

**Real Kids Early Learning Centre  
Hobsonville, Auckland**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Real Kids Early Learning Centre

## Hobsonville, Auckland

### 9 November 2017

## 1 Evaluation of Real Kids Early Learning Centre

How well placed is Real Kids Early Learning Centre to promote positive learning outcomes for children?

Not well placed	Requires further development	Well placed	<b>Very well placed</b>
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ERO's findings that support this overall judgement are summarised below.

### Background

Real Kids Early Learning Centre opened in May 2015 in Hobsonville, Auckland. It is a family owned business and operates in a well renovated building that was once a conference facility. Licensed for 97 children, including 30 up to two years of age, the centre is arranged into three spaces that cater for children of different ages and stages.

Real Babies caters for infants and toddlers until they are around two years of age, Real Tots provides for children aged two to around three years, and Real Kids caters for the older children until they go to school. Each space has its own indoor and outdoor environment. The entrance area is welcoming and provides a calm, hospitable space for families to sit and relax, and connect with other parents or centre managers.

The centre's philosophy promotes early childhood theory and practice based on the Reggio Emilia approach. It affirms children as capable, competent learners and promotes strong partnerships with parents.

The owners/directors provide overarching governance support and assist in the daily running of the service. A centre director is responsible for the overall management of the centre and leads the teaching team. She is well supported by two supervisors, three team leaders and well qualified teachers. The centre has teachers who speak a number of different languages, especially Mandarin and Korean, to support families who are new to Aotearoa New Zealand.

The centre currently has a waiting list, especially for families with younger children. To address this need, the owners are extending the facility to provide an additional space for children up to two years of age. This separate licence is due to open in early 2018.

### The Review Findings

Children are highly respected as competent individuals and as thinkers, explorers and learners. Children and families are warmly welcomed at the start of the day. Children become quickly involved in play areas of their choice, and younger children settle easily with their primary caregivers. Centre events outside of working hours provide good opportunities for families to connect with staff

and other families. These occasions alongside other inclusive practices contribute to children feeling happy and secure, and having a strong sense of belonging in the centre environment.

Babies and toddlers experience calm, nurturing and respectful practices. Teachers are responsive to their care needs, following home routines and parents' preferences. Highly skilled teachers support these younger children to take well managed risks that invite exploration and evoke curiosity and wondering. The primary caregiver approach enhances children's wellbeing and confidence, and ensures that children have good connections with the whole teaching team.

Older children are highly engaged in their play and learning. Teachers follow children's lead and are deliberate and thoughtful in how they support, prompt and enhance children's learning. Teachers provide high levels of challenge and promote children's critical thinking skills. They involve children in making decisions about their learning, and in planning programmes and projects that encourage collaboration. Teachers also provide real world learning contexts, and support children to connect meaningfully with people and organisations in the local community.

Collaboration is central to the success of teaching and learning programmes. The teaching philosophy is enacted throughout the centre. Teachers demonstrate an understanding of the interplay between the environment and practice. The centre environments are very well designed from a Reggio Emilia perspective and act as the third teacher for children. Teachers value the bicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand and the many cultures of centre families and staff.

The centre is very well governed and led. An external consultant was employed to support the establishment of the centre especially in areas of governance and leadership. This consultant continues to provide guidance and support when needed.

The directors are dedicated to their vision of a high quality service where people are valued and trusted. They resource the centre generously, and continue to enhance the well-considered design of the facility. The directors have a clear understanding of their governance roles, and provide very good support for the centre director and staff. The policy framework is sound and supports children's and adults' entitlements. Internal evaluation is very well understood, and is used as a tool for improvement at all levels.

Centre leadership is also collaborative. Supervisors and teachers are respected as professionals and leaders, and valued for their strengths, interests and skills. High levels of relational trust support staff to take risks and challenge each other's practice. These honest and open team approaches result in high levels of staff morale.

Professional learning is generously resourced and well selected to continually strengthen teachers' and leaders' professional expertise. Parents also benefit from learning opportunities provided by the service to enhance their role as their children's first teachers. Very good systems, including the teachers' appraisal, ensure that the service is managed effectively for improvement and accountability.

## **Key Next Steps**

Centre directors and leaders have established well considered plans to continue evaluating and improving all aspects of the service for children and families.

## Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Real Kids Early Learning 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.

## Next ERO Review

### When is ERO likely to review the service again?

The next ERO review of Real Kids Early Learning Centre will be in four years.



Graham Randell  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern  
Te Tai Raki - Northern Region

9 November 2017

## 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	Hobsonville, Auckland		
Ministry of Education profile number	46702		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	97 children, including up to 30 aged under 2		
Service roll	115		
Gender composition	Boys	52%	
	Girls	48%	
Ethnic composition	Māori		3%
	Pākehā		65%
	Chinese		16%
	Korean		5%
	Indian		3%
	Cook Islands Māori		2%
	Samoan		2%
	other		4%
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	September 2017		
Date of this report	9 November 2017		
Most recent ERO report(s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	No previous ERO reports		

### 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.