

The Terrace Kindergarten Education Review

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1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report: The Terrace Kindergarten

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

The Terrace Kindergarten is administered by the Central Otago Kindergarten Association. It is one of six kindergarten services providing early childhood education across Central Otago. Over recent years many of the services have adjusted their hours to better suit the needs of the community. The Terrace follows the school-day model and is open from 8.30 till 3.00, Monday to Thursday and half a day on Fridays. They also have a playgroup on Wednesday afternoons and parents have the option of sending children for a half day.

This review focuses on the quality of education. ERO reviews how the environment, programme and interactions, contribute to children's learning.

ERO found this to be a high performing kindergarten. The teaching team has been together for less than a year. Already they have put into practice their shared understandings and beliefs about teaching and learning and what this will look like at the kindergarten.

Children's learning and their wellbeing are the key priorities for the teaching team. A culture of respect is evident and underpins all aspects of the service. The kindergarten philosophy is a living document, demonstrated by teachers and children. Children were consistently respectful and collaborative and showed an interest in one another's work and wellbeing. There is a strong sense of a community where families and children are accepted and valued. Other strengths of the service include;

- the rich integrated programme of learning that supports children's holistic development;
- the high quality interactions all teachers have with the children;
- the relaxed, nurturing environment that makes the kindergarten a positive context for learning; and
- the teachers' high level of skill and thoughtful practice that are consistently demonstrated as they work alongside children and their families.

Refinements in the kindergarten's self-review processes and practices may further support the ongoing development of the programme and teaching practice.

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 The Terrace 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 The Terrace 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

Areas of strength

The teachers at the kindergarten are focussed on the needs of the children. They identify each child's strengths and interests and provide stimulating activities and experiences to build on their unique talents and abilities. Children are consistently empowered to take responsibility and ownership of their learning. Teachers ensure transitions are seamless and routines are there to enable and support children.

Other positive features of the service include:

- the respectful, reciprocal, responsive relationships between adults and children;
- the rich conversational learning interactions between children and teachers;
- the way teachers apply the kindergarten philosophy throughout their practice, building the children's sense of wonder and love of learning;
- the teachers' commitment to giving effect to the principles and strands of Te Whariki through an integrated and effective programme with a sense of fun and enjoyment; and

- the way teachers reflect on what they do, why and how they do it, and all consistently model what they agree to as best practice.

ERO observed high levels of cooperative, collaborative play between children. They confidently determined the direction of their learning, making decisions and solving problems with a can-do approach. Children are seen and responded to as confident and competent learners. Teachers record the learning and progress of children. They enthusiastically celebrate the Māori culture and use effective strategies that ensure all children enjoy learning about New Zealand's bicultural heritage.

Areas for development and review

Teachers know and acknowledge their strengths and areas to develop. Their ability to openly communicate these and share their views is helping to build a unified team with shared understandings of, and implementation of good quality practice. Much of what has been agreed upon is relatively new. Although well established, the challenge is to maintain this solid foundation. Teachers need to continue to build and refine their processes and practices as children's needs change and the kindergarten evolves. Further development of self review will support this ongoing development.

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 The Terrace Kindergarten completed an ERO Centre Assurance Statement 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:

- 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.

During the course of the review ERO did not identify any areas of non-compliance.

5 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

30 November 2010

About the Centre

Location	Alexandra, Central Otago
Ministry of Education profile number	5488
Type	Kindergarten
Number licensed for	40 children, over 2
Roll number	52
Gender composition	Boys 29 Girls 23
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 42 Māori 10
Review team on site	October 2010
Date of this report	30 November 2010
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review March 2008 Review Report August 2004 Accountability Review November 2000

Community Page

30 November 2010

To the Parents and Community of The Terrace Kindergarten

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

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Refinements in the kindergarten's self-review processes and practices may further support

the ongoing development of the programme and teaching practice.

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 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.