

What Matters Most

ERO's Early Childhood Education Services Newsletter | OCTOBER 2025 | ISSUE #12



Tēnā koutou katoa

As we step into spring, we welcome the longer days and the fresh energy that the warmer weather brings. Our reviewers have been busy visiting centres across the country, working with you to support our shared goal of high-quality education and care for all children enrolled in services.

Early childhood education has been under the spotlight over the past year, with a review by the Ministry for Regulation, and the subsequent announcement by Associate Minister of Education David Seymour, of the Government's intention for ERO to take responsibility for licensing and certification and enforcement of early childhood education services.

For services, this proposal is intended to simplify how you engage with the regulator; reducing duplication across the sector, and minimising confusion so you can focus on what matters most.

It's important to note that there is a legislative process to be worked through before any changes are made.

In the here and now, your ERO reviews will continue as you expect in scope and focus with no immediate changes resulting from this proposal. We'll continue to keep you informed as planning progresses and more information becomes available. In the meantime, we encourage you to read the information and links on our [website](#).

Today's newsletter takes a look at emergent literacy in early childhood and our increased focus on intentional teaching in services. Together, this lays the groundwork for lifelong learning and a strong foundation for future success. Our reviewers will be exploring how your service is developing experiences for children that support cognitive development and school readiness.

We are always keen to hear from you about your review experience. You can do this by completing the Post Review Questionnaire - the link for the questionnaire is included in the email with your confirmed report.

We hope you find today's newsletter useful. If you missed the last ECE newsletter, you'll find previous editions [on our website](#).

Ngā mihi
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Deputy Chief Executive
Review and Improvement



What's in this newsletter:

- ERO's focus on emergent literacy for lifelong learning
- Spotlight on intentional teaching
- The evaluation process
- We have updated the Post Review Questionnaire
- Our evidence website and social media

ERO's focus on emergent literacy for lifelong learning

Emergent literacy is the set of skills and knowledge children develop before they learn to read and write. It includes how children use language every day, like recognising sounds and letters, knowing that print has meaning, copying reading or writing, and enjoying stories and books. Activities such as reading together, telling stories and drawing help children build vocabulary, understand language, and get ready to write.

Early childhood teachers play a pivotal role in encouraging children's emergent literacy skills and through ERO's evaluation we explore the quality of your service's curriculum experienced by all children. During the onsite phase of an evaluation, our reviewers will:

- have conversations with you about how you promote literacy learning at your service for all children
- observe interactions between children and teachers, including what strategies they are using to support children's learning
- look at the learning environment and literacy experiences provided for all children
- analyse curriculum documentation and records of children's learning and development including having a focus on emergent literacy.

During your next evaluation, the ERO team will talk with you about how well your service is supporting children's emergent literacy learning.

As part of a comprehensive approach to children's emergent literacy, have a look at ERO's report on [oral language development in the early years](#). Our evidence-based good practice guidance for [leaders](#) and [teachers](#) include practical strategies, stories, and reflective questions.

Spotlight on intentional teaching

ERO is interested in intentional teaching and how early childhood teachers thoughtfully design and facilitate learning experiences that extend children's thinking, curiosity, and skills.

Rather than relying solely on spontaneous interactions, intentional teaching sees teachers' plan environments, conversations, and experiences that align with children's interests and priorities for their learning. By making these teaching practices deliberate, the impact for children can be amplified, providing a strong foundation for their future success in education and beyond.

During an ERO evaluation, we'll talk with you about how your team uses intentional teaching that aligns with Te Whāriki. These might include:

- using open questions
- presenting new information
- encouraging, suggesting and providing feedback
- describing, telling and narrating
- modelling
- facilitating
- watchful attentiveness.

ERO will also be interested in how you support and monitor quality teaching in your service.

More information about He Whāriki Motuhake | The learner and their learning, which includes information about intentional teaching practice, can be found in our [ECE Improvement Framework](#).

The evaluation process

ERO evaluations focus on quality education and care of all children, alongside a focus on child safety and wellbeing. The evaluation process has many stages, including the setup of the evaluation, the onsite stage and a robust quality assurance process that follows. This means that the evaluation process is not finished when the ERO team leaves your service.

We will email you the unconfirmed report about 20 working days after we complete the evaluation visit at your service.

You have 10 working days from the date we email the report to:

- ask about the evidence we based our findings on
- tell us in writing about any errors of fact or anything that is missing
- provide extra documents or evidence.

We'll consider your response. If the evidence justifies a change, we'll update the report. The process is complete when the report is confirmed.

We have updated the Post Review Questionnaire

Your feedback about your review experience is important to us. When you receive your confirmed ERO report, we will also send you a link to our Post Review Questionnaire (PRQ). This quick survey helps us to gather your views on our review process, usefulness of the review, what has worked well for your service and what can be improved.

Our evidence website and social media

You can access our national evaluation and research team's insights, reports and guides at www.evidence.ero.govt.nz

We also regularly share news, links, and sneak peeks through our dedicated research social media accounts. Look for 'Te Ihuwaka Education Evaluation Centre' on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

For more information about ERO and our mahi please visit ero.govt.nz

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