

Cromwell Kindergarten Education Review

- 1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation
- 2 Review Priorities
- 3 National Evaluation Topic
- 4 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements
- 5 Recommendation
- 6 Future Action
- About the Centre
- Community Page

Disclaimer

Individual ERO school and early childhood centre reports are public information and may be copied or sent electronically. However, the Education Review Office can guarantee only the authenticity of original documents which have been obtained in hard copy directly from either the local ERO office or ERO Corporate Office in Wellington. Please consult your telephone book, or see the ERO web page, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>, for ERO office addresses.

1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report: Cromwell Kindergarten

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

Cromwell Kindergarten is one of six kindergartens administered by the Central Otago Kindergarten Association. It is supported by a senior teacher and a manager. Since the last review the kindergarten has increased the number of teachers from two to four. Three of the teachers have joined the team in the last two years.

This review focused on the quality of education. ERO reviewed the programme, the learning environment and the interactions, and the extent to which these are contributing to children's learning. The review also included an evaluation of children's social and emotional competence and some aspects relating to children's health and safety.

The teachers have created an environment where positive supportive relationships with children and their families are the basis for all learning. Teachers affirm and respect the children. Some teachers use good questioning and sensitive interactions to promote children's learning. They structure the day with unhurried routines and meaningful group times. The children are focussed in their play and relate well to one another.

Children play and learn in a well-resourced and spacious environment. They enjoy a range of experiences which reflect their interests, such as assigning one day each week for bringing special toys from home and for bike riding. Older children help teachers plan the experiences for the week.

Since the last ERO review, the teachers have made improvements to their understanding of self review, their implementation of a programme which reflects the bicultural heritage of New Zealand, and their understanding of noticing and recognising children's learning. The teachers now need to develop a stronger focus on understanding the role of the teacher and the importance this has on improving learning programmes for children. Planning, assessment and evaluation practices need to show that teachers use the knowledge they have of children to plan both group and individual programmes that reflect the parents' aspirations for their children and the strengths, interests and learning needs of the children. Teachers should find ways to improve the quality of their self-review process and also develop a schedule for reviews that over time covers all aspects of the centre's operation.

The recommendations from this report build on the recommendations from the last two ERO reports. The teachers follow the Central Otago Kindergarten Association's health and safety

policies, procedures and practices. This is resulting in a generally safe environment.

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.

2 Review Priorities

The Focus of the Review

Before the review, the management of Cromwell 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 teachers. 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 Cromwell 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

The 2008 ERO report recommended teachers build on assessment, programme planning and evaluation practices. Teachers had yet to formulate agreed strategies to help, support and extend children's thinking and decision making. The report also recommended that teachers seek assistance to develop and implement curriculum review. Since that report, teachers have accessed some professional development. There have been some changes to teachers over this time and the new team has made good progress towards developing shared beliefs to underpin teachers' practice. They have also begun to implement some bicultural practices. Limited progress has been made in addressing the other recommendations in the report.

Areas of strength

Children confidently play and learn in a well resourced, spacious environment. They play well together and appear to be very caring and considerate of one another. ERO observed children engaged in meaningful conversations together and playing cooperatively for sustained periods. The teachers provide a range of experiences for learning within the kindergarten as well as in the wider community. They effectively model appropriate

behaviours and provide effective support for children developing their social skills. Older children enjoy taking some responsibility for planning what they want to do in the programme, and the younger children particularly benefit from the range of outdoor equipment that promotes their physical development.

Other features that contribute to positive outcomes for children include:

- the encouraging, affirming relationships children and their families have with teachers;
- the group times that are well paced and relevant to the children's interests and abilities;
- the well-established routines that contribute to children's sense of wellbeing and belonging; and
- teaching practices that support and respect children's choice.

Teachers have made some good progress toward the development of bicultural practices.

Areas for development and review

Assessment and evaluation of learning. Records of learning do not clearly show how teachers have helped children to learn. In order to improve outcomes for children teachers now need to:

- develop and show that they have priorities for children's learning, for individuals and groups of children. These decisions need to include information gathered from parents around their aspirations for their child's learning;
- show in their planning and learning records what strategies teachers use and what difference they have made to children's learning. Teachers also need a system to ensure all children are regularly assessed over time; and
- consider the role of the teacher in implementing a rich curriculum.

