



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Just Kids Merrington
Christchurch**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Just Kids Merrington

Christchurch

7 May 2019

1 Evaluation of Just Kids Merrington

How well placed is Just Kids Merrington to promote positive learning outcomes for children?

Not well placed	Requires further development	Well placed	Very well placed
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Just Kids Merrington is well placed to promote positive learning outcomes for children.

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

Background

Just Kids Merrington is one of three early childhood education and care services managed by the Families for Life Trust. The Trust purchased this early childhood site in 2017 and it was licensed by the Ministry of Education that year.

The centre is licensed to provide full day education and care in a mixed age group for up to 28 children, including up to six under the age of two. Many children come from diverse cultural backgrounds and this diversity is reflected in the staffing. The centre states that it is committed to providing low cost, quality accessible care for children and their families within the local community, including a free transport service.

A centre manager and senior head teacher provide educational leadership of the three centres. There is a head teacher who leads the teaching team. Most of the teachers are qualified and registered early childhood teachers.

Centre programmes and practices are guided by a shared vision and philosophy which emphasise respectful relationships, open communication, and learning as a lifelong journey. The preschool's core values support children's learning through the belief that 'our broad, rich curriculum ensures that play is a fundamental feature, and reflects the holistic way in which children learn and grow'.

The centre participates in the Ōtākaro Kāhui Ako Community of Learning. It is also part of the leadership team for the Aranui Community of Practice, a network of early childhood and school leaders in the Aranui/Wainoni area.

This review was part of a cluster of three reviews in the Families for Life Trust which is part of a community complex that supports families.

This is the first ERO review of Just Kids Merrington.

The Review Findings

Children are engaged in the learning programme and are well supported by their teachers who are responsive and supportive. They listen to children's ideas and provide resources and equipment which encourage children to investigate, explore and extend their interests.

The organisation of the indoor and outdoor areas allow children to play and learn for sustained periods of time in meaningful ways. The environments are calm and thoughtfully presented. Children engage positively with other children and tuakana-teina is evident in the play and learning between older and younger children.

Children have opportunities to explore the local community, such as the local library and gymnasium. Literacy is well supported, and teachers use community opportunities to extend children's awareness of the wider world. Leaders and teachers make effective use of community groups to extend children's learning and care of the environment.

Children enjoy warm, nurturing relationships with teachers. They make independent choices and can access a range of resources. Teachers are responsive to younger children's non-verbal cues, needs and interests. The teachers communicate with parents regularly to provide continuity between the centre and homes. This provides good support for children's sense of wellbeing and belonging.

Children with additional learning needs are well supported by their teachers. Leaders and teachers consult with outside agencies and the centre's education support workers, to ensure that these children can participate fully in the learning programme.

Programme planning includes aspects of Māori culture and contributes to building children's awareness of Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural heritage. Teachers have a strong commitment to building their knowledge and understanding of tikanga and te reo Māori.

Internal and external professional development have been used by leaders and teachers to improve assessment, planning and evaluation. Te Whariki (2017), the NZ Early Childhood Curriculum, is well documented in assessment, planning and learning outcomes.

Transitions into and out of the centre are flexible and individualised and consider the preferences of the child and their family. Teachers engage with parents and whānau to seek their aspirations for their child.

Leaders and teachers have used internal and external expertise to improve internal evaluation processes, and are building a culture of reflection for continuous improvement. Strategic planning and goals are linked to teacher practice, appraisal and professional development. Strong leadership and a collaborative approach are supporting staff to continue to develop their professional capability and leadership capacity.

Key Next Steps

The centre is in its second year of operation. Centre leaders and ERO's evaluation confirms that the next steps are to:

- further strengthen appraisal processes to ensure that appraisal meets the expectations of the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand
- continue to build teachers' knowledge, pedagogy and inquiry around intentional teaching, practices and programmes for positive outcomes for all children.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Just Kids Merrington 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 Region

7 May 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	Christchurch		
Ministry of Education profile number	47372		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	28 children, including up to 6 aged under 2		
Service roll	21		
Gender composition	Boys 10, Girls 11		
Ethnic composition	Māori	11	
	NZ European/Pākehā	9	
	Other ethnicities	1	
Percentage of qualified teachers	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	February 2019		
Date of this report	7 May 2019		
Most recent ERO report(s)			
These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	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

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.