Improving quality in early learning services: striving for equity and excellence

Celebrating Northland’s Tamariki Conference
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Equity and excellence

Our purpose
Our evaluation insights are a catalyst for change so that every child achieves success as a lifelong learner.

Our whakatauki
Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa
The Child – the Heart of the Matter
Education reviews in ECE: shift in focus and approach

Education Reviews (2002-2012)

- Quality of Education
  - programme
  - environment
  - interactions

- Additional Review Priorities
- Areas of National Interest
- Compliance Issues

Chain of Quality

- Clear philosophy
- Effective management
- High quality educators, professional leadership
- High quality programme, environment, interactions
- Positive outcomes for children
- Involved Families and Communities

Chain of Quality Diagram
ERO’s approach to reviews:
He Pou Tātaki

Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtaka o te Kaupapa
The Child – the Heart of the Matter
Diagram 7: Connections between Ngā Pou Here, the Evaluation Indicators, and the Criteria.

**The Evaluation Indicators**

ERO's Evaluation Indicators for Early Childhood Services help to determine whether high quality practice is demonstrated.

Ngā Pou Here and the evaluation indicators support ERO's criteria for the three year and four year return times.

The criteria for the Very Well Placed option are further unpacked through the indicators. The indicators provide a deeper insight into what ERO considers to be high quality early childhood education.

The indicators are in PART 6 of this book.

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**The Criteria**

**The next ERO review in consultation with the Ministry of Education**

Not well placed to promote positive learning outcomes for children. This option will be used when a service is not performing adequately, is not meeting legal requirements and does not have the capacity to make improvements without support or Ministry intervention. ERO will not review the service again until the Ministry of Education is satisfied that the service meets licensing requirements.

**2 YEARS**

**The next ERO review within TWO YEARS**

Requires further development to promote positive learning outcomes for children. This option is used when many of the factors that contribute to positive outcomes for children are not evident or require significant development. ERO will have some confidence that the service can improve with support.

**3 YEARS**

**The next ERO review in THREE YEARS**

Well placed to promote positive learning outcomes for children. ERO will next review the service in three years when it finds that the service is effective in promoting children's wellbeing and largely effective in promoting children's learning. Good performance in relation to Ngā Pou Here will be evident.

**4 YEARS**

**The next ERO review in FOUR YEARS**

Very well placed to promote positive learning outcomes for children. ERO will next review the service in four years when it finds that the service is consistently effective in promoting children's wellbeing and learning. High quality performance in relation to ERO's evaluation indicators for Ngā Pou Here will be evident.

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**EROb's four different review return times** for early childhood services, depending on their capacity to promote positive learning outcomes for children. ERO has criteria to inform its decision about the return time and the overall judgement that links to this. The criteria help ERO to evaluate practice across the wide range of quality in the early childhood sector.

SEE ERO'S WEBSITE FOR THE CRITERIA TO SUPPORT THESE DECISIONS.
What do we mean? How do we do it? For what purpose(s) are these all different names for the same thing? Or different names for different things?
Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

The Child – the Heart of the Matter

Programme review

- *Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations (1990/1998)*
- Regulation 32(c)

Internal review

- DOP 9 and 10 (e)

Quality review

- The Quality Journey (1999)

Self review

- Pathways to the Future (2002)
- Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua (2006)
- Licensing criteria GMA (2008)
- He Pou Tātaki (2013)

Internal evaluation

- School evaluation indicators (2015)
- Effective school evaluation (2015)
the evaluation resource package

- *School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success*

- **Effective School Evaluation** *How to do and use internal evaluation for improvement*

- *Effective School Evaluation for Improvement Good Practice Report*
evaluation processes and reasoning

**FIGURE 6. COLLABORATIVE SENSE MAKING**

- **When making sense of our data and information**
  - We ensure we have the necessary capability (data literacy) and capacity (people/time).
  - We are open to new learning.
  - We know "what is so" and have determined "so what.
  - We know what "good" looks like so that we can recognize our strengths and areas for improvement.
  - We have a robust evidence base to inform our decision making and prioritizing.

