

HE POU TĀTAKI

How ERO reviews early childhood services



Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

The Child – the Heart of the Matter

Published June 2013
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ISBN 978-0-478-389548 (Pbk)
ISBN 978-0-478-389555 (PDF)
ISBN 978-0-478-389562 (HTML)
ISBN 978-0-478-389579 (MS Word)

Foreword

The Education Review Office (ERO) independently reviews and reports on the quality of education in schools and early childhood services. The focus of ERO's reviews in early childhood services is on the capacity of the service to promote positive learning outcomes, with the purpose of contributing to improved wellbeing and learning for all children.

He Pou Tātaki provides resources for both ERO and services to use during reviews. The information contained within this document reflects ERO's commitment to the provision of high quality early childhood education for all children in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The *Framework and Resources for Early Childhood Education Reviews* was first published in 2002. This 2013 publication explains ERO's new review methodology that has been developed in response to research and developments in the early childhood sector, as well as to changes in ERO's own practices.

In 2004, ERO published *Evaluation Indicators for Education Reviews in Early Childhood Services*. The indicators have been significantly updated to reflect current research, theory and practice in early childhood education. The indicators are integral to the review methodology and are included in this document.

The methodology is the result of collaborative work between ERO staff and those who are active in the education sector – highlighting ERO's goal of maintaining a positive and productive relationship with early childhood services and the broader education community.

Separate review procedures are available for private kura and schools, kōhanga reo and Te Aho Matua kura kaupapa Māori. The 2002 procedures are used for reviews in home-based education and care services, and hospital-based education and care services. All documents are on ERO's website (www.ero.govt.nz) or can be requested from an ERO office.



Chief Review Officer (Acting)
June 2013

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PART
ONE

Introduction

This document gives information about the process that the Education Review Office (ERO) uses for reviews of early childhood services.

ERO's review methodology* is centred on positive learning outcomes for children and is underpinned by sound evaluation theory and current educational theory.

The methodology:

- focuses on the capacity of the early childhood service to sustain and improve outcomes for children
- is flexible, and responsive to each service's context and stage of development
- builds upon services' self-review processes and information
- retains an accountability function and contributes to service improvements
- incorporates processes for collecting information about government priorities
- is responsive to the Government's goals for the early childhood sector.

Through its evaluation practice, ERO aims to build the capacity of the early childhood sector to review, evaluate and improve its own practice.

* The methodology outlined in this document applies to ERO's review of all education and care services including kindergartens, playcentres and immersion centres. It does not pertain to home-based education and care services, kōhanga reo or hospital-based education and care services. Reviews for those services are undertaken using the 2002 and 2009 frameworks. There will be separate methodology developed to meet these specific contexts.



About ERO

The Education Review Office (ERO) is an independent external evaluation agency. ERO provides assurance to the Government about the quality and effectiveness of schools and early childhood services.

Children and young people are central to ERO's approach. This is reflected in ERO's whakataukī and is the foundation for ERO's vision and mission statement.

VISION: ERO will be a significant contributor to a world-leading education system.

MISSION: To provide high quality evaluation that contributes to high quality education for all young New Zealanders.

WHAKATAUKĪ: Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa.
The Child – the Heart of the Matter.

ERO's evaluations prompt change and improvement in individual schools and early childhood services. They take into account the important contextual and cultural dimensions that shape each service.

ERO's system-wide evaluations also influence national debate and support the Government in the development and implementation of education policy and practice.

ERO and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi informs the development and implementation of all policies and procedures in ERO, including its education evaluation approaches. ERO promotes educational success for Māori, as Māori and the realisation of Māori potential.

Ka Hikitia – the Government's Māori Education Strategy – clearly articulates this aspiration for the education sector.

Conduct during Education Reviews

Review officers use ERO's *Manual of Standard Procedures* and follow the *Code of Ethical Conduct for Review Officers*.

The procedures allow for flexible and responsive evaluation that reflects the circumstances of individual services. ERO's Code expects and requires standards of fairness, impartiality, responsibility and trustworthiness. These standards reflect those in the *State Services Commission Standards of Integrity and Conduct*.

PART
TWOOutcomes for children in
early childhood education

Introduction

All licensed early childhood services are required to meet regulated standards, employ qualified teachers or meet other qualification requirements, and implement a bicultural curriculum. While unified at a policy level, the early childhood education sector in Aotearoa New Zealand is diverse.

This diversity includes:

- different cultural perspectives
- structural differences (sessions or full day programmes)
- organisational differences (kindergartens or education and care services)
- different environments (home-based or centre-based programmes)
- a range of philosophical emphases (Pacific early childhood services, Playcentre, Montessori, or Rudolf Steiner programmes)
- the different resources available in urban and rural settings
- the ways in which local communities participate
- the age range of children in programmes.

ERO's reviews of early childhood services respond to the diversity in the sector and variations in services' performance in promoting positive learning outcomes for children.

Regulatory environment

The Education Act 1989 was amended in 2008 to create a revised legal framework for the operation of early childhood services. This is known as the '2008 regulatory system'. All early childhood services will be licensed under the *Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008*¹ by 30 November 2014.

Two key documents form part of the regulatory framework for early childhood services, the *Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008*² and the *Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework*.³ Early childhood services must meet the licensing criteria as well as the other regulatory requirements contained in the regulations in order to gain and maintain a licence to operate.

ERO's review process includes how the early childhood service meets the regulated standards. However, ERO focuses on the *quality* of care and education that the service provides.

The curriculum framework is prescribed by the Minister of Education. The *Early Childhood Education Curriculum Framework* is made up of the English and te reo Māori

1 www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2008/0204/latest/DLM1412501.html?search=ts_regulation_early+childhood_rese&sr=1

2 www.lead.ece.govt.nz/ServiceTypes/CentreBasedECEServices.aspx

3 www.lead.ece.govt.nz/ManagementInformation/RegulatoryFrameworkForECEServices/EarlyChildhoodEducationCurriculumFrameworkForAotearoaNewZealand.aspx

versions of the principles and strands from the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mā ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa (Te Whāriki)*.⁴ All licensed early childhood services are required to provide a curriculum that meets the principles and strands of *Te Whāriki*.

Early childhood services and Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a foundation document of Aotearoa New Zealand and guides education with regards to participation, power and partnership for Māori, as tangata whenua, and non-Māori as signatories to the Treaty. The Treaty provides a driving force for the revitalisation of Maori language and culture.

Early childhood services are required to provide a curriculum that acknowledges and reflects the unique place of Māori as tangata whenua. The curriculum must also help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritages of both parties to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The principle of partnership in the Treaty needs to be reflected in the practices of the early childhood service. Working in partnership with Māori requires inclusive and collaborative practices between the early childhood service and whānau of tamariki Māori for the learning and wellbeing of Māori children.

Outcomes for children in early childhood education

Te Whāriki sets out the principles, strands and goals for curriculum in early childhood services. It seeks for children ‘to grow as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, and secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society.’⁵

Te Whāriki is based on socio-cultural perspectives. This means that there is an expectation that the curriculum in each early childhood service will respond to the social and cultural values and beliefs of its community of children, families and teachers. Each early childhood service, in consultation with its community, determines its own curriculum priorities and emphases, and the learning it values.

According to *Te Whāriki*, the outcomes of a curriculum are knowledge, skills and attitudes that combine together to form a child’s working theory and help children to develop dispositions that encourage learning. Positive outcomes for children include high level competencies as well as more specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions for learning.

The valued outcomes of early childhood education vary from one family to another depending on cultural, educational and religious beliefs, as well as views on early learning. There is a broadly shared expectation, however, that early education will contribute to the growth of a secure, confident child who can communicate, learn and work with others. An early childhood service that nurtures and promotes an individual child’s growing competence to communicate, participate and learn about the world, is likely to support such progression.

Outcomes for children are not always easy to determine. Nevertheless, the focus on how well children learn is central to all ERO reviews. ERO’s methodology, evaluation indicators and professional practice refer to research on how different factors and features of early childhood practice contribute to positive learning outcomes for children.

4 Ministry of Education (1996). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mā ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa; Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington.

5 Ministry of Education (1996). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mā ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa; Early Childhood Curriculum*. p.9 Wellington.

ERO's methodology requires early childhood services to reflect on what their intended outcomes for children are, and what they know about how well children are achieving those outcomes.

