

Hawea Kindergarten Education Review

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1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report:Hawea Kindergarten

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

Hawea Flat Kindergarten is one of six early childhood services operating within the Central Otago Kindergarten Association (COKA). The kindergarten opened in 2008 to provide education and care for preschool children. The kindergarten has recently completed renovations to expand the facility and make better use of the space outdoors.

During the first year of operating, the teaching team made good progress in establishing the service within the community and building relationships with families in the area. An ERO review in 2009 affirmed the progress made and recommended further development of teaching interactions and processes around self review. Since that review there has been a change regarding the type of service the community needs and uncertainty around the best ways to meet these needs.

At the time of this review, positive features of the kindergarten included:

- the attractive, spacious, well-resourced environment and the development of a new food garden;
- children's enjoyment when participating in drama, music and movement; and
- teachers who are reflective practitioners constantly working to improve practice and build children's learning.

While teachers have continued to provide a good quality service for children in many aspects of their practice, the uncertainty around the programme and the lack of a clear vision has disrupted progress. The teachers, with support from COKA, need to decide on their vision and purpose.

Further progress is dependent on teachers building a shared philosophy and agreeing on how they will demonstrate this in their practice. The team is relatively new and still developing. There are a number of aspects of the environment, learning programmes and teaching practice that need to be reviewed and improved. The implementation of effective self-review practices could also support the kindergarten's development.

Future Action

ERO intends to return to the centre within a year to evaluate the progress made in response

to the recommendations in this report.

2 Review Priorities

The Focus of the Review

Before the review, the management of Hawea 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 Hawea 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

A number of factors may have had an impact on the kindergarten since the November 2009 report. Over the past year:

- the needs of the community have changed;
- staffing has been unstable; and
- extensive renovations have taken place.

Areas of strength

Children enjoy the opportunity to learn, to be involved, and to share their ideas. ERO observed times where children were settled in their play, and engaged cooperatively in meaningful experiences for sustained periods. Children are keen to learn in the company of other children and teachers. Other positive features of the kindergarten include:

- the importance teachers place on establishing effective community relationships;

- the involvement of parents, with some frequently making useful contributions to their child's profile book and sharing their expertise;
- the opportunities for teachers to demonstrate particular strengths and abilities, such as music and movement, dramatic re-enactments of stories and incorporating literacy and mathematics into children's experiences; and
- teachers' willingness to continually reflect on their practice with the aim of improving the service and the learning outcomes for children.

Areas for development and review

As the kindergarten enters its third year of operation it is timely for teachers, with the support of the association, to review aspects of the environment, learning programmes and teaching practices. Further progress is dependent on teachers establishing a clear vision about the type and nature of the service they provide and to develop together an underpinning philosophy to guide practice.

As part of their review practice, teachers need to reflect on and develop shared understandings and practices to support consistency in:

- their roles and responsibilities;
- expectations for behaviour;
- routines and how these support children's learning;
- how they record and evaluate children's learning and progress;
- how learning programmes enhance children's individual strengths, abilities, interests and learning requirements; and
- giving effect to the principles of Te Whariki.

[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 staff of Hawea 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);
- staff qualifications and organisation; and
- evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake.

In order to improve current practice the management should:

- ensure nappy changing procedures include hand washing.

5 Recommendation

ERO and the Centre Management agreed that teachers, with the support of the association, should:

5.1 develop a vision for the service, review the centre philosophy and implement a process of review that covers all aspects of the service that impact on the quality of children's learning and development.

6 Future Action

ERO intends to return to the centre within a year to evaluate the progress made in response to the recommendations in this report.

Graham Randell
National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

4 February 2011

About the Centre

Location	Hawea Flat, Central Otago
Ministry of Education profile number	80060
Type	Kindergarten
Number licensed for	35 children, including up to 12 aged under 2
Roll number	63
Gender composition	Girls 32 Boys 31
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 53 Māori 5 Other 5
Review team on site	October 2010
Date of this report	4 February 2011
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review Report November 2009

Community Page

4 February 2011

To the Parents and Community of Hawea Kindergarten

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

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Further progress is dependent on teachers building a shared philosophy and agreeing on how they will demonstrate this in their practice. The team is relatively new and still developing. There are a number of aspects of the environment, learning programmes and teaching practice that need to be reviewed and improved. The implementation of effective self-review practices could also support the kindergarten's development.

Future Action

ERO intends to return to the centre within a year to evaluate the progress made in response to the recommendations in this report.

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 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.

- 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.