



A New Approach

ERO Early Childhood Education Services Newsletter | SEPTEMBER 2021 | ISSUE #3

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 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 routines that allow children to take the lead in their own learning, support for communication and language, and 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 (ECE) sector.

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

Welcome from ERO

Welcome to ERO's 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.

At the current Alert Levels with all ERO offices closed, all reviews are deferred and will be rescheduled at a time when COVID-19 alert levels allow. These include reviews in progress or nearing finalisation.

ERO remains in contact with those services due to be reviewed, to share what to expect in terms of scheduled reviews and those currently in progress or nearing finalisation.

A reminder of the way ERO works under the range of alert levels:

At Alert Level 4 – All our offices are closed and onsite review work is deferred. We will keep in contact with early learning services.

At Alert Level 3 – All our offices remain closed, and staff are still working from home. Onsite review work is deferred. If your early learning service is due for a visit or review, ERO will be in touch on a case-by-case basis to check whether working with you digitally is something you would like to do.

At Alert Level 2 – Our offices are open, and we are doing business as close to usual as possible. We aim to continue to work onsite in early learning services, consistent with the [Public Service Commission advice](#).

At Alert Level 1 – ERO offices are open, and it is business as usual.

You can also [find advice on our website](#).

Learning in a Covid-19 world

Early learning services are facing continuing challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We know that Covid-19 has had a huge impact on you, your early childhood education service, and other services across NZ.

In 2020, you had to deal with new challenges and develop innovative ways to support your children. In 2021, you're having to do this again.

ERO would like to help you to support your children during this difficult time. Our series [Learning in a Covid-19 World](#) shares lessons and successes from the 2020 lockdowns that services can continue to draw on in 2021. We talked to leaders and kaiako in a wide range of services in 2020 to find out about the challenges they had to overcome in responding to Covid-19 and the lessons learnt in supporting children, parents, whānau, and kaiako.

From talking to everyone, we have produced a series of reports on the impact of Covid-19 on early childhood education. We hope you find this series useful to reflect how far you have come in responding to Covid-19 and to provide you with some ideas about what you could do to support your service in 2021.

Over the page, you will find links to all the publications in this suite of resources.

I hope that you find these regular newsletters useful. For more information, you'll find everything you need [on our website](#).

Take care everyone.

Ngā mihi



Jane Lee,
Deputy Chief
Executive Review
and Improvement

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

Ngā Ara Whai Hua

Resources to support evaluation for improvement in early childhood services



Nga Ara Whai Hua Quality Framework for Evaluation and Improvement in Early Childhood Services

Nga Ara Whai Hua is a bicultural framework based on three interconnected metaphors - Ngā Aka, Poutama and Ngā Ara. It outlines ERO's new approach to review and evaluation for accountability and improvement, and Te Ara Poutama - Indicators of quality is at the core of this framework. The approach champions evaluation, both internal and external, as the engine to drive improvement and the Indicators provide a common currency for making Judgements about quality for improvement.

Shared evaluation resources - ERO and early childhood services

Te Ara Poutama

This resource draws together research and evaluation evidence about effective practice and the learning and organisational conditions in early childhood education contexts that promote valued learning outcomes for children in Aotearoa New Zealand. ERO expects all early childhood services to use the Indicators in their internal evaluation and planning for improvement. They form the basis of our external evaluations of early childhood services.

Ngā Rāpukupuku Indicators Poster

This resource outlines the conditions that support quality early childhood education, along with the valued learning outcomes. It revises and updates the Indicators in He Pou Tataki: How ERO reviews early childhood services (2013). The poster presents the Indicators in relation to the learning and organisational conditions and includes the questions ERO and services ask when working with the Indicators.

Akanuku Quality Evaluation Judgement Rubric

Used in conjunction with the Indicators, the Rubric supports early childhood services to make judgments about the extent to which they have the learning and organisational conditions to support equitable and excellent outcomes for all learners. This Rubric and the Indicators can also help leaders and kaiako identify the actions they need to take to focus their quality improvement planning.

ECE sector resources

Parent and Whānau Resource

We've written this guide to help parents and whānau understand what matters most for their child and their learning in an early childhood service. Early childhood is an important time in children's life when they learn and develop faster than at any other time. This guide helps parents and whānau to know what they can expect from an early childhood service and what questions they might ask about the quality of the service.

Ngā Aronga Whai Hua

This document has been developed to support early childhood services to engage in internal evaluation and ERO's external evaluation using Te Ara Poutama - Indicators of quality for early childhood education: what matters most. It builds on Effective Internal Evaluation for Improvement (2016) and replaces most of the content in He Pou Tataki: How ERO reviews early childhood services (2013).

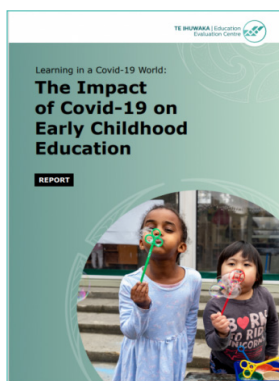
Piki Ake, Kake Ake

This is a guide to quality improvement planning for early childhood services. It supports services to plan for improvement based on the findings from internal and external evaluation and includes some examples.



Learning in a Covid-19 world

Our series *Learning in a Covid-19 world* focuses on how the sector responded to the 2020 lockdowns, and shares the lessons and successes that the sector can continue to draw on in 2021.



[Learning in a Covid-19 World: The Impact of Covid-19 on Early Childhood Education](#)

[Learning in a Covid-19 World: How early childhood education services helped children and their whānau](#)

[Practical actions to help early childhood education services to respond to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic](#)

[A guide to learning in a Covid-19 world: Supporting early childhood learners into 2021](#)

[A guide to learning in a Covid-19 world - Supporting parents into 2021](#)

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](#)
- [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](#)