Priority learners

High quality early childhood education can make a lasting difference for children and act as a protective factor for vulnerable children; those at risk of poor educational and life outcomes. Research indicates that some of our most vulnerable children include Māori, Pacific, those from low income families, and children with diverse needs. The Government identifies these groups as priority learners. ERO also includes children up to the age of two years as priority learners.

In early childhood settings, priority learners will be the children the service has identified that require additional support to help them achieve equitable outcomes.

To understand and respond to priority learners, early childhood services need to have a deep understanding of the identity and experiences of these children.

Māori children

Penetito⁶ states that there is no such thing as the Māori identity, there are only Māori identities. In addition, Māori children live in and between at least two worlds. While they may position themselves differently in these worlds they are Māori, by virtue of descent and whakapapa.⁷

The wellbeing and learning of Māori children is located in their culture, language and identity. A child's culture, language and identity are places where concepts of mana, wairua and mauri exist. *Mana* is the power and potential the Māori child brings with them.⁸ *Wairua* is a concept linked to the child's spirit and emotional stability. *Mauri* is observable. It is the life force and energy of the child which enables energy to be expended; the mind to think and have some control over how the body behaves. It enables the child to be vibrant, expressive and impressive.⁹

Ka Hikitia, the Government's Māori Education Strategy, proposes that better outcomes for Māori learners are likely when the language, culture and identity of Māori children is acknowledged and a productive partnership is forged by the sharing of power between Māori learners, whānau, iwi and educators.

Children of Pacific heritage

To improve outcomes for children with a Pacific heritage it is important to understand that Pacific children are not a homogeneous group. Pacific children come from diverse groups with different cultures and languages. While some Pacific children are born in New Zealand, others may be new arrivals to the country. Families hold differing belief systems about the place of culture, faith, family and education, among others.

Understanding the diversity of Pacific children is integral to understanding each child as an individual. Educators cannot simply create broad strategies or approaches to improve outcomes for Pacific children who attend early childhood services (both Pacific services and

6 Penetito, W. (2001). *'If We Only Knew ... Contextualising Maori Knowledge'*. Paper presented at Early Childhood Education for a Democratic Society 2001 and published in Wellington by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

7 Rameka, L. (2011) Being Māori: Culturally relevant assessment in early childhood education. *Early Years* 31, (3): 245–256. Retrieved from [dx.doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2011.614222](https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2011.614222)

8 Walker, R. (2008) The Philosophy of Te Whatu Pōkeka: Kaupapa Māori assessment and learning exemplars. *The First Years: Nga Tau Tuatahi, New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education* 11 (1): 5–9.

9 Mead, H., and Mead, S. (2003). *Tikanga Māori: Living by Māori Values*. New Zealand. Huia Publishers.

mainstream). Educators need to use their knowledge and understanding of Pacific children, their families and communities to design a meaningful curriculum and relevant experiences so that each Pacific child experiences success.

Children with diverse needs

Children with diverse needs include children with special education needs or special abilities, children from low income families, children who speak English as an additional language, and children of migrants and refugees.

Services need to have practices and systems that, as far as is possible in group care, provide for children's particular attributes and capabilities, as well as their changing circumstances and needs. The focus will be on inclusive practice to enable each child's participation and engagement in the programme, and their further development of competence as a learner.

The extent to which the service provides for each child is likely to be a measure of the commitment the service has to equitable outcomes for all children.

Children up to two years of age

Early years' research has increasingly focused on the experiences and outcomes for children up to the age of two. It demonstrates that children at this age are highly susceptible to the negative impacts of poor quality early childhood education. On a more positive note, a recent literature review on quality early childhood education for children up to the age of two states:

“The evidence demonstrates that quality early childhood education at this very early age has lasting benefits for infants and their families – especially those from disadvantaged sectors – and for society. The high quality education and care of infants therefore constitutes a key investment in the future of Aotearoa New Zealand.”¹⁰

Attuned adults and the provision of quality environments are now understood to have a marked impact on the development and learning of children up to two years of age. Adults are more likely to be attuned to very young children if they have responsibility for a smaller number of children up to the age of two (the recommended ratio is 1:3 adults to children), and have specialist knowledge about working with this age group.

10 www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/ece/quality-early-childhood-education-for-under-two-year-olds-what-should-it-look-like-a-literature-review/executive-summary



**PART
THREE**

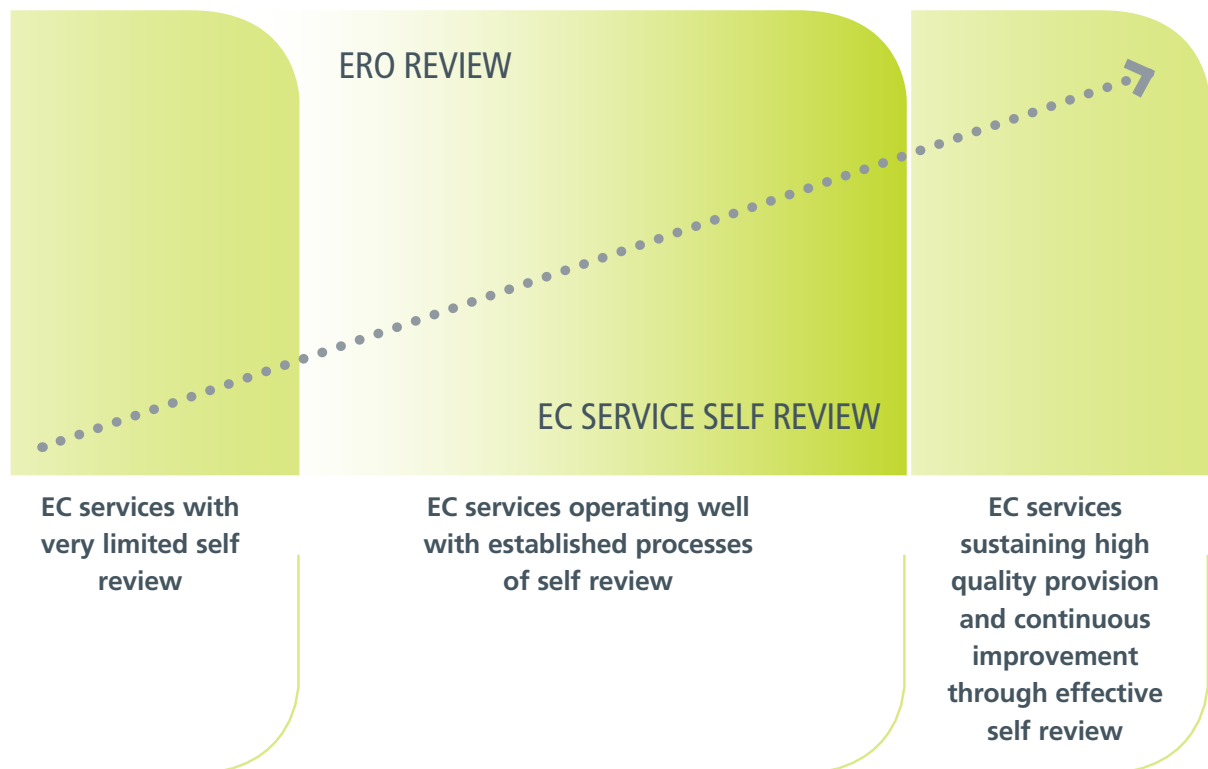
Complementary evaluation in early childhood service reviews

Complementary evaluation is the purposeful interaction between internal and external evaluation. It implies a mutually beneficial relationship that recognises the distinct purposes of each and where the overlap lies.

ERO's external evaluation process is both proportional and responsive to the service's self review. It responds to the early childhood service's overall capacity and capability to evaluate its own performance. ERO's external evaluation also has a role to play in building the evaluation capacity of the service by strengthening self review according to each service's context.

Diagram 1: Complementary Evaluation

An evaluation approach that balances external ERO review with service self review according to each service's circumstances.



The complementary nature of external and internal evaluation

External evaluation can:

- stimulate internal evaluation
- expand the scope of internal evaluation
- validate the results of internal evaluation
- provide an additional perspective
- include a capacity building role as part of the evaluation.

Internal evaluation can:

- deepen the scope of external evaluation
- give a context to the external evaluation
- provide important insights
- improve the interpretation of external evaluation findings
- increase the use of external evaluation findings.

