



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Wee Nippers Early Childhood Centre
Invercargill**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Wee Nippers Early Childhood Centre

Invercargill

19 June 2019

1 Evaluation of Wee Nippers Early Childhood Centre

How well placed is Wee Nippers Early Childhood Centre 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

Wee Nippers Early Childhood Centre is a privately owned full-day education and care service for children aged three months to six years. It is one of the owner's two purpose-built centres.

The current centre manager was appointed after the 2016 ERO review and has overall responsibility for day-to-day matters and the learning programme. There is a team leader in each of the four rooms: Koru, Toetoe, Kowhai and Rata. Children transition through the rooms as they grow and develop.

Some progress has been made in addressing the recommendations of the 2016 review. Developments include processes for induction of staff, support for beginning teachers and children's transitions in and through the centre. However, many of the recommendations continue to be works in progress.

The Review Findings

Children and families show a sense of belonging to the centre. Teachers have friendly, welcoming, supportive relationships with children and their families.

Children respond well to the programme. The spacious well-designed outdoor area provides a range of opportunities for exploration and developing children's physical abilities. Excursions and at times long-term projects further enrich the learning. Children explore available activities and resources and engage for sustained periods of time when they are able to follow their interests and are supported by teachers. Teachers now need to further develop the curriculum so it provides a richer and more responsive programme that gives children opportunities to choose the direction of their learning.

Infants and young children are well cared for. They play and learn in calm environments suitably arranged to support their learning and development. Teachers provide good support for continuity of care between the centre and home. They are responsive to these young children's interests and preferences.

Since the 2016 ERO review, the service has introduced an online system for documenting children's learning and communicating with parents. The next step is to review the usefulness of the new system, to see how well it supports learning and teaching, and how useful it is for parents.

While some teachers' planning assessment and evaluation practices are well implemented, overall the quality of this across the service is variable. The next step is for the leadership team to develop guidelines that clearly set their expectations for the process and quality of assessment, programme planning and evaluation.

The service has a useful strategic plan, clear vision, centre values and a philosophy that states the centre's aspirations for children. The recent review of the philosophy has helped the service identify its key learning priorities. Leaders are in the process of aligning these with *Te Whāriki*- the Early Childhood Curriculum and programme planning. Currently, each room has an additional vision and philosophy. Leaders need to be clear about the purpose of these and how they are to be used.

The centre owner values and is committed to supporting professionalism and quality teaching. With the support of the owner, the manager has identified areas for further development and improvement across the service and taken appropriate action to implement change. This includes establishing:

- a leadership team supported by appropriate professional development opportunities
- updated job descriptions that align with teachers' appraisal goals
- responsibility for internal evaluation.

Key Next Steps

The leaders and teachers need to continue to develop and improve curriculum implementation. Each room needs to provide a rich curriculum that supports identified learning priorities for individuals and groups of children and responds to their language culture and identity. They need a planned approach to support treaty-based practices across the service including a system to monitor and evaluate progress so that gains are not lost.

Assessment planning and evaluation need to be strengthened. This includes:

- developing consistency of practice to meet the owner's high expectations
- consistently gathering and responding to parents' aspirations
- ensuring that records show children's learning and progress over time and how teachers respond to children's language, culture and identity.

The owner and manager need to embed the new leadership structure with guidelines for responsibilities and reporting expectations. They need to further develop and embed the new appraisal process and clarify the process for the manager's appraisal.

The understanding and use of internal evaluation needs further development across the service. This includes developing quality indicators to measure performance against. The schedule needs to show that all aspects of the service that impact most on children are evaluated for effectiveness over time.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Wee Nippers Early Childhood Centre 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.



Alan Wynyard
Director Review and Improvement Services Southern
Southern Region

19 June 2019

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	Invercargill		
Ministry of Education profile number	46046		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	75 children, including up to 30 aged under 2		
Service roll	92		
Gender composition	Boys 52, Girls 40		
Ethnic composition	Māori	20	
	NZ European/Pākehā	55	
	Indian	4	
	Other ethnicities	13	
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:4	Better than minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:8	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	April 2019		
Date of this report	19 June 2019		
Most recent ERO report(s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Education Review	February 2016	

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.