

Information for services - National Evaluation Topic

Science in the Early Years (Early Learning and Years 1 – 4)

Why are we doing this NET? The national strategic plan for science in society ([A Nation of Curious Minds | He Whenua Hihiri i te Mahara](#)) has three action areas aimed at strengthening the place of science in society over ten years (2014-2024). One of these action areas is *Enhancing the role of education* (MBIE, 2014, p.9). This action area is aimed at supporting “all young New Zealanders to be resilient learners with future-proofed skills to understand, assess and apply rapidly changing science and technology knowledge to their everyday lives.” (MBIE, 2014, p. 23).

We are now halfway through the ten-year timeframe for this strategic plan.

This makes it a good time to consider the science-related learning opportunities younger children, including infants and toddlers experience, that set them up with the knowledge, capabilities, dispositions and working theories which form the foundation for their ongoing learning in science.

What does ERO want to find out? The focus of this review is on how well kaiako in the early years promote children’s development of the foundations for ongoing learning in science. The following questions will guide discussions reviewers have with leaders and kaiako:

1. How does science | pūtaiao feature in teaching and learning?
2. How are children’s science-related working theories deliberately extended and refined?
3. How is science | pūtaiao led in the service?

If ERO identifies your service as having good practice in this area, you may be invited to participate in an additional, more in-depth visit to explore this further.

Sources of information Information for this evaluation will be collected through service documentation, interviews with leaders and, where possible, observations of science in action.

It would be helpful if the following sorts of documents are available for review teams when they are on site:

- curriculum planning related to science
- assessment information about children’s learning in relation to science (e.g. developing working theories, dispositions that support science learning)
- internal evaluation to do with science in your service’s local curriculum
- any kaiako inquiries relating to science

When are we doing this NET?

Term 3, 2019.

Which services are included?

This NET will be undertaken in all ERO reviews of early learning services during Term 3, 2019.

What will happen with the findings?

ERO is likely to use the findings to produce:

- A general report of the findings
- A good practice report, sharing examples of practice for science teaching and learning in the early years
- Presentation of findings at conferences, such as the NZ Association of Science Educators Conference, and/or early learning conferences.

We may also produce brochures of sector-specific findings targeted to service leaders and kaiako.

[Official Information Act](#)

When talking with our review team, please state if you have any objections to the release of any information contained in your submission. Any request for the withholding of information on the grounds of confidentiality or for any other reason will be determined in accordance with the Official Information Act.