Building evaluation capability

ERO uses its external evaluation process to increase the capability within early childhood services to undertake internal evaluation (self review) as a routine activity for both accountability and improvement purposes. The intention is for evaluation to become embedded in the day-to-day practice of managers and educators.

ERO builds the evaluation capability of the early childhood service through:

- making its own external review processes transparent
- modelling evaluation practice
- encouraging participation in ERO's evaluation process
- having discussions about the service's self-review processes
- involving nominated service personnel in evaluation design, analysis and synthesis processes
- providing tools (e.g. examples of evaluation questions and indicators) that services can use in their self review
- discussing resources that services can use to help them with self review.

Self review in early childhood services

The term self review is often used synonymously with other terms such as self evaluation, internal evaluation, evaluation, assessment, monitoring and appraisal. In early childhood services in Aotearoa New Zealand self review has its roots in terms such as programme review, internal review and quality review.

ERO defines self review as *the use of robust processes to systematically inquire into and evaluate the effectiveness of policies, programmes and practices. Self-review findings are used to inform decision-making, improve the quality of practice and promote positive outcomes for all children.*

Review implies a looking back or taking stock of some activity, practices or processes. However, self review is also *evaluative* in nature.

Definitions of evaluation vary according to the underpinning theory or theories that they are based on. All evaluation involves reaching judgements or producing knowledge about



what is being evaluated. The purpose of each evaluation differs: it can be for accountability purposes, to help with decision making, to contribute to improved effectiveness, to increase understanding or to advance a principle such as equity. This is referred to as evaluation use.

Regulatory requirements for self review

Early childhood services are required to undertake self review as part of their licensing requirements. The criteria to assess the governance management and administration standard specifies that *an ongoing process of self-review helps the service maintain and improve the quality of its education and care*.¹¹

The licensing criteria require early childhood services to document:

- a process for reviewing and evaluating their operation
- a schedule showing timelines for planned review of different areas of operation
- recorded outcomes from the review process.

Self review is an integral part of professional practice in the governance, management and administration of an early childhood service.

Guidance and support to help services with self review

The Ministry of Education resources such as *Quality in Action: Te Mahi Whai Hua*¹² and *The Quality Journey: He Haerenga Whai Hua: Improving quality in early childhood services*¹³ help early childhood services understand the concept of self review. The Ministry has also published guidelines for self review in early childhood services: *Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua*.¹⁴ These guidelines set out a process for services to use to undertake self review. This process is one that requires a systematic process of preparation, data gathering, analysis and decision-making. It implies an evaluative approach.

Highly effective self review

In 2008 ERO undertook a national evaluation¹⁵ that focused on how well self review was understood, supported and implemented in early childhood services. ERO found that where self review was highly effective:

- improvement and accountability were understood to be the main purposes of self review
- management and educators shared the same understandings about self review
- it was embedded in practice and integral to the service's operation
- reviews had a clear focus
- it was strongly focused on improvement and with well-established procedures to guide practice
- reviews were both planned and spontaneous
- planned reviews included scheduled policy reviews and more in-depth reviews of targeted areas of practice
- spontaneous reviews were responsive to emerging issues.

11 www.lead.ece.govt.nz/ServiceTypes/CentreBasedECEServices/GovernanceManagementAdministration/ProfessionalPractices/GMA6Self-review.aspx

12 Ministry of Education, (1998). *Quality in Action/Te Mahi Whai Hua: Implementing the Revised Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices in New Zealand Early Childhood Services*. Wellington: Learning Media.

13 Ministry of Education, (1999). *The Quality Journey/He Haerenga Whai Hua: Improving quality in early childhood services*. Wellington: Learning Media

14 Ministry of Education, (2006). *Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua/Self-review guidelines for early childhood education*. Wellington: Learning Media.

15 Education Review Office (2009) *Implementing Self Review in Early Childhood Services*. Wellington: Education Review Office

The factors that emerged as common to all services where self review was well understood and implemented included:

- strong leadership to promote self review
- professional development to support self review
- stable and collaborative staff
- sound, sustainable systems for self review
- the use of relevant resources and support systems.

Types of self review

Self-review processes let an early childhood service know how well it is promoting positive learning outcomes for children. As a result of information from self review, the service is able to identify the contributing factors and priorities to enhance children's wellbeing and learning.

There are different ways of describing the various types of self review. The Ministry of Education's guidelines refer to a framework of *planned* and *spontaneous* review. The following diagram expands upon that framework for self review by including *strategic* self review. Strategic self review is the process by which the early childhood service evaluates how well it is achieving its vision, goals or philosophy.

Diagram 2: Types of self review



Strategic self review is long term, and focused on key goals related to the early childhood service's vision, goals or philosophy.

Regular (or planned) self reviews are about 'business as usual'. They are smaller, focused and ongoing, feeding regular information into the strategic self review.

Emergent (or spontaneous) self reviews are in response to unplanned events or issues as they arise. They are one-off spontaneous reviews but should fit with overall goals and link to other reviews.

All self review involves gathering information which is used as evidence to support judgements and make decisions about service direction and priorities.

Diagram 3: Self Review Continuum

Self review: a continuum of capacity (understanding and practice)

Self review: a continuum of understanding and practice
 Self review is a developmental activity that is best understood as operating on a continuum of understanding and practice. The features or characteristics of each of the identified stages are a guide to determining the level at which the early childhood service understands and undertakes self review.

Early stage of self review

- largely compliance or audit focused
- mostly about policy review (as a paper exercise)
- understanding of self review developing but not shared at all levels of the service (purpose and processes)
- processes and outcomes not documented
- mostly undertaken by individuals rather than a collaborative activity
- limited as to whose perspectives are sought
- limited gathering of evidence
- limited analysis of information
- action not taken as a result of self review

Developing self review

- shared understanding of self review developing
- evidence of self review but not strongly aligned to strategic planning/goals/vision/philosophy
- focus on resources and environment
- evidence of a process (documented)
- starting to focus review on teaching and learning practice and children’s learning
- becoming established with clear purpose and procedures to guide self review
- a planned approach evident – use of a review plan or schedule to guide review
- examples of spontaneous or emergent self review and planned review

Highly effective/well-developed self review

- well-established processes for self review
- purpose of self review is clear
- systematic, planned and deliberate inquiry
- documentation developed to show evidence of process and outcomes
- multiple perspectives sought- children and whānau contribute to self review
- indicators or criteria are used
- use of multiple sources of information
- well-analysed information
- strong focus on teaching and learning and outcomes for all children
- self review includes a focus on all aspects of the service’s operation over time
- self review is linked to the service’s vision and philosophy and informs strategic direction
- self-review outcomes are used for decision-making and improvement
- self review involves working with evidence to achieve ongoing improvement

Self review that meets regulatory requirements sits between these two stages.

ERO’s evaluation indicators provide more detailed information about highly effective self review.

PART
FOURERO's Framework for review –
Ngā Pou Here

Introduction

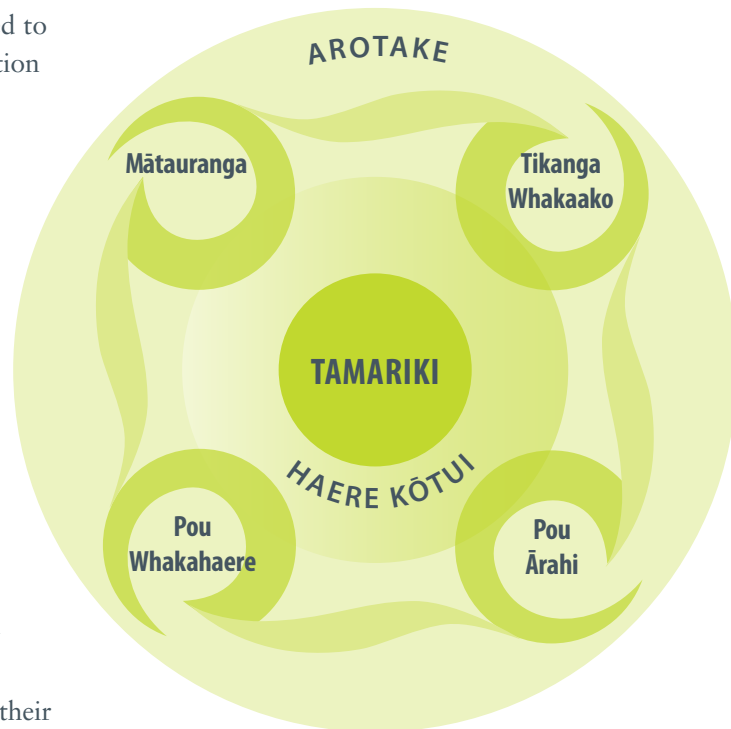
Ngā Pou Here is a metaphor used to frame the early childhood education review methodology. *Ngā Pou Here* is about the factors that affect the capacity of early childhood services to promote positive learning outcomes for children. Tamariki/children are at the centre of ERO's focus.

