agree, that they could continue to:

- develop portfolios to reflect children's progress over time in terms of their learning dispositions and thinking
- strengthen connections with the Māori community
- improve self review to guide environment changes, curriculum content and teaching practices.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

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



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern (Acting)

9 September 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	Ruawai	
Ministry of Education profile number	5008	
Licence type	Free Kindergarten	
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008	
Number licensed for	30 children, including up to 0 aged under 2	
Service roll	45	
Gender composition	Boys 24 Girls 21	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā British South African	10 33 1 1
Percentage of qualified teachers 0-49% 50-79% 80%+ <i>Based on funding rates</i>	80% +	
Reported ratios of staff to children Over 2	1:10	Meets minimum requirements
Review team on site	June 2015	
Date of this report	9 September 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	April 2012
These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Education Review	February 2009
	Education Review	December 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.