

Hora Hora Kindergarten Education Review

- About The Centre
- The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation
- Review Priorities
- Areas Of National Interest
- Management Assurance On Compliance Areas
- Recommendations
- Future Action
- Community Page

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

About The Centre

Location Whangarei

Ministry of
Education
profile number 5011

Type Free Kindergarten

Number 70 children over two years of age
licensed for

Roll number 70

Gender Girls 40
composition Boys 30

Ethnic NZ European/Pākehā 43, Māori 16, Chinese 2, Filipino 2,
composition British 1, Cambodian 1, Korean 1, Samoan 1, South African
1, Sri Lankan 1, Tokelauan 1,

Review team November 2008
on site

Date of this 13 February 2009
report

Previous ERO Education Review, March 2006
reports Education Review, January 2003
Accountability Review, July 1998
Assurance Audit, December 1992
Review, February 1991

The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Hora Hora Kindergarten operates under the auspices of the Northland Kindergarten Association. The Association provides a range of operational systems to support administration, personnel, management and professional development in the kindergarten.

Children are confident in their relationships with adults and develop good friendships with other children. They are encouraged to explore their environment and to take responsibility for their actions. They have opportunities to develop negotiating and problem-solving skills. The ways in which children and their parents are welcomed at the centre contribute to their sense of belonging.

Children are increasingly confident in understanding and using early literacy and numeracy skills as part of their play. They write and draw in meaningful contexts and are becoming familiar with number and measurement in their activities. Teachers foster interest in science concepts and provide opportunities for children to learn about nature as part of the programme.

Children have access to, and demonstrate growing ability with, the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). They are supported to use a digital camera, digital microscope and computer. Teachers plan as a team and are finding new ways to ensure that the programme is based on individual children's ideas and interests. Teachers provide children with a carefully planned and well resourced environment. Displays record children's involvement in a variety of activities and experiences and celebrate their creativity.

Teachers have a variety of complementary skills and experiences. The head teacher provides strong leadership and, with her team, is committed to making changes to improve the quality of the programme. The developing appraisal system provides teachers with opportunities for coaching and mentoring that focus on reflection and evaluation.

This review evaluates the quality of education provided for children, including the extent to which teachers respond to whānau aspirations for Māori tamariki. Areas of good performance have been identified and some improvements are suggested to improve the quality of the programme for children. ERO recommends that teachers develop formal evaluation practices and plan to ensure that Māori values are incorporated in the programme and the centre environment.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the service is being managed in the interests of the children. Therefore

ERO is likely to review the service again as part of the regular review cycle.

Review Priorities

The Focus of the Review

Before the review, the management of Hora Hora Kindergarten 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 Hora Hora Kindergarten.

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

At the time of the 2006 ERO report, Hora Hora Kindergarten was characterised by a stable, longstanding teaching team, who were undertaking professional development to improve their planning processes. Teachers used strategies to sustain children's play and extend their thinking. ERO identified the need for teachers to build on children's emerging interests and to use portfolios to encourage parents to participate in their children's learning.

ERO recommended that centre staff develop a self-review plan and strengthen systems for planning, assessment and evaluation.

Areas of good performance

Confident children. Teachers treat children with respect. They provide a warm, welcoming environment that enables children to develop their interests and to explore for periods of uninterrupted play. Adults work close to children, supporting them in their play through

conversation and suggestions. As a result, children are confident about making choices and asking for support.

Interactions. Children are confident communicators. They talk readily to each other and to adults, expressing their point of view and their ideas about the world. Teachers engage children in conversation about their activities and experiences. Children make good friendships and engage in cooperative and collaborative play for much of the session.

Integrated literacy, numeracy and science. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of early literacy concepts. Children freely access materials for writing and drawing and take part in spontaneous and planned opportunities to write. Reading material is accessible and children enjoy opportunities for group, independent and teacher supported reading.

Children are becoming familiar with concepts relating to counting and measurement and access these independently and during group activities. They have opportunities to participate in science and nature experiments and in activities that children find enjoyable and interesting. The use of a digital microscope encourages children in early scientific exploration.

Environment supports learning. A child-friendly and attractive environment invites children's exploration and engagement. The resources are arranged so that different areas of play are clearly defined and to encourage children to experiment and extend their play. The outdoor covered deck is well used as an extended play space and increases the variety of activities available.

