

## Questions received from Centres for Tāngata Tiriti Trustee Nominees 2021

### Responses from Hayley Kirk-Smith

#### 1. What skills would you bring to the TB?

Refer to nomination form for detail:

I will bring to the TB a skill set, knowledge and experience that will enable me to work with stakeholders, employees, members and trustees in a collaborative way to achieve the goals of our organisation.

Strategic, big picture thinking

Strong working understanding of the governance/management split

Experience working with government and other stake-holders such as MoE and Auckland University.

Extensive governance experience over 12 years

Experience with performance review and management of staff including professional development and mentoring.

Governance training, in particular, legislative and regulatory requirements in education sector.

Negotiation skills

Collaborative skills

Communication skills

#### 2. Since moving into the representative role, what meaningful collaboration and consultation have you had with the centres you are representing?

I have been involved in the Kapa Mahi, consulting with centre members and representatives, collaborating with representatives and leading the SGM/AGM paper writing team.

#### 3. What are the biggest challenges facing Playcentre, both internally and externally? How do you plan to address these challenges?

Internal challenges: governance structure not fit for purpose, emergent leadership pathways lacking, communication pathways not transparent or engaging, high staff turnover, health and safety of employees, Constitution requiring urgent review, education programme requiring review and improvement for greater accessibility and completion rate.

Address these challenges by forming kapa mahi to address the governance issues in a collaborative way, engage external experts where needed eg, constitutional review, education programme. Creating an annual plan that addresses the outcomes of the health and safety audit and work towards meaningful resolution of staff concerns.

External challenges: funding structure and licensing requirements, NZQA report, socio-political pressures.

Address these challenges by engaging with the MoE and negotiating the co-design of Playcentres funding structure in a way that meets the needs of our centres. Lobbying government and communicating with media for recognition of the role Playcentre plays in society.

#### 4. What are the biggest challenges facing our centres - internally and externally? How do you plan to address these challenges?

The vaccination mandate – social impacts and potential centre closures  
Funding model – as above  
Education – accessibility, engagement and completion rates  
Regulatory requirements – centres working in a one-size-fits-all ECE model

5. What role do you see centres and rūpū having at a national governance level? How do you plan to support this level of engagement?

Consultation, consultation, consultation! Create more and varied informal and formal communication pathways so that rūpū and centres can share their voice more often and more effectively in ways that suit them. By setting up kapa mahi to run interest projects that seek to gather the voices across our diverse organisation eg, rural interests, urban interests, regional interests, rūpū development and growth, cluster development and growth. This would inform the strategic and annual plans.

6. How would you support grassroots governance in a bicultural context?

Co-design a governance structure that builds bi-cultural partnership at all levels from centre up so that partnership happens meaningfully not just at an AGM or on the Trustee Board.

7. If you are elected as a Trustee, what would be your number one priority in this role?

Eek, 1! I can do two... Governance structure and Constitutional review (interconnected) and negotiating a fair and sustainable funding model with the MoE.

8. What would you do differently, if anything, from the current trustee board representatives?

Open and transparent communication – proactively with all levels of governance.

9. How would an ideal board function within the philosophy of Playcentre? What are the three philosophical underpinnings you believe are essential to uphold within the context of the Trustee Board?

- Playcentre empowers adults and children to work, play, learn and grow together;
- Playcentre Aotearoa acknowledges Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand;
- Within Playcentre Aotearoa, Tāngata Whenua and Tāngata Tiriti work in partnership and shall be given the same rights, privileges and responsibilities.

10. What does partnership within the Two House Model look like at the Board level? What are the important components of partnership? If agreement on an issue cannot be reached, what next?

Each trustee making sure that they are both representing the voices of their whare and seeking to understand the voices of the other whare making sure we are responsible to each other and the entire membership. As Tāngata Tiriti, I see myself as an ally in support of the objectives of Tāngata Whenua.

Communication, listening to understand, equitable decision making, seeking collaborative solutions.

When consensus is not reached - take some more time, consult more widely, seek expert advice and find ways to move and points of agreement on which to build consensus.

11. Do you think the Board would benefit from a percentage of non-Playcentre professional voices? Why/Why not.

No not as a percentage but on a situational basis it may be advantageous. This would be through co-option for specific tasks. I believe we have the skills we need within our organisation.

12. Where within our bicultural framework are there areas for growth and development? What would be your first steps as a Trustee Board member to strengthen our bicultural practices?

Consultation and collaboration on how to grow rōpū and how the voice of whanau Māori can be heard in governance.