Build self review. Teachers need to improve their understanding of self review. They should implement effective processes and practices that support the ongoing development of the learning environment, programmes and teaching practice. To improve outcomes for children self-review practices need to include:

- establishing a schedule and cycle of review around practices, policies and procedures;
- improving the quality of information gathered/baseline data; and
- developing indicators of best practice so that outcomes for children can be evaluated against them.

Self review needs to include review of:

- the lay-out of the physical environment;
- settling procedures,
- meeting the needs of children who do not have English as a first language, and
- the integration of Māori perspectives into programmes.

[Recommendation 5.1]

3 National Evaluation Topic

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.

Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Competence

As children learn to make sense of their world they develop an understanding of themselves in social contexts, including the early childhood service. As part of this review ERO looked at how each service's curriculum supports children's developing social and emotional competence.

The findings are reported in the Quality of Education section of this report and used as part of a national evaluation report on this topic.

4 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the teachers of Cromwell Kindergarten completed an ERO Centre Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they have attested that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

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

During the review, ERO looked at the service's documentation, including policies, procedures and records of recent use of procedures. ERO also checked elements of the following areas that 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);
- teachers' qualifications and organisation; and
- evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake.

ERO found that there were some practices that needed improving.

In order to improve current practice the management should:

- improve the space and resources in the nappy changing area and make clear the procedures for nappy changing at the kindergarten; and
- develop procedures for pet care.

5 Recommendation

ERO, the teachers and centre management agreed that:

5.1 the teachers, with the help of the managers, improve the planning, assessment and evaluation practices, and improve the quality of self-review processes.

6 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.

Graham Randell
National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

4 February 2011

About the Centre

Location	Cromwell, Central Otago
Ministry of Education profile number	5487
Type	Kindergarten
Number licensed for	30 children aged 2- 5 years
Roll number	57
Gender composition	Girls 30 Boys 27
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 54 Māori 2 Asian 1
Review team on site	October 2010
Date of this report	4 February 2011
Previous three ERO reports	Education Reviews March 2008 August 2004 Accountability Review November 2000

Community Page

4 February 2011

To the Parents and Community of Cromwell Kindergarten

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

Cromwell Kindergarten is one of six kindergartens administered by the Central Otago Kindergarten Association. It is supported by a senior teacher and a manager. Since the last review the kindergarten has increased the number of teachers from two to four. Three of the teachers have joined the team in the last two years.

This review focused on the quality of education. ERO reviewed the programme, the learning environment and the interactions, and the extent to which these are contributing to children's learning. The review also included an evaluation of children's social and emotional competence and some aspects relating to children's health and safety.

The teachers have created an environment where positive supportive relationships with children and their families are the basis for all learning. Teachers affirm and respect the children. Some teachers use good questioning and sensitive interactions to promote children's learning. They structure the day with unhurried routines and meaningful group times. The children are focussed in their play and relate well to one another.

Children play and learn in a well-resourced and spacious environment. They enjoy a range of experiences which reflect their interests, such as assigning one day each week for bringing special toys from home and for bike riding. Older children help teachers plan the experiences for the week.

Since the last ERO review, the teachers have made improvements to their understanding of self review, their implementation of a programme which reflects the bicultural heritage of New Zealand, and their understanding of noticing and recognising children's learning. The teachers now need to develop a stronger focus on understanding the role of the teacher and the importance this has on improving learning programmes for children. Planning, assessment and evaluation practices need to show that teachers use the knowledge they have of children to plan both group and individual programmes that reflect the parents' aspirations for their children and the strengths, interests and learning needs of the children. Teachers should find ways to improve the quality of their self-review process and also develop a schedule for reviews that over time covers all aspects of the centre's operation.

The recommendations from this report build on the recommendations from the last two ERO reports. The teachers follow the Central Otago Kindergarten Association's health and safety policies, procedures and practices. This is resulting in a generally safe environment.

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>.

Graham Randell
National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

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 teachers 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.
- National Evaluation Topics – This strand contributes to the development of education policies and their effective implementation. The information from this strand is aggregated by ERO for its national evaluation reports. Topics for investigation are changed regularly to provide up-to-date information.
- 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.