- **We ask ourselves**
  - What is our data telling us? What insights does it provide?
  - Is this good enough?
  - How do we feel about what we have found?
  - Do we have different interpretations of the data? If so, why?
  - What might we need to explore further?
  - What can we learn from research evidence about what "good" looks like?
  - How close are we to that?

- **Collaborative sense making involves**
  - Scrutinising our data with an open mind.
  - Working with different kinds of data, both quantitative and qualitative.
  - Drawing on research evidence and using suitable frameworks or indicators when analysing and making sense of our data.

- **"We want to know what’s good — and what’s not good enough."**
- **"To effect change, teachers needed to be on board — it was not going to be a two-meeting process."**
- **"What are we doing well? What can we improve on? How can we assess and accelerate the learning of our students?"**
Small group discussion

Using one of the processes and associated reasoning

Discuss

What does this particular process involve?

Why is it important?

How might you use Ngā Pou Here and the evaluation indicators in this part of the process?
An improvement journey

**Context for improvement**
Every context is different. It may be that the appointment of a new leader provides the catalyst for change. It may be that external evaluators, by posing ‘stop and think’ questions, motivate leaders and teachers to evaluate aspects of practice to improve outcomes.

Whatever the context, engaging in evaluation for improvement is motivated by the need to make changes that will have a positive impact on the learning and wellbeing of all learners. Such change is sustained by the belief that they can do better.

**Noticing**
What’s going on here? For which learners?
Is this what we expected?
Is this good?
Should we be concerned? Why?
What is the problem or issue?
Do we need to take a closer look?

**Investigating**
What do we already know about this?
How do we know this?
How might we do this?
What ‘good questions’ should we ask?
How will we gather relevant and useful data?

**Collaborative sense making**
What is our data telling us/what insights does it provide?
Is this good enough?
How do we feel about what we have found?
Do we have different interpretations of the data? If so, why?
What might we need to explore further?
What can we learn from research evidence about what ‘good’ looks like?
How close are we to that?

**Prioritising to take action**
What do we need to do and why?
What are our options?
Have we faced this situation before?
What can we do to ensure better progress and outcomes for more of our learners?
How big is the change we have in mind?
Can we get the outcomes we want within the timeframe we have specified?
What strengths do we have to draw on/build on?
What support/resources might we need?

**Improvement actions**
Improvement actions emerge out of collaborative sense making processes. Consideration needs to be given to whether there is the internal capability to forge ahead with the necessary changes or whether external expertise is needed. Good decisions at this point rely heavily on leaders knowing what it takes to bring about significant educational change.

Capability building is often high on the list when it comes to improvement actions. Leaders and teachers need to have the skills and knowledge they need to make the desired changes. The way in which they collaborate is a crucial aspect of any improvement endeavour that seeks better outcomes for learners.

**Shifts in practice**
By monitoring the implementation of improvement actions and evaluating their impact, those involved come to learn what works or does not work, for which learners, and why. The biggest shifts are those that penetrate to the core of teaching practice. Shifts in the conditions that support effective evaluation will contribute to shifts in teaching practice.

From | To
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**Outcomes for learners**
Effective internal evaluation processes enable those involved to better understand:
- how individual learners and groups of learners are progressing in relation to valued outcomes
- how improvement actions taken have impacted on learner outcomes and what difference is being made
- what needs to be changed and what further action needs to be taken
- the patterns and trends in outcomes over time
- what kind of practices are likely to make the most difference for diverse learners and in what contexts
- the extent to which the improvements achieved are good enough in achieving priorities for equity and excellence.
Group discussion

Scenario

Increasing numbers of two year olds in your service.
What might you ‘notice’?

What might you need to investigate?

How might you work together to make sense of the data/information gathered? Who might you involve?

What might be some the actions you decide to take (based on your sense making)? How might you monitor and evaluate the impact of your actions?

What might be some of the outcomes you would expect to see?

How might Ngā pou Here and ERO’s evaluation indicators help you?
Reflect on:

- What have I heard that has resonated with me?
- What has challenged my thinking and/or my practice?
- What am I taking away with me to share with others?

Share your reflections with someone else