



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Childspace Ltd - Northland
Wellington**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Childspace Ltd - Northland

Wellington

30 April 2018

1 Evaluation of Childspace Ltd - Northland

How well placed is Childspace Ltd - Northland 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

Childspace Ltd – Northland, is licensed for 30 children, including 12 aged up to two years. The service is one of four in the area that are governed by a board of directors of the Childspace Early Childhood Institute (the Institute) with considerable knowledge and expertise in early childhood education and environment design.

A centre manager oversees the curriculum, staff and day-to-day operation. The Institute employs a principal to offer further professional and operational support. They also provide professional development and resources to others in the early childhood sector. A kai creator is employed to provide nutritious meals for the children. Childspace is committed to gender balance in its staffing, and employs a number of male kaiako.

Relationships are core to the service philosophy. Staff (kaiako) focus on resourcing the environment, with particular attention paid to natural materials, rituals and rhythms, and real-life experiences. Teaching practices are underpinned by Resources of Infant Educators (RIE) philosophy, emphasising respectful practice and close attachments with key teachers.

Five kaiako have started at the centre since the beginning of 2017. Re-establishing the team has been a strong focus for the year. Three of these kaiako are previous employees of the Institute, including the centre manager, who has been in the role for ten months. The centre manager previously held the position of principal of the Institute.

The next step identified in the service's February 2014 ERO report related to developing transition to school processes has been progressed. However, cultural responsiveness to Māori and internal evaluation remain areas requiring development.

This review was one of a cluster of four reviews of the Childspace Early Learning Centres.

The Review Findings

Children benefit from warm and respectful interactions. Children freely access a good range of learning materials linked to their own interests, throughout the day, and confidently participate in rituals.

Kaiako work alongside children at their level, and support their oral language through attentive conversations.

Dedicated indoor and outdoor spaces support movement and self-determined active exploration. The outdoor environment provides high levels of interest, challenge and creative play opportunities. Kaiako are skilful in their use of the environment as a learning tool.

The daily programme reflects ngā kaiako commitment to their philosophical values. It is strongly child-led and unfolds over the day. Kaiako use a range of highly effective strategies to promote children's social competence.

A strength of the programme is the emphasis on sustainability and the natural world. Group projects and investigations are supportive of children's interests as well as offering valuable new experiences. The curriculum is enriched by a weekly forest exploration programme, where groups participate in excursions into the local bush and community.

Kaiako liaise with parents and outside agencies, as appropriate, to support the learning and wellbeing of children with diverse learning needs. Transitions into, through and out of the centre are very well considered. Management provides an additional kaiako across the Childspace services to assist during transition periods. The service has built positive, reciprocal relationships with local schools.

Provision for infants and toddlers is responsive and appropriate. These children are respected as competent individuals and benefit from closely attuned relationships with kaiako. Their personal rhythms and cues are sensitively responded to. Care routines and rituals are maximised as valuable relationship-building opportunities. Interactions are warm, calm and peaceful. Families are welcomed and consulted to develop individualised care programmes.

Positive relationships with parents are prioritised. Kaiako provide a range of opportunities for families to engage in their child's learning programme, including regular workshops and parent-teacher discussion evenings where families' aspirations are shared. An online assessment tool is used to invite parent comments and strengthen connections between home and centre.

As a next step, kaiako should clearly demonstrate in documentation how close relationships with families enrich their planning and assessment. This would mean stronger acknowledgement of parent aspirations as well as children's culture, language and identity.

Kaiako are sensitive observers. They document useful information about children's individual interests, skills and development, as well as their engagement in the rich group curriculum. Portfolios show that kaiako know children well. They thoughtfully relate observations to a range of theoretical lenses. Documentation shows clear links to *Te Whāriki 2017*, the early childhood education curriculum.

However, the impact of targeted teaching on individual children's learning outcomes is not clear in documentation. Assessment and planning requires strengthening, to better show and build children's identities as successful, continual learners.

Kaiako are building their knowledge of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. The centre's sustainability focus, excursions into the surrounding community, and explorations into native bush, are usefully linked to bicultural perspectives. Kaiako demonstrate authenticity in their commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The programme affirms all children's identities as bicultural citizens of Aotearoa.

Leaders agree their next step is to build on this knowledge to explore and implement specific strategies for promoting the educational success of Māori learners. This is indicated in future plans.

Teaching teams collaborate on useful investigations to inform change and improve the programme. A next step is to build review practices which are strongly evaluative. Leaders should support kaiako to use systematic, robust evidence-gathering to inform refinement of practices. Internal evaluations should clearly measure and monitor the impact of practices against intended outcomes for children.

Systematic processes for bi-annual appraisal are in place. Kaiako are highly reflective. Observations of teaching practice are part of this process. To support an improved approach these observations and other evidence should consistently inform more robust feedback and feed forward, strongly focused on children's learning outcomes and alignment with centre goals.

Strategic planning identifies useful goals that are likely to positively affect children's outcomes. To strengthen long-term planning, clear indicators of success should be developed, linked to each goal, to enable ongoing measurement of progress and inform actions. Since the onsite stage of ERO's evaluation, clear indicators of success have been developed that should support an improved process.

Childspace kaiako are well supported by management. A range of useful documents and resources are in place to support shared understandings. The Institute offers many opportunities for kaiako to network and take on leadership roles, in the centre as well as in the wider sector. Leaders purposefully and consistently promote team cohesion and a positive culture.

Key Next Steps

The intended goals, strategies and outcomes identified in the revised and updated 2018-2023 Childspace Strategic Plan outline the service's intended next steps in relation to the need to strengthen:

- the focus on measurement and monitoring of the impact of practices on children's outcomes through internal evaluation processes
- individualised assessment and planning processes, particularly in relation to building children's identities as ongoing learners, and responding to children's cultural contexts
- all teachers' understanding and implementation of targeted strategies for the promotion of educational success for Māori learners.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Childspace Ltd - Northland 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.

To improve practice, management should strengthen its monitoring of quality assurance processes to ensure the service consistently meets the requirements of *Licensing Criteria for Education and Care Services 2008* and the *Health and Safety at Work Act 2015*.

Next ERO Review

When is ERO likely to review the service again?

The next ERO review of Childspace Ltd - Northland will be in three years.



Alan Wynyard
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central (Acting)
Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

30 April 2018

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	Wellington		
Ministry of Education profile number	55384		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	30 children, including up to 12 aged under 2		
Service roll	43		
Gender composition	Boys 23, Girls 20		
Ethnic composition	Māori	3	
	Pākehā	32	
	Other ethnic groups	7	
Percentage of qualified teachers 0-49% 50-79% 80%+ <i>Based on funding rates</i>	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:4	Better than minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:7	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	November 2017		
Date of this report	30 April 2018		
Most recent ERO report(s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Education Review	February 2014	
	Education Review	August 2010	
	Education Review	June 2007	

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 and Next Review

The overall judgement that ERO makes and the timing of the next review will depend on how well placed a service is to promote positive learning outcomes for children. The categories are:

- Very well placed – The next ERO review in four years
- Well placed – The next ERO review in three years
- Requires further development – The next ERO review within two years
- Not well placed - The next ERO review in consultation with the Ministry of Education

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.