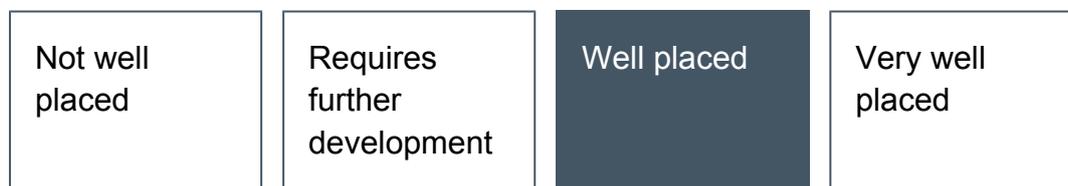


Little Sweethearts Montessori - Historic Village Education Review

- 2 Information about the Early Childhood Service
- 3 General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

Evaluation of Little Sweethearts Montessori - Historic Village

How well placed is Little Sweethearts Montessori - Historic Village to promote positive learning outcomes for children?



ERO's findings that support this overall judgement are summarised below.

Background

Little Sweethearts Montessori is located within the Tauranga Historic Village. In June 2013 the name of the centre was changed from Wickham Childcare to its current name. At this time the owner/licensee initiated a change in philosophical direction to incorporate the principles of Maria Montessori. This philosophy nurtures a love of learning and an environment that provides and supports children as they explore the world around them. This is the first ERO review of Little Sweethearts Montessori - Historic Village.

Since the implementation of the Montessori principles and practices there have been significant changes to management, staffing and the environment. The centre has incorporated a Little Sacred Heart's Atrium that represents a 'hands on' approach to the Catholic faith. The centre has also strengthened their relationship with St Mary's Catholic Primary School.

Little Sweethearts Montessori - Historic Village is licensed for 62 children and has a roll of 45, including 5 under two years of age. The centre provides all-day and half-day sessions. It has established a Beginners Nest for children under two and a preschool for children up to school age. The Montessori philosophy and the principles of Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum, are woven together and promote the integrated learning for each child.

The Review Findings

The centre owner/licensee provides effective governance and regular support for centre operations and staff. He has employed a Montessori trainer to facilitate ongoing professional development for all teachers. Robust self-review practices are closely aligned to the centre's strategic direction and are focused on improvement.

The recently appointed acting centre manager is a qualified Montessori teacher. She provides professional leadership for staff and is focused on enriching the Montessori experience for children. The enthusiastic team leader of the 'Beginners Nest' has a high level of commitment to improving positive outcomes for babies and toddlers.

The centre's curriculum empowers and nurtures children. An important feature of their curriculum and Montessori philosophy is providing an environment where children experience activities of family life. The programme is focused on growing children's independence and confidence through self-esteem, competence and respect. Teachers document children's learning and use this information to plan appropriate, individualised learning programmes. A spacious and well-organised environment provides a range of opportunities for children to learn through play. Resources are used as tools to unlock children's personal learning.

Teachers observe and reflect on children's interests and activities and are responsive to children's learning. Literacy and mathematics are integrated in all areas of play. Children are encouraged to be respectful and care for the environment. They are free to make choices about play activities and the pace at which they participate and are involved. Teachers encourage children's curiosity and thinking by using open-ended questions and promoting conversations while children play. Children are confident, capable and supportive of each other.

Parents feel well-informed and express high levels of confidence in teachers to provide an environment where each child is respected and valued as an individual. Leaders and teachers actively encourage parents and families to participate and contribute their ideas. Centre management and staff have effective systems in place to promote an emotionally and physically safe environment for children and adults.

Key Next Steps

ERO and management agree that the next areas for review and development are to:

- implement the new appraisal process for all staff
- review the purpose and consistency of portfolios
- strengthen te reo and tikanga Māori practices in the programme.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Little Sweethearts Montessori – Historic Village 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.

Next ERO Review

When is ERO likely to review the service again?

The next ERO review of Little Sweethearts Montessori – Historic Village will be in three years.

Dale Bailey
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

18 November 2014

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	Tauranga		
Ministry of Education profile number	30096		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	62 children, including up to 16 aged under 2		
Service roll	45 children, including 5 aged under 2		
Gender composition	Girls 25 Boys 20		
Ethnic composition	Māori	2	
	NZ European/Pākehā	33	
	Other	8	
	Pacific	2	
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +		
	0-49%	50-79%	80%+
Based on funding rates			
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:5	Meets minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:6	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	September 2014		
Date of this report	18 November 2014		

Most recent ERO report(s)

No previous ERO reports
under this name

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.