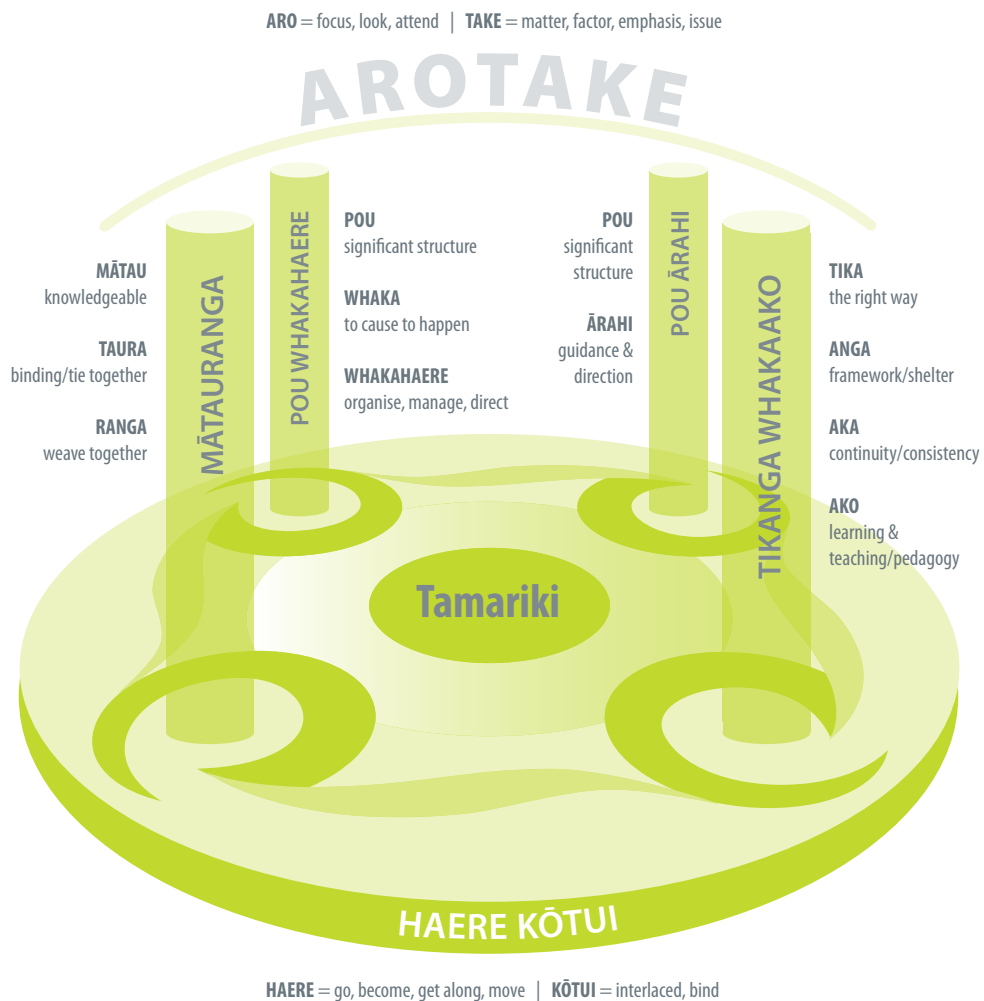
The use of Māori terminology and concepts in *Ngā Pou Here* is one strategy ERO uses to realise its commitment to equitable outcomes for Māori. Review officers and early childhood services can use the Māori terminology and increase their understanding of the Māori world view as expressed in *Ngā Pou Here*.

The use of *Ngā Pou Here* will help services and ERO to foreground success for Māori children in each evaluation.

In this section the terminology and meaning of each *Pou* is briefly explored from the perspective of te ao Māori. PART 5 has more information about *Ngā Pou Here* as an evaluation framework and ERO's evaluation indicators in PART 6 further explain each *Pou*.

Diagram 4: Ngā Pou Here





POSITIVE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ALL CHILDREN

Diagram 5: Ngā Pou Here Te Ao Māori

This diagram shows the Pou, the significance of the words in te reo Māori, and how the principles of partnership (Haere Kōtui) and self review (Arotake) connect and support the Pou.

Ngā Pou Here

Pou are carved posts placed strategically on the land or in specific places to acknowledge and represent the relationship between tangata whenua, their ancestors and their environment or *taiao*. Pou are significant markers that identify boundaries, guardianship and protection. In short, they mark the traditional and contemporary associations significant to Māori and their contribution to New Zealand’s cultural heritage and identity. This diagram shows the interconnectedness of the *Pou* and their connection to outcomes for children. The four *Pou* embody inclusion, equity and balance. None of the *Pou* can stand on their own; they impact on and influence one another.

Pou Whakahaere

Pou Whakahaere acknowledges the skills and knowledge that a group of people bring to a particular context. Pou Whakahaere are entrusted to work on behalf of others to ensure that the vision and aspirations of the collective are realised. Their significant marker is that of management and governance.

Pou Whakahaere is a marker for:

- the service establishing its vision, philosophy and strategic direction
- the service having an up-to-date policy framework that guides practice
- management of resources, including people, money and property
- capacity building to enable the service to sustain quality and improve outcomes for children.

Pou Ārahi

Pou Ārahi refer to the people who ‘ārahi’ or provide guidance, supervision and direction to others. Pou Ārahi enact the guidelines and procedures put in place by Pou Whakahaere. This requires a high level of skill in culturally and socially appropriate leadership.

Pou Ārahi is a marker for:

- the enactment of the service’s philosophy
- realising the service’s vision and strategic direction
- establishing an organisational culture that supports ongoing improvement
- building and supporting professional practice.

Mātauranga

Mātauranga is a body of knowledge that is framed in certain ways. In curriculum development it is important to ask whose knowledge is valued and how this achieves positive outcomes for all children. The inclusion of mātauranga Māori enables all children to understand the significance of Māori as tangata whenua through the use of te reo Māori; Māori symbols; learning experiences that focus on the environment (taiao) through the lens of atua Māori (guardians of the forest, sky, earth, wind, rain, storms earthquakes and volcanoes); pūtaiao (science); and hangarau (technology). Mātauranga Māori communicates something fundamental about the Māori world, something distinctive and valuable. It encompasses both ancient and modern forms of knowing and enlightenment.

The inclusion of Mātauranga Māori across the curriculum enhances the mana and wairua of Māori children. This validates their ways of knowing, being and doing. At the same time it provides all children with knowledge and information that extends their learning and understanding of the world they live in.

Mātauranga is a marker for:

- teachers’ professional knowledge and their curriculum and subject content knowledge
- teachers’ knowledge of children as learners and of their learning
- teachers’ knowledge of culture and context and how this contributes to decisions about curriculum
- teachers’ knowledge of whānau and the wider community
- assessment and planning processes.

Tikanga Whakaako

Tikanga whakaako, also known as Māori pedagogy, is a term used to describe teaching and learning that is appropriate for Māori children within an education context. The concept of ako is deeply embedded in tikanga whakaako. Ako acknowledges teaching and learning as reciprocal processes whereby teachers are learners and learners are teachers. Tikanga whakaako also recognises that the learner, educator and whānau cannot be separated. Embracing the concept of tikanga whakaako enables educators to build caring and purposeful learning relationships where everyone feels that their contribution is valued and their potential is recognised. Critical to Māori pedagogy (tikanga whakaako) is the notion of which or whose knowledge (mātauranga) is privileged.¹⁶

16 Walker, R. (2008) The Philosophy of Te Whatu Pokeka: Kaupapa Māori assessment and learning exemplars. *The First Years: Nga Tau Tuatahi, New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education* 11 (1): 5–9.