13. There is a communication pathway for governance on the website. Do you think this pathway is adequate for our organisation? If not, how would you improve it?

No it is not adequate. Create more opportunities through a variety of channels/tools that are both informal and formal eg, informal zoom hui, facebook live announcements, regional formal hui.

14. The Trustee Board is responsible for millions of dollars of taxpayer money. How can we ensure that we are acting in a fiscally responsible manner? Do you think there is any room for improvement here? If so, what would you do?

Transparency – members should be able to access the financial information simply and regularly. Information needs to be accessible eg, detailed budget with a supporting simpler budget.

15. What conflicts of interests do you think might occur while you are on the board? How would you seek to manage these conflicts?

I am from a high functioning urban centre in central Auckland and Pākehā. Be honest and open about these conflicts, seek to mitigate them and step aside as appropriate. Provide opportunities to hear from voices not on the Trustee Board eg, kapa mahi for rural centre interests, or for South Island interests feeding into the Trustee Board.

16. What experience (if any) do you have with the ECE sector outside Playcentre?

None.

17. How would you go about establishing strong working relationships with MoE?

I have 6 years of experience in working with the MoE successfully as a member of the BoT Property Committee, working on a full school rebuild (largest rebuild project in NZ history). It's about clear, consistent, and persistent communication, strategic and creative (outside the box) thinking and knowledge of the structures involved and how to work within and around them.

18. Which of the DISC categories of leadership personalities do you believe best describes you?

- **\_Dominant** – Leads by forcefully shaping their environment to suit their vision, overcoming opposition and accomplishing results. Task oriented, direct, demanding, strong-willed, driven, determined, fast-paced, self-confident. More focused on results than process. Motivated by competition/success. Prioritises accepting challenges, taking action and achieving immediate results.

- • **\_Influence –** \_Leads by influencing or convincing others to follow their vision. Outgoing, social, enthusiastic, persuasive, warm, trusting, optimistic, focussed on making connections with others. Motivated by social recognition, group activities and relationships. Values coaching & counselling, freedom of expression and democratic relationships
- • **\_Steadiness –** \_Leads by emphasising cooperation within existing circumstances. Sympathetic, even-tempered, patient, calm, predictable, deliberate, consistent. Motivated by cooperation, opportunities to help and sincere appreciation. Prioritises giving support, collaboration and maintaining stability.
- • **\_Conscientious –** \_Leads by working conscientiously within existing circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy. Careful, cautious, systematic, diplomatic and attentive to detail. Motivated by opportunities to gain knowledge, show their expertise and produce quality work. Prioritizes ensuring accuracy, maintaining stability, and challenging assumptions.

Having completed an online test, I came out as strong on Influence with the secondary being Dominant.

19. We have concerns about Playcentre as a whole moving to a facilitator-led model instead of being parent-led (an example being the recent shift in the supervision plan requirements) and the lack of engagement with centres beforehand. How do you see this shift, and does the Trustee Board understand the implications of this?

I don't know how the TB understand this issue but I see it as an issue of sustainability for our organisation and threat to our special character and unique place in the ECE environment. The MoE have focused on fitting Playcentre into the wider, existing ECE model that simply does not work for Playcentre. The Trustee Board needs to work to find ways Playcentre can be formally recognised as a unique ECE option for families.

This shift is at the core of Playcentre philosophy and as such needs to be consulted upon with rōpū, whanau Māori, and centres.

20. How can Playcentre have a stronger voice in the early childhood education sector and as an advocate for play-based learning? We used to be recognised as a strong movement.

Having a strong voice on all relevant ECE and government bodies, and presence in the media when ECE, families, education, wellbeing of children is the topic.

21. Would you support the reintroduction of the Playcentre Journal, either in print or electronically? It has been such a treasured resource for many years and a fantastic way to communicate across the motu, share our stories and publish research.

This has been a very sad loss to our Playcentre community. Electronically would be a great way forward.

22. Do you see a place for clusters in the revised governance framework and constitutional review?

Yes definitely, but not as a one-size-fits-all model.

23. We are aware of a high level of staff turnover (particularly at the national level) amongst Playcentre Aotearoa employees. What would you do as a Trustee Board member to improve staff retention?

Thorough review of the Health and Safety audit and sincere implementation of recommendations from this review. A focus on ensuring we can fund a living-wage for all employees. Through constitutional review, inclusion of a staff representative on the Trustee Board (which is common place).

24. Do you have good relationships with those on the Board currently?

Prior to amalgamation, I have worked with Michelle Hutton successfully on the Auckland Playcentres Association Governance Board.