



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Little Settlers
Bombay, South Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Little Settlers

Bombay, South Auckland

5 December 2017

1 Evaluation of Little Settlers

How well placed is Little Settlers 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

Little Settlers is a privately owned centre that opened in 2015. The service provides early childhood education and care for children from approximately six months to four years of age. This purpose-built centre operates two age-specific rooms, and most children transition to the nearby preschool centre run by the same owner. The centre is licensed for 60 children, with a maximum of 25 aged under two years. The current roll is 85, including eight children identified as Māori.

The owner is also the centre director. She retains overall governance and management responsibilities including strategic planning, employment, finance and compliance with legislative requirements. The director is a qualified teacher and shares responsibility for professional leadership with the centre manager. Recently, head teachers have been appointed for the Explorers (up-to-two years) and Trailblazers (two to about four years) rooms, to take responsibility for assessment, planning and evaluation in their areas. As the teaching team has increased to cater for roll growth, the centre director has maintained generous staffing ratios and a high proportion of qualified staff.

The philosophy of the centre is to create an empowering and stimulating child-driven environment. Children are encouraged to become independent lifelong learners within a safe and inclusive environment.

This is the first ERO report for this centre.

The Review Findings

Children experience responsive and nurturing relationships with adults, and develop a strong sense of belonging. They are supported to gain confidence as learners through opportunities for exploration and by making choices about their play. Teachers make skilful use of questioning and conversations to affirm and extend children's learning. High levels of oral language are modelled by teachers and demonstrated by children. Literacy resources have recently been improved as a result of effective self review. Centre routines are well-established and efficient. Teachers foster appropriate levels of self management and help to build children's social competencies.

Children and their families are well supported during important times of transition into, within and from the centre. These transitions are flexible and show careful consideration of the needs of the

children involved. Children with English as their second language are included in all activities and are well supported. Any additional needs that children have are identified, discussed with parents, and external support recommended as appropriate. Positive learning and development outcomes are promoted for all children.

Infants and toddlers have their own designated environment for safe exploration within a calm and respectful climate. Teachers establish and maintain daily communication with parents to ensure centre routines are consistent and supportive with home. Children are fully engaged in mat times which include singing and having fun together. Responsive caregiving enables strong and secure attachments to develop.

The curriculum is informed by teachers' good knowledge of children, families and community. There is extensive documentation of teacher planning, evaluation and assessment processes. This documentation reflects how teachers notice, recognise and respond to children's curiosities and learning dispositions. Planning includes the deliberate use of particular strengths of teachers, and the participation of children in local community events to extend learning experiences. Environments are well resourced, and children have opportunities for creative and dramatic play, construction and physical challenge. Next steps in the programme are to increase children's ongoing access to a wide range of equipment and challenging experiences.

Teachers prepare well-presented assessment portfolios which are shared with families. They have recently extended communication with families to include on-line portfolios to gain a stronger family voice and feedback. Children experience a programme that responds to their curiosities and interests.

The centre has a Treaty of Waitangi policy in place, and leaders and teachers are aware of the need to extend their confidence in bicultural practice. Te reo and tikanga Māori are evident in counting, waiata and karakia, and in sleeping and eating routines. Many children in the Trailblazers room have their pepeha displayed. Leaders recognise that strengthening the local curriculum to improve children's awareness of the bicultural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand is an important next step. This should strengthen outcomes for Māori children as they sense their language, culture and identity being recognised and valued.

There is a strong partnership between the director and centre manager. Teachers are supported to work as a collaborative team through comprehensive documented guidelines and clear expectations, and consistent feedback from centre leaders. They also benefit from mentoring advice and guidance as part of the teacher appraisal and registration processes.

There are well established systems for spontaneous and longer-term self review. These systems ensure that teachers are regularly reflecting on the practice and seeking further improvements. Currently, the main areas for self review are encouraging a love of literacy in Trailblazers, and bicultural practice in the Explorers room. Self review and professional development include reference to external research material on good practice in early childhood education.

A strength of the centre is the high level of professional commitment provided by the owner/director. This creates a positive sense of shared purpose and direction for the staff, children and their families. The director sets, models and maintains high expectations for professional practice for all staff and leaders. She values and supports teachers and leaders and ensures appropriate programmes of professional development are available for teachers. The director recognises the importance of fully implementing a robust process for her own annual appraisal.

Parents spoken to by ERO felt welcome and well informed about their child's learning and progress, and able to participate in regular community events. Effective governance supports the continued development and improvement of centre operations, teacher practice and outcomes for children.

Key Next Steps

ERO and centre leaders agree that next steps are to:

- develop and implement a plan to develop the wider leadership potential
- increase the opportunities for child-directed play and more challenging experiences
- strengthen the local curriculum so it is consistent with the new *Te Whāriki* document.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Little Settlers 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 Settlers will be in three years.



Lynda Pura-Watson
Deputy Chief Review Officer
Te Tai Miringa - Waikato / Bay of Plenty Region

5 December 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.

Information about the Early Childhood Service

Location	Bombay, South Auckland		
Ministry of Education profile number	46916		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	60 children, including up to 25 aged under 2		
Service roll	85		
Gender composition	Boys	49	
	Girls	36	
Ethnic composition	Māori		8
	Pākehā		70
	Other		7
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +		
0-49%	50-79%		
	80%+		
<i>Based on funding rates</i>			
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:3	Better than minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:7	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	October 2017		
Date of this report	5 December 2017		
Most recent ERO report(s)	No previous ERO reports		
These are available at www.ero.govt.nz			

2 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.