Tikanga whakaako is a marker for:

- relationships and interactions between teachers and children
- effective teaching practice
- Te Tiriti-based practice and bicultural curriculum
- inclusive practices
- learning environments
- transitions into and within services, and to school.

Haere Kōtui

Haere Kōtui captures the essence and importance of partnership. The phrase emphasises the sense of coming together to work with and alongside each other. Haere Kōtui weaves and binds the essential strands of individual commitment and contribution with collective focus and responsibility for the achievement of desired outcomes. A well-woven whāriki brings together all those who are important to the task.

Embedded within the action of Haere Kōtui is whanaungatanga, which in contemporary contexts has been described as the ways in which a group of people, coming together for a common cause or kaupapa, interact and behave with one another.¹⁷

Whanaungatanga is based on genuine respect, appreciation and support afforded to others. It recognises the centrality of whānau and relationships to Māori children in early childhood settings. Whanaungatanga creates a support system drawing on loyalties, obligations and commitment to a common purpose.^{18, 19}

Partnership is especially important for Māori children because of the central role of whānau in building children's sense of identity; through whānau children develop their understanding of the world and their place in te ao Māori.

Arotake

Arotake encompasses the terms assess, evaluate and review. In ERO's work, arotake refers to the process of conducting evaluation. Both internal and external evaluative inquiry help early childhood services to know how well they are supporting Māori children to realise their potential.

There are many different forms of Māori identity and there are many ways of consulting and engaging with Māori. The processes used during arotake need to appropriately observe Māori tikanga and kawa. So should the way ERO communicates the findings. Effective and culturally appropriate evaluation activities are those that foster meaningful and honest engagement with Māori.

17 Smith, G.H. (1995) Whakaoho Whanau: New Formations of Whanau as an Innovative Intervention into Maori Cultural and Educational Crises. *He Pukenga Korero: A Journal of Maori Studies* 1 (Spring): 18–36.

18 Hohepa, Margie (1993) *Preferred Pedagogies and Language Interactions in Te Kōhanga Reo*, Monograph 13, Te Tari Rangahau o te Mātauranga Māori, University of Auckland, Auckland.

19 Walker, R. (2005) Bicultural Challenges to Early Childhood Education in Aotearoa New Zealand: Walking With Uncertainty. Paper presented to the CEIEC Conference 'Honouring the Child, Honouring Equity: Reconsidering Rights and Relationships', Melbourne, 17–20 November 2005.

**PART
FIVE****ERO's Education Reviews in Early
Childhood Education Services****The structure for ERO's evaluation**

This section provides a brief description of the elements that make up the review structure.

These are:

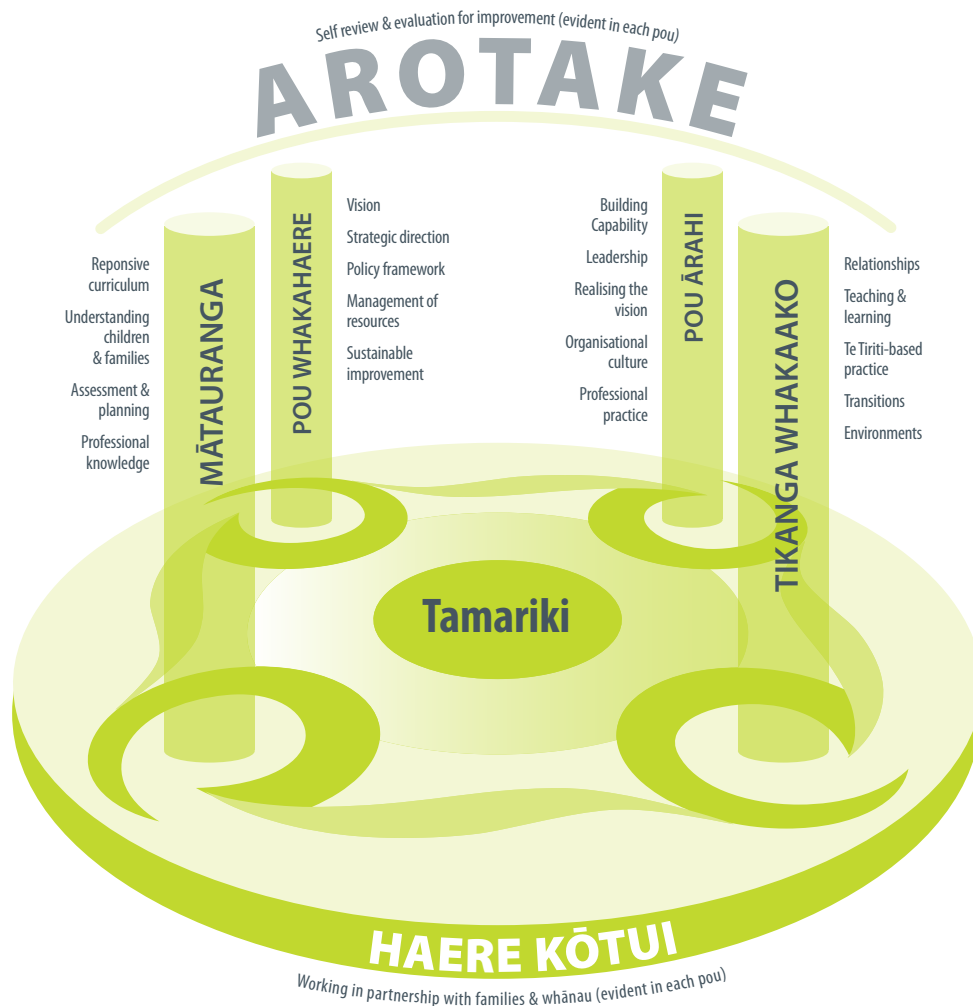
1. ERO's overall evaluation question
2. Ngā Pou Here – the review framework
3. Capacity and sustainability
4. Priority learners
5. National evaluation topics
6. Compliance

1. ERO's overall evaluation question

ERO's review will answer the overall evaluation question:

How well placed is this service to promote positive learning outcomes for all children?

In answering this question, ERO's structure for reviewing and reporting helps early childhood services to see what they are doing well, where they need to develop and what they should do next to improve outcomes for children.



POSITIVE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ALL CHILDREN

Diagram 6: Ngā Pou Here – Review Framework

This diagram shows what each Pou represents in the review process. It also shows the connecting elements, Haere Kōtui and Arotake, which should be evident in each Pou.

2. Ngā Pou Here – the review framework

Ngā Pou Here is ERO’s framework for the evaluation of processes and practices in an early childhood service. The overall aim of using Ngā Pou Here is for ERO to evaluate the service’s capacity to promote positive learning outcomes for all children and to sustain a process of ongoing improvement.

Ngā Pou Here explores four key areas:

- Pou Whakahaere – how the service determines its vision, philosophy and direction to ensure positive learning outcomes for children
- Pou Ārahi – how leadership is enacted to enhance positive learning outcomes for children
- Mātauranga – whose knowledge is valued and how the curriculum is designed to achieve positive learning outcomes for children
- Tikanga Whakaako – how approaches to teaching and learning are responsive to diversity and support positive learning outcomes for children.

Within each *Pou* ERO considers the extent to which the service is enacting Haere Kōtui (working in partnership) and using Arotake (evaluative approaches). As connecting elements, Haere Kōtui and Arotake are envisaged as weaving through and connecting each *Pou*.

ERO's evaluation indicators in PART 6 clarify the basis on which ERO evaluates early childhood services' performance within *Ngā Pou Here*, and also provide a tool to assist early childhood services with self review.

Reviewers use *Ngā Pou Here* to design and undertake the review according to each early childhood service's context, while ensuring that the focus remains on the service's capacity to promote the wellbeing and learning of all children.

3. Capacity and sustainability

The structure of *Ngā Pou Here* supports ERO to determine the capacity a service has to sustain and continue to improve the quality of provision for all children.

For services that are not performing well, *Ngā Pou Here* will help review officers to identify and prioritise the key areas for development. For services that demonstrate a high level of performance, the review can focus on the service's own information about how well it promotes positive learning outcomes for all children.

ERO's review process takes into account each early childhood service's context, performance and capacity. The review framework remains sufficiently flexible for review officers to design reviews that are responsive to context.

