



A New Approach

ERO Early Childhood Education Services Newsletter | MAY 2021 | ISSUE #1

The new evaluation framework

ERO evaluates and reports publicly on the quality and effectiveness of education provided in early learning services. Our role encompasses accountability (including compliance with regulatory requirements), education improvement, and knowledge generation.

We know from research that the early years are a critical time for young children’s learning and development, particularly for the youngest children (birth to three years).

Research highlights the importance of stable relationships and interactions with sensitive and responsive adults, a focus on play and interactions that allow children to take the lead in their own learning, support communication and language, and their opportunities to move and be physically active.

ERO is updating its approach to review and evaluation, initially in centre-based early childhood services.

We regularly revise and update our approach to external evaluation in early childhood services to reflect current research and evaluation evidence about what matters most in the provision of high-quality early childhood education.

Changing societal contexts, including shifting patterns of parental employment, and increasingly diverse cultural and educational aspirations have led to changes in the early childhood education sector.

We have developed an updated Early Childhood Education methodology and are now implementing this across New Zealand.

Welcome from ERO

Kia ora koutou

Welcome to the first in a series of regular newsletters. You are receiving this as an Early Childhood Education Service that is currently being introduced to the new evaluation for improvement framework, Ngā Ara Whai Hua.

ERO is implementing Ngā Ara Whai Hua in a phased way. We began implementing the framework early in 2019 starting with Akanuku | Assurance Reviews. COVID-19 and associated lockdowns impacted on our plans for implementation of Akarangī | Quality Evaluations in the beginning of 2020, and we introduced these in October 2020.

We will continue to implement this approach in 2021 along with an approach to working collaboratively with governing organisations in the context of Ngā Ara Whai Hua.

What we are finding:

Based on what we are observing in the early childhood education sector, we ask that you check the following areas as part of your systems for regular monitoring and review. It’s important you are meeting your obligations to



Jane Lee
Deputy Chief Executive
Review and Improvement

provide a healthy and safe environment for children and that you maintain compliance with all Regulatory Standards and associated Licensing Criteria.

Please check:

- Physical safety including supervision, sleep procedures and monitoring, accident records, medication, hygiene practices, daily hazards, excursion policies and procedures, supervision of children’s eating, securing of heavy furniture and fixings
- Emotional safety including positive guidance, and meeting all of the requirements of the Children’s Act 2014
- Evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake including at least 3-monthly drills for each of the potential events that could impact your service
- Suitable staffing including police vetting as part of the Safety Checking requirements
- Licensing Criteria and Regulatory Standards are on the Ministry of Education’s website: [Rules for services](#)

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For more information on the new Evaluation Framework go to ero.govt.nz

We suggest that you specifically timetable into your routines a check on each of the requirements of your licence in order to give yourself, your staff and your parents the confidence that your service is indeed a great place for children's learning.

In an Akarangi | Quality Evaluation, following our initial onsite meeting and welcome, the ERO team will discuss and undertake the Compliance Check requirements with you.

Where we identify non-compliances with licensing requirements that are an unacceptable or immediate risk to children's safety and wellbeing, the evaluation focus changes to an Akanuku | Assurance Review.

Where there are no non-compliances identified, or the non-compliances identified are not an unacceptable or immediate risk to children's safety and wellbeing, we will email you confirming progression to a full Akarangi | Quality Evaluation.

I hope that you find these regular newsletters useful. More information is available on our website – please note that our website has recently been refreshed and so some previous links may no longer be active. You can find everything you need here: [How ERO reviews early childhood services](#) | [Education Review Office](#)

Ngā mihi

Jane Lee | Deputy Chief Executive Review and Improvement

Printed packs



In September 2020 we distributed a resource package to early childhood services (initially to centre-based services). This package included:

- A copy of Te Ara Poutama – Indicators of quality for early childhood education
- A poster that provides an overview of Te Ara Poutama focused on Ngā Rāpupuku | Indicators
- A copy of Akarangi Quality Evaluation Judgement Rubric

Further resources are being developed and will be shared with early childhood services on the next few months:

- Ngā Aronga Whai Hua – improving quality in early childhood education through effective internal and external evaluation
- A Guide to Quality Improvement Planning
- What matters most for your child and their learning in an early childhood service – a resource for parents and whānau

Please contact us if you did not receive your package.

What's coming up

We are in the process of transitioning home-based education and care reviews onto Ngā Ara Whai Hua

- We will continue with hospital-based education and care services reviews
- We will progress our approach to working with governing organisations aligned to Ngā Ara Whai Hua

On our website

Quality Framework for Evaluation and Improvement: Ngā Ara Whai Hua: Quality Framework for Evaluation and Improvement in Centre-based Early Childhood Services

Indicators of quality for early childhood services: Te Ara Poutama – indicators of quality for early childhood education: what matters most

Akanuku | Assurance Reviews assess whether services are meeting regulatory standards: New Assurance Reviews and Quality Evaluations | Education Review Office (ero.govt.nz)

Akarangi | Quality Evaluations evaluate the extent to which services have the learning and organisational conditions to support children's learning: New Assurance Reviews and Quality Evaluations | Education Review Office (ero.govt.nz)

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