

5 May 2010

**To the Parents and Community of Riverside Kindergarten**

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

Riverside Kindergarten, in Whangarei, provides a good quality early childhood service operating as part of the Northland Kindergarten Association. Teachers are well supported by an administrator and parent group and the Association provides a policy and management framework and professional support. The centre operates for four and half hour sessions each week day morning and provides a welcoming environment for parents and siblings of kindergarten children. The kindergarten is led effectively by an experienced head teacher.

In 2007 ERO identified many areas of good performance in the kindergarten, including children's engagement in the programme and teachers' assessment practices. The current teaching team has sustained previous good practices and has enhanced the management of the kindergarten with strategic plans and improved communication systems. Teachers are actively working to further develop parents' involvement in the kindergarten. They have a focus on tikanga and te reo Māori and on raising awareness of the local cultural history.

Children are enthusiastic learners who work well, individually, and in small groups. They often sustain prolonged interest in an activity and some are developing skills to tutor their friends. They enjoy trusting relationships with adults and confidently approach teachers for assistance. Children engage in a wide variety of learning experiences that integrate curriculum areas and often challenge them to think, solve problems and persist with difficult tasks. They benefit from an extensive and inviting outdoor area, rich literacy and numeracy experiences, and a well resourced environment.

Teachers skilfully support children to become independent learners. They foster children's thinking with open questions and encourage them to develop the complexity of their play. Teachers engage in ongoing self review and are improving curriculum practices as they develop a team approach to programme management. They maintain attractive assessment portfolios for each child, providing parents with good information about children's learning and participation in the programme. More explicit documentation of the ways in which teachers extend children's individual interests would further enrich the information provided for parents.

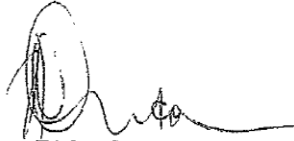
ERO and teachers agree that teachers could now involve children and parents more in setting children's learning goals and could encourage children to assess their own progress.

**Future Action**

ERO is confident that the service is being managed in the interest of the children. Therefore ERO is likely to review the service again within 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>.



**Richard Thornton**  
National Manager Review Services  
Northern Region