4. Priority learners and ERO's review structure

A priority for the government is that every child has the opportunity to participate in high quality early childhood education. The Government's priority learners include children who are Māori, Pacific, from low income families, and those with diverse needs. ERO also includes children up to the age of two.

Educational opportunities and outcomes for Māori are a focus in all evaluation work conducted by ERO. In early childhood services, ERO will review how well services promote participation and engagement of Māori children and whānau. ERO looks for evidence that Māori children are actively engaged in their learning, are progressing well and succeeding as Māori.

For children of Pacific heritage, ERO will explore how their culture, languages and identities are recognised and responded to in order to help them succeed.

Children with diverse needs include children with special education needs or special abilities, children who speak English as an additional language, and children of migrants and refugees. ERO will review how well the services recognise and provide for children's particular learning needs.



Where a service enrolls children up to the age of two ERO will maintain a close focus on provision for the learning and wellbeing of these infants and toddlers.

5. National evaluation topics

The national evaluation topics (NETs) are an important part of ERO's review process. Through the NETs, ERO investigates key aspects of early childhood services' performance in relation to the Government's education priorities. Topics for investigation change regularly and are decided in consultation with the Minister, the Ministry of Education and other government agencies.

ERO uses a range of ways to gather information for its national reports, depending on the scope and focus of the information needed. Currently ERO uses one or a combination of the following evaluative approaches:

- specific in-depth questions asked by review officers during reviews
- analysis of confirmed ERO reports on early childhood services
- questionnaires sent directly by ERO to early childhood services
- specific studies undertaken by ERO in early childhood services outside of the scheduled Education Review.

Information from individual early childhood service reviews is gathered, aggregated and analysed. System-wide evaluation judgements are developed from this analysis and published in education evaluation reports which are on ERO's website and often printed as booklets.

Early childhood services will be notified of the current NET before their scheduled ERO review. Information about current NETs is also provided on ERO's website.

6. Compliance

Early childhood services operate under a comprehensive set of regulations (reflecting the importance of safety and wellbeing for young children) and there is a public expectation that ERO will continue to check on compliance with these regulations.

ERO supports services' management of compliance functions and places emphasis on services' own reporting on compliance. ERO has developed the *Guidelines for Centre [Management] Assurance Statement* and *Self-Audit Checklists* so that services can provide assurance that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

During the course of all reviews, ERO checks performance in respect of compliance as attested in the Assurance Statement. If the checking process indicates any significant problems, ERO may decide to investigate further.

Compliance is not a major focus of reviews unless it appears to ERO that there are significant levels of risk to children's safety, wellbeing or learning. If the checking process indicates significant problems, ERO will investigate further or make recommendations to the Ministry of Education to reassess the service's compliance with licensing requirements.

**PART
SIX****ERO's Evaluation Indicators for Education
Reviews in Early Childhood Services****Introduction**

Indicators are statements that indicate whether a goal has been achieved. In this document, ERO's evaluation indicators are about the factors in an early childhood service that contribute to positive learning outcomes for children.

The indicators provide a framework that allow for judgements to be made about what is being practised and the difference between what is enacted and high quality practice.

ERO's evaluation indicators for early childhood services:

- help to determine if high quality is being achieved
- are indicative of quality – they do not represent quality practice on their own
- are statements that can be verified through data collection and analysis.

They are not requirements and early childhood services are not expected to demonstrate that they have achieved all practices outlined in the indicators.

Indicator development

ERO's evaluation indicators for education reviews in early childhood services are based on current national and international evaluation and research, ERO's national evaluations, and many years of reviewing experience within ERO.

ERO conducted a wide ranging literature search on research related to early childhood education over the past ten years. The search was broad enough to encompass diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives. Priority was given to New Zealand research in order to provide localised perspectives on best practice in early childhood education.

Research ranged in size, scope and focus. Studies that had been subject to peer review or accepted for publication, and reports of major studies were given priority. Research ranged from action-research and small-scale research projects through to larger projects and longitudinal studies. Where a lack of research was found the scope of the search was expanded or deepened. In some instances opinion pieces, articles or other material were used if they communicated ideas or aspects of best practice not well explored in research.

The full list of references used to develop the indicators is available on ERO's website.

The indicators as a resource

The evaluation indicators are a resource to inform the judgements that ERO reviewers make about different aspects of the performance of early childhood services. They are also intended to clarify the basis on which ERO evaluates early childhood performance, and to assist in the early childhood service's self review.

Cross-checking across several indicators strengthens the evidence base for answering evaluative questions.

For ERO, the evaluation indicators:

- support the implementation of *Ngā Pou Here*, the review framework
- keep the reviews focused on the factors that contribute to successful outcomes
- keep the importance of success for Māori children to the fore
- assist ERO reviewers to consider what is significant when making judgements about how well placed the service is to promote positive learning outcomes for all children
- promote consistency by providing guidance for reviewers
- provide a basis for discussion with service personnel about what they know about the quality of education and associated outcomes for children who attend their service.

For early childhood services, the evaluation indicators:

- make the review process transparent
- help them to understand the basis on which ERO makes its judgements
- focus them on factors that contribute to positive outcomes for children
- support their focus on diverse groups of children and their families
- provide a tool to assist them with their own self review
- help to build their evaluation capacity by modelling evaluative questions and evidence-based judgments.



How the indicators are organised

The indicators are organised within each of the four *Pou* of *Ngā Pou Here*.

Each set of *Pou* indicators starts with partnership with parents (Haere Kōtui) and sustainability through self review (Arotake). These elements weave through and connect each *Pou*. As a result there is some overlap across the different sections.

The evaluation indicators for each *Pou* are preceded by questions to guide evaluation and review of that *Pou*.

The evaluation questions and prompts

Priority questions.

These questions ask what the service knows through its self review about its priority learners. They also ask about the effectiveness of partnerships and self review in relation to each *Pou*.

Supporting evaluation questions

These are the key evaluative questions that highlight the main aspects of each *Pou*.

Investigative prompts

These prompts further unpack the priority questions and the supporting evaluation questions. They are examples rather than a definitive list.

The indicators

Connecting elements

These refer to indicators related to Haere Kōtui (partnerships with parents and whānau) and Arotake (sustainability through self review). Because Haere Kōtui and Arotake are woven across each *Pou* there is a connecting elements indicator section for each *Pou*.

Contributing elements

This is a way of grouping the indicators according to particular aspects of practice or common themes for particular indicators.

Using the indicators as part of self review

- The *indicators* can be used:
 - ~ to foster greater depth of understanding about an element or area for development
 - ~ as a tool for exploring an aspect of high quality practice
 - ~ as a measure to evaluate whether high quality is being achieved.
- The *investigative questions* are a good starting point to reflect on an aspect of practice.
- By answering one of ERO's *priority questions* an early childhood service will be asking itself a challenging question that is likely to generate in-depth review and evaluation.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR POU WHAKAHAERE

How effectively do the service's philosophy, vision, goals and systems promote positive learning outcomes for all children?

Priority questions

What does the service know about the effectiveness of its philosophy, vision, goals and systems in:

- supporting Māori children to achieve success as Māori?
- supporting Pacific children to achieve success?
- responding to the interests, strengths and capabilities of diverse groups of children who attend the service and supporting them to achieve success?

How effectively do the governors and managers of the service promote partnerships with parents and whānau?

How effectively does self review guide decision-making and lead to improvements in the provision of high quality education and care?

Supporting evaluation questions

To what extent does this service:

- value and implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles through its policies and practices?
- include diverse parent and whānau aspirations and expectations for their children's learning in the vision and associated goals and plans?
- have a philosophy that reflects the values and beliefs of teachers, parents, whānau and community?
- plan (long and short term) and implement strategies that focus on improvement and children's learning?
- have policies that guide practice?
- effectively manage finances, resourcing, health and safety?
- appoint staff with relevant knowledge and expertise?
- provide for ongoing staff development?
- involve parents and whānau in self review?
- use robust processes in self review?
- use self review in guiding decision-making and improving quality?

