

Totara Park Playcentre - 09/05/2016

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1 Evaluation of Totara Park Playcentre

How well placed is Totara Park Playcentre 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

Totara Park Playcentre is one of 17 centres administered by the Lower Hutt Playcentre Association (the association). The association is made up of elected volunteer representatives from its member centres. It provides the parent committee at Totara Park with governance and management support. A kaitautoko, a centre support person, is employed by the association to provide guidance.

The centre is licensed to provide mixed-age sessional education and care for 30 children four days a week. This includes 15 children up to the age of two. There is one afternoon session for older children.

Curriculum planning and implementation is a shared responsibility. Each session is supported by a team of parent educators who hold playcentre training certificates. When necessary they employ a supervisor with the level of training that meets the legislative requirements for group supervision.

Almost all centre members are involved in the adult education training programme provided by the association. The centre has sustained the good numbers of parents taking advantage of this opportunity for active involvement in their child's education.

The securing of a silver Healthy Heart Award has added emphasis to implementing a programme that supports children making healthy active choices and consuming appropriate food for healthy development.

The service and the association has a positive reporting history with ERO. Effective centre practice identified in the June 2013 ERO report has been sustained.

This review was part of a cluster of eight services within the Hutt Playcentre Association.

The Review Findings

Children's active exploration through play and their learning is well supported by attentive parent educators. Respectful relationships between all positively contributes to children's strong sense of belonging.

The service's philosophy strongly reflects the playcentre philosophy of parent-led education, learning through play and the principles and strands of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum. A culture of care, respect and shared responsibility for leading children's play is evident.

Children participate enthusiastically in a varied range of planned and spontaneous activities. They are able to lead their own learning and benefit from the wide range of skills and interests of adults. These positive aspects of practice are celebrated in assessment, planning and evaluation records.

Centre members continually seek ways to improve their practice. They share information in many ways, including a closed portal of social media.

The inclusion of te ao Māori and acknowledgement of children's cultures, languages and identities continues to evolve. Children who identify as Māori are empowered to be confident in their own culture. Adults are committed to learn about promoting educational success for Māori children.

Adults skilfully manage interactions to maximise children's learning and growing independence. Children aged up to two years old experience freedom to make choices about their play. A positive social and emotional climate results from a responsive curriculum. The recently redeveloped outside playground is the outcome of deliberate planning to challenge and support all children's physical development.

The association is an improvement focused organisation committed to providing timely and relevant support for its centre members. ERO's June 2013 reviews found the support provided at the centre level by kaitautoko was appreciated and supportive. ERO also recognised that formalising this arrangement to promote a more effective approach to responding to the needs of individual centres was a next step for development. An evaluation of the effectiveness of changes to kaitautoko practice in improving outcomes for centre members and children is planned for.

The previous ERO report identified that members should strengthen the approach to assessment, planning and evaluation. It reported a need to further develop understanding and use of self review. These aspects of practice have been addressed.

Key Next Steps

The association:

- must implement rigorous annual appraisal for the kaitautoko and identify professional development to support them in their leadership roles

should build kaitautoko knowledge and capability to undertake effective internal evaluation. This should include a focus on providing centre members with evaluative feedback that assists them to further develop aspects of the curriculum and centre practice.

Centre members have identified the need to continue to explore ways to support educational success for Māori children at the playcentre.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Totara Park Playcentre 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.

Action for compliance

ERO identified areas of non-compliance relating to governance and management practices. To meet requirements the service needs to improve its performance in the following area:

- fully implementing a system of regular appraisal. [*Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008, GMA7*]

Next ERO Review

When is ERO likely to review the service again?

The next ERO review of Totara Park Playcentre will be in three years.

Joyce Gebbie

Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

9 May 2016

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	Upper Hutt		
Ministry of Education profile number	60025		
Licence type	Playcentre		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	30 children, including up to 15 aged under 2		
Service roll	36		
Gender composition	Girls 20, Boys 16		
Ethnic composition	Māori		4
	Pākehā		32
Reported ratios of adults to children	Under 2	1:1	Better than minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:2	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	March 2016		
Date of this report	9 May 2016		
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review		June 2013
	Education Review		August 2009
	Education Review		June 2006