



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

The Tree House
Papatoetoe, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

The Tree House

Papatoetoe, Auckland

3 March 2020

1 Evaluation of The Tree House

How well placed is The Tree House 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

The Tree House is located on the grounds of Middlemore Hospital, and provides for up to 90 children, including up to 30 under two years of age. It serves a diverse community and the roll includes a small percentage of Māori and Pacific children.

The centre's philosophy is based on the values of Ngākau pai - positive, Whanaungatanga - relationships, Aroha - love and Tupu - grow. It features the importance of collaborative relationships with whānau and is influenced by *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

Children are grouped according to their age in rooms with designated outdoor play areas. Each room is led by a coordinator who is responsible for curriculum, assessment and planning. There are eight qualified teachers with seven support staff.

The service is governed by an incorporated society. The governance committee consists of a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, four parent members and the centre director. The director provides leadership for the teaching team. She works closely with the chairperson to carry out service operation and administration responsibilities.

The service has experienced significant changes, including the employment of new teachers and extensive renovations to redesign the learning environment.

ERO's 2016 report identified areas for improvement including the use of te reo Māori, centre organisation, strategic planning and philosophy review. Progress has been made in these areas.

The Review Findings

Children are happy and settled. They experience positive interactions with adults and friends, that enhance their wellbeing. Children select resources and direct their own learning through imaginative play. They have opportunities to participate in group and independent play.

Infants and toddlers receive good care. The redesigned learning environment allows them to move freely indoors and outside. It would be useful for teachers to explore ways to extend learning opportunities for these children. For example, they could increase children's access to sensory and exploratory play resources.

Teachers work inclusively with all children and respond to children's individual needs. They use their knowledge of children's interests and dispositions to facilitate children's play and explorations.

Teachers use te reo Māori and other languages during daily routines. This practice promotes bicultural practices and celebrates diversity.

The new teaching team has focused on developing a shared understanding of *Te Whāriki* to strengthen assessment, planning and evaluation practices. Individual children's interests are used in a theme-based project approach to learning. However, there is variability in teachers' expertise and practice in assessment, evaluation and extending learning through these projects.

In consultation with teachers and whānau, leaders have established a clear vision and core values. Leaders and teachers are committed to enacting these centre values.

A useful strategic plan articulates the future direction of the centre, and strong internal evaluation processes follow an established format. A sound policy framework guides practice. Leaders should ensure that policies and procedures meet licensing criteria requirements and are regularly reviewed and implemented by all staff.

Leaders are committed to establishing an organisational culture that supports improvement through accessing relevant professional learning and development. This includes external mentoring for the director. Leaders aim to grow individual leadership capability to support and build professional practice across the teaching team.

Key Next Steps

Leaders agree that next steps are to continue:

- promoting individual children's language and cultural identity through making this more visible in documentation
- developing teaching practices that enhance children's sense of themselves as successful learners
- using *Te Whāriki* to develop shared understandings and consistent assessment, planning and evaluation practices.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of The Tree House 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.

Actions for compliance

Since ERO's onsite visit, the service provider has provided evidence to show that the following non-compliances have been addressed:

- systems to ensure that policies meet legal requirements and that there is alignment between policies and practice, particularly in relation to health and safety
- a child protection policy and safety checking of children's workers that reflect the legislative requirements of the Children's Act 2014.

Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008, HS2,8,9,17,27,28,31, GMA7,7A.



Steve Tanner
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Northern Region - Te Tai Raki

3 March 2020

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	Papatoetoe, Auckland		
Ministry of Education profile number	25035		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	90 children, including up to 30 aged under 2 years		
Service roll	101		
Gender composition	Boys 60% Girls 40%		
Ethnic composition	Māori	2%	
	NZ European/Pākehā	47%	
	Indian	17%	
	Samoan	13%	
	Filipino	8%	
	other Pacific	6%	
	other ethnic groups	7%	
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:4	Better than minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:4	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	December 2019		
Date of this report	3 March 2020		
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	January 2016	
These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Education Review	July 2012	
	Education Review	February 2009	

3 General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

ERO's Evaluation Framework

ERO's overarching question for an early childhood education review is 'How well placed is this service to promote positive learning outcomes for children?' ERO focuses on the following factors as described in the bicultural framework [Ngā Pou Here](#):

Pou Whakahaere – how the service determines its vision, philosophy and direction to ensure positive outcomes for children

Pou Ārahi – how leadership is enacted to enhance positive outcomes for children

Mātauranga – whose knowledge is valued and how the curriculum is designed to achieve positive outcomes for children

Tikanga whakaako – how approaches to teaching and learning respond to diversity and support positive outcomes for children.

Within these areas ERO considers the effectiveness of *arotake* – self review and of *whanaungatanga* – partnerships with parents and whānau.

ERO evaluates how well placed a service is to sustain good practice and make ongoing improvements for the benefit of all children at the service.

A focus for the government is that all children, especially priority learners, have an opportunity to benefit from quality early childhood education. ERO will report on how well each service promotes positive outcomes for all children, with a focus on children who are Māori, Pacific, have diverse needs, and are up to the age of two.

For more information about the framework and Ngā Pou Here refer to [ERO's Approach to Review in Early Childhood Services](#).

ERO's Overall Judgement

The overall judgement that ERO makes will depend on how well the service promotes positive learning outcomes for children. The categories are:

- Very well placed
- Well placed
- Requires further development
- Not well placed

ERO has developed criteria for each category. These are available on [ERO's website](#).

Review Coverage

ERO reviews are tailored to each service's context and performance, within the overarching review framework. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to positive outcomes for children and useful to the service.