Examples of prompts for investigation

- In what ways do plans, policies and practices demonstrate evidence of a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles?
- What processes are used to consult with parents, whānau, iwi, hapū and the wider community?
- Are the processes used to communicate with whānau Māori appropriate, for example kanohi ki te kanohi?
- How does the service find out what aspirations and expectations parents and whānau have for their children?
- How is this information used?
- What informs this service's long and short term planning? Does it include a strong focus on children's learning?
- How has the statement of philosophy been developed? Has it been reviewed? Who was involved? Whose values and beliefs does it reflect?
- How does the service ensure alignment between policy and practice?
- In what ways does self review link to the service's vision and associated goals?
- What self review is undertaken of governance and management practices?
- What self review is planned? What self review is undertaken in a spontaneous way?
- What processes are used to carry out self review?
- How are the outcomes of self review used by those responsible for governing and managing this service?
- What is the impact of self review for this service? What difference does it make for all children and their families?

Indicators for Pou Whakahaere

ELEMENTS	EXAMPLES OF EVALUATION INDICATORS
Connecting elements	
Pou Whakahaere and partnerships with parents and whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service acknowledges Māori as tangata whenua and is committed to Tiriti-based partnerships. • The importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is acknowledged through partnerships, policies and practices. • Parents and whānau are consulted and have opportunities to contribute to self review. • The service demonstrates a strong commitment to consulting whānau of Māori children and involving them in decision-making. • The philosophy, vision and associated goals and plans are influenced by the aspirations parents and whānau have for their children. • Management recognises the importance of providing appropriate physical spaces for conversations with and among teachers, parents and whānau.
Pou Whakahaere and sustainability through self review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is compelling evidence that self review leads to improved outcomes for children. • The dual purposes of self review for improvement and accountability are well understood. • Expectations/guidelines/procedures are documented to effectively guide self review. • Self review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is ongoing and responsive to identified priorities. - includes all aspects of the operation of the service over time - focuses on the effectiveness of processes and practices - includes a focus on progress towards the vision, goals and outcomes. • Self review informs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decision-making at a governance level - professional learning and development (PLD) programmes - priorities, plans, policies and actions. • The impact of change made as a result of self review is well monitored over time.
Contributing elements	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear vision sets direction for the service. This vision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seeks to realise the potential of Māori children and their whānau - includes reference to the bicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand - is responsive to the aspirations and expectations that parents and whānau have for their children. - guides long and short term planning - reflects a commitment to high quality early childhood education for all children.
Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service's philosophy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - was developed collaboratively by management, teachers, parents and whānau, and children - is clearly documented and shared with all who are involved in the service - is regularly reviewed - is underpinned by shared values and beliefs - reflects a commitment to the bicultural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand - outlines the service's desired outcomes for children - is evident in practice.

<p>Strategic direction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning (long and short term) clearly identifies the service’s priorities and associated goals towards achieving its vision. • The service’s priorities and goals are strongly linked to positive learning outcomes for children. • Goals are supported by appropriate actions and resources to enable them to be achieved. • Progress towards identified goals is systematically monitored. • The service has evidence to demonstrate the achievement of its vision and goals
<p>Policy framework and guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies acknowledge Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori as tangata whenua. • Policies set out explicit expectations and guidance for teachers to implement a Te Tiriti-based/bicultural curriculum. • Policies and procedures guide inclusive practice at all levels of the service. • Policies usefully underpin high quality practice in all aspects of the service. • Policies are based on principles of advocacy, equity and social justice. • Policies reflect the rights of all children to a quality, inclusive early childhood education.
<p>Performance management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service has up-to-date policies and procedures that support the recruitment, management and professional learning and development (PLD) of competent managers and teachers. • Performance management successfully contributes to the service achieving its vision and goals.
<p>Financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual budget is well aligned to the service’s goals and priorities. • The budget reflects the priorities the service has for promoting positive outcomes for children. • Spending is monitored through regular reporting.
<p>Health and safety management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service has effective systems to monitor physical and emotional health and safety for all involved in the service. <p>Note: <i>The Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008</i> set the requirements for health and safety.</p>
<p>Capacity building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong focus on continual improvement. • New members into governance and management roles are well supported through induction and ongoing training processes. • Those responsible for governing and managing the service have a good understanding of and capability to carry out their roles and responsibilities. • Management supports ongoing PLD for teachers according to their specific needs. • Managers undertake PLD and training to ensure they have current knowledge and skills necessary to provide high quality early childhood education. • Management advocates for bicultural development and Tiriti-based practices. • Management promotes equity and social justice for children and their families through cross-cultural development and understanding. • Management is committed to and has the capability to recruit, manage and develop competent teachers.

The term *teacher* in the indicators refers to *teacher/educator/kaiako*.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR POU ĀRAHI

How effectively do leaders build capability within the service to promote positive learning outcomes for all children?

Priority questions

What does the service know about the effectiveness of its leaders in relation to:

- supporting Māori children to achieve success as Māori?
- supporting Pacific children to achieve success?
- responding to the interests, strengths and capabilities of diverse groups of children who attend the service and supporting them to achieve success?

How effectively do leaders work in partnership with parents and whānau to achieve positive outcomes for all children?

How effective is the educational (pedagogical and curriculum) leadership of the service?

To what extent do leaders promote and implement effective self review as a means to improve the quality of education and care for all children?

Supporting evaluation questions

How effectively do leaders:

- promote the vision and its associated goals?
- promote quality learning and teaching?
- build and support professional practice?
- develop relationships and collaborative ways of working?
- provide opportunities for leadership at all levels? (teachers, parents and whānau, children, the wider community)

Examples of prompts for investigation

How is leadership defined and enacted in this service?

- Who gets to lead and in relation to what?
- What understanding do leaders have about the service's philosophy, vision and goals?
- How do leaders promote the service's philosophy?
- What do leaders do to promote strong partnerships with whānau Māori?
- How do leaders work in a responsive way with families of diverse groups of children?
- What role do educational leaders have in self review?
- How does professional learning and development (PLD) contribute to the implementation of bicultural and Te Tiriti-based practice?
- How do leaders support teachers to develop their professional teaching practice for infants, toddlers and young children?
- What PLD are leaders involved in?
- What PLD is planned for teachers? Why? What determines this planning?
- What PLD have leaders and teachers undertaken recently? What impact has this had?
- How do leaders encourage and support teachers to increase their cultural competencies?

Evaluation Indicators for Pou Ārahi

ELEMENTS	EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS
Connecting elements	
Pou Ārahi and partnerships with parents and whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders base relationships on respect, trust and reciprocity. • Leaders and teachers respectfully validate te ao Māori, and create opportunities for whānau Māori to voice their views. • Leaders understand parent and whānau aspirations and expectations, and work collaboratively and responsively to achieve them. • Leaders ensure effective communication with families who are bi- or multilingual. • Leaders encourage and invite parents and whānau to take an active role in their children’s learning. • Leaders are responsive to issues, concerns and questions from parents and whānau. • Parents, whānau and children are encouraged to take on leadership roles and responsibilities in the service. • Leaders strongly advocate for infants, toddlers and young children and their whānau.
Pou Ārahi and sustainability through self review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders are focused on improving the quality of education and care through ongoing systematic self review. • Self review is valued, championed and effectively led. • Self review includes the gathering and analysis of useful information from a range of sources. • Leaders ensure teachers have time to critically reflect on their practice. • Leaders use evidence to reflect on and improve practice. • Good use is made of resources and research to support self review. • Leaders access professional learning and development to increase their individual and collective capability in self review. • Leaders ensure that all members of the service have opportunities to be involved in self review. • Reviews are documented and leaders ensure that outcomes are shared with those involved in the service.
Contributing elements	
Realising the vision and philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders show a strong commitment to the philosophy, vision and goals of the service. • Leaders promote a shared understanding among teachers of the service’s philosophy, vision and goals. • A high level of commitment to bicultural practice is apparent. • Leaders ensure the service’s vision and goals are focused on learning. • Leaders give priority to equitable outcomes for all children.
Establishing and developing the organisational culture of the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders establish a culture in which children are first and foremost valued, celebrated and affirmed for who they are and what they bring to their learning. • A high level of relational trust is evident among all who are involved in the service and is conducive to debate, negotiation, problem solving and critical reflection. • Collaborative ways of working are fostered with everyone involved in the service.

Building and supporting professional practice

- Leaders have a strong commitment to teaching and learning that contributes to positive outcomes for all children.
- Leaders and teachers are aware of their responsibility to advocate for infants, toddlers and young children.
- Leaders and teachers ensure their practices reflect the rights of all to a quality, inclusive early childhood education.
- Curriculum design and implementation is underpinned by Te Whāriki (the principles, strands, goals and learning outcomes)
- Curriculum design and implementation are effectively led.
- Leaders encourage and support Māori teachers to build their leadership capabilities.
- Leaders advocate for the development and implementation of a Tiriti-based curriculum.
- Emergent leadership among teachers is encouraged.
- Leaders plan for PLD.
- Leaders seek appropriate PLD to strengthen bicultural practice.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR MĀTAURANGA

How effectively is this service's curriculum designed to promote positive learning outcomes for all children?

Priority questions

What does the service know about the effectiveness of its curriculum (design and planning) in:

- supporting Māori children to achieve success as Māori?
- supporting Pacific children to achieve success?
- responding to the interests, strengths and capabilities of diverse groups of children who attend the service and supporting them to achieve success?

To what extent does this service's curriculum recognise and build on the knowledge and expertise that children and their parents and whānau bring to the service?

How effective is self review in evaluating the impact of the service's curriculum in promoting positive learning outcomes for all children?

Supporting evaluation questions

- How well do teachers know infants, toddlers and young children (and their parents and whānau)?
- How well are the aspirations and goals of parents and whānau understood by teachers and reflected in the curriculum?
- To what extent are teachers involved in curriculum decisions?
- To what extent does the curriculum reflect the interests and knowledge of teachers?
- How well placed are teachers to implement a curriculum that effectively responds to the interests and strengths of infants, toddlers and young children?
- How effective are assessment and planning processes in enabling teachers to notice, recognise and respond to the strengths, interests and capabilities of infants, toddlers and young children?
- To what extent is the curriculum based on teachers':
 - professional knowledge, curriculum and subject knowledge, and knowledge of learners?
 - understanding of te ao Māori perspectives?
 - knowledge of the diverse cultural identities of the service's families and community?

Examples of prompts for investigation

- How do teachers get to know children and their parents and whānau?
- What informs curriculum decisions in this service?
- How are emphases and priorities for the curriculum determined? Who is involved?
- What processes are in place to involve children and parents and whānau in curriculum decisions?
- How do whānau Māori contribute to curriculum decisions? Hapū and iwi?
- What role do whānau Māori play in reviewing the curriculum?
- How does this service value and draw on the expertise of parents, whānau and the wider community in planning and reviewing its curriculum?
- What assessment processes enable teachers to notice, recognise and respond to the strengths, interests and capabilities of infants, toddlers and young children and document continuity of progress and learning for all children?
- What processes are in place to plan a responsive curriculum?
- How does the service evaluate the responsiveness of its curriculum?

Evaluation Indicators for Mātauranga

ELEMENTS	EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS
Connecting elements	
Mātauranga and partnerships with parents and whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong, responsive, reciprocal and respectful relationships are formed with each family, supporting children’s sense of belonging. • Teachers value and acknowledge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parents and whānau aspirations for their children and take account of these in assessment and planning processes. - the knowledge, skill and expertise that whānau Māori bring to the service - children’s place as part of a wider whānau and iwi. • Teachers value and seek the contribution of infants, toddlers and young children, parents and whānau to the programmes. • Teachers provide opportunities for parents and whānau to contribute their perspectives to the design of the service’s curriculum. • Parents, whānau and children are involved in leading and contributing to the service’s curriculum. • Leaders and teachers work in partnership with parents of children with special needs to improve and enhance their learning.
Mātauranga and sustainability through self review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - question whose knowledge is valued and reflected in the service’s curriculum as part of self review. - evaluate the impact of curriculum decisions on infants, toddlers and young children - use Te Whāriki as a basis for evaluating the service’s curriculum
Contributing elements	
Professional knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers work in-depth with the goals, dispositions and learning outcomes of Te Whāriki • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - know about current theories of learning, teaching and development and use this knowledge to design the curriculum and decide how they structure time and space and use of resources - learn about Māori theories and philosophies to assist in the development of a culturally appropriate curriculum - reflect on their personal values, beliefs, attitudes and philosophy when making decisions about curriculum - recognise and value the importance of children learning through play. • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are able to explain and discuss their pedagogy. - articulate and share the rationale for curriculum decisions with parents and whānau. • Teachers take personal responsibility for learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - te reo Māori, using correct pronunciation and integrating this te reo meaningfully into the programme - about the languages, cultures and identities of all children attending.
Curriculum and subject content knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers can explain how their curriculum aligns to the principles and strands of Te Whāriki. • Teachers’ knowledge of waiata, haka, pūrakau, pakiwaitara, karakia and whānau helps them to extend children’s thinking and foster new understandings. • Teachers have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an understanding of te ao Māori perspectives across all aspects of the curriculum - sufficient knowledge, including subject and general knowledge, to build on children’s existing understandings, working theories and dispositions - a depth of subject knowledge that enables them to respond meaningfully to infants’, toddlers’ and young children’s interests and enquiries. • Where teachers do not have the necessary content knowledge to support children’s interests and enquiries they access information with children (e.g. through books, the Internet, or by asking community specialists and family elders, tangata whenua, kaumātua, kuia, whānau).

<p>Knowledge of learning and of children as learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘funds of knowledge’ infants, toddlers and young children bring with them to the early childhood service are acknowledged and provide a basis for decisions about curriculum. • Teachers understand the child in the context of family/whānau and wider community. • Teachers value Māori children’s identities as Māori as the foundation for, and key to, their success as Māori. • Teachers recognise and acknowledge the whakapapa of Māori children. • Children contribute to the development of a curriculum that is responsive to their culture, languages and identities. • Teachers provide a curriculum that is responsive to infants’, toddlers’ and young children’s deep interests. • Teachers have an understanding of each child as a unique learner including their ‘working theories’ (knowledge, skills and dispositions). • Teachers carefully listen to, recognise and document infants’, toddlers’ and young children’s working theories, and encourage their development through dialogue and providing further relevant experiences.
<p>Knowledge of children’s rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curriculum provides opportunities for children to discuss and negotiate rights, fairness and justice with adults. • The curriculum empowers children with the knowledge that they have the power to affect conditions that impact on them. • Children are supported to develop the characteristics of a global and local citizen, including collective responsibility for problem solving in a changing world. • Assessment practices support children to understand and contribute to decisions about their learning.
<p>Knowledge of culture and context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and teachers acknowledge whakapapa as integral to the development of a sense of self, belonging and connectedness. • Teachers learn about local hapu and iwi, their history, sites of significance and kawa, and incorporating this into the programme in a meaningful and respectful manner. • Teachers are aware of indigenous knowledge unique to Aotearoa New Zealand and what this means for the service’s curriculum. • Kaupapa Māori concepts such as manaakitanga, wairuatanga, whanaungatanga and kaitiakitanga are integral to curriculum decisions. • Teachers recognise the diversity within children of Pacific heritage (i.e. they are not a homogeneous group) and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understand that language and culture are key to Pacific children’s identity and a positive, confident sense of self - seek ways to maintain the children’s connections to and fluency in their first language. • Teachers seek ways to maintain children’s connections to their cultural identity.
<p>Knowledge of family and community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers recognise that Māori have a unique culture and history based on strong genealogical links and relationships. • Teachers engage with children and their parents’ language and culture to make the setting more meaningful for their wider community of learners. • Teachers view each family and its knowledge of their child as an integral part of the service’s learning community.

Assessment and identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment builds children’s identity as a successful learner. • Assessment acknowledges the social and cultural worlds, and ways of learning of all children. • Assessment supports the development of a strong Māori identity in Māori children, through reflecting Māori perspectives of the child, their world and their place in the world. • Māori children’s cultural capital is acknowledged and valued and their learning achievements are celebrated. • Assessment practices value and respond to Pacific cultures, knowledge and ways of learning.
Assessment processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focuses on enhancing dispositional learning, as well as skills and ways of knowing - shows deepening and the increasing complexity of children’s learning - reflects the complexity of children’s relationships with people, places and things - reflects a credit-based approach that pays attention to children’s strengths, interests and dispositions - is available to the children so that they can revisit and share their learning with others. • Ongoing observation of children in everyday activities builds a picture of what children know, understand, feel, are interested in, and can do. • Assessment includes multiple perspectives that enhance the interpretation and analysis of learning.
Assessment purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers use a range of