Programme planning. A team approach to planning has made teachers' planning steps transparent and open to critique within the team. This newly adopted planning process has enabled teachers to identify children's interests. Teachers are well placed to include evaluation as a next step in their planning process to further strengthen the quality of the teaching programme.

Links with home. Teachers encourage input from parents and whānau at the time of enrolment and include introductory information about the kindergarten in the children's portfolios. Teachers could extend home-centre partnerships and build on their good relationships with parents by:

- sharing models of parent learning stories for portfolios;
- giving parents encouragement about their contributions to the learning stories; and
- individualising current 'homework' so that it more clearly reflects children's interests and learning dispositions.

Centre leadership. The head teacher is forging a new teaching team and encouraging a shared direction. She is currently improving her qualifications and has acknowledged changes in her professional thinking. She shares professional readings with other teachers and uses staff meetings to encourage discussions about teaching and learning.

Areas for improvement

Extending children's learning. Staff have yet to review the centre philosophy to reflect on the ways in which the programme enables children to explore and take risks with their learning. Encouraging children to be part of the planning process should increase their ownership of their learning and should help to develop their reasoning and thinking skills.

Evaluation practices. Evaluation is not a regular part of the planning process and teachers are yet to reflect formally on their practice and on the ways in which the programme meets children's individual learning needs and interests. The head teacher and staff are keen to explore ways to make self review an integral part of the assessment and planning cycle. They should also develop a framework for the review of centre operations.

Long term planning. As noted in ERO's 2006 report, staff are yet to develop annual and strategic planning goals for the centre. A more fully developed annual plan would help to ensure that areas for improvement were identified, meaningful goals established, and an appropriate timeline set to achieve desired outcomes.

Areas Of National Interest

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.

Māori Children

As part of this review, ERO evaluated the extent to which this service carries out a process to identify and respond to the aspirations and expectations of the parents and whānau of Māori children and focuses on the potential of Māori children to develop as competent and capable learners.

Area of good performance

Resources and te reo. The centre makes use of resources to support Māori language and culture including books, posters and waiata. Bilingual posters and signage are displayed to indicate basic greetings and words. Some teachers use basic words incidentally in the programme and during formal mat times.

Areas for improvement

Policy and philosophy development. Teachers agree that documented systems and processes should be developed to identify and respond to the aspirations and expectations of parents and whānau of Māori children. In this way, Māori dimensions can be incorporated into all centre practices to further support Māori children, parents and their whānau and to ensure that New Zealand's bicultural heritage is acknowledged and affirmed.

Links with parents/whānau. Teachers could provide opportunities for Māori parents and whānau to share their whakapapa. A whānau wall with photographs of children's parents and whānau and reference to significant places could be a useful starting point.

Professional development for staff. Teachers should consider ways to develop their confidence and skills in te reo me ōna tikanga. They should seek professional development opportunities to build their understanding of te reo me ōna tikanga and continue to strengthen community and whānau links and relationships.

Recommendation

Teachers should ensure that Māori perspectives form an integral part of kindergarten's

policies and programme provision.

Management Assurance On Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the licensee and staff of Hora Hora Kindergarten completed an ERO Centre Management Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they have attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legislative obligations related to:

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

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they 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.

In order to improve current practice, teachers should more fully document procedures for recording accidents and should practise earthquake procedures with children. The Association should support the kindergarten in its endeavours to provide additional shade in the outdoor environment and to provide increased indoor ventilation.

Recommendations

ERO and the teachers agreed that teachers should develop formal evaluation processes in order to improve practices for teaching and learning.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the service is being managed in the interests of the children. Therefore ERO is likely to review the service again as part of the regular review cycle.

Signed

Elizabeth Ellis

Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

13 February 2009

13 February 2009

To the Parents and Community of Hora Hora Kindergarten

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Hora Hora Kindergarten.

Community Page

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This review evaluates the quality of education provided for children, including the extent to which teachers respond to whānau aspirations for Māori tamariki. Areas of good performance have been identified and some improvements are suggested to improve the quality of the programme for children. ERO recommends that teachers develop formal evaluation practices and plan to ensure that Māori values are incorporated in the programme and the centre environment.

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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 licensee 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>.

Elizabeth Ellis

Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

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.
- Areas of National Interest - information about how Government policies are working in early childhood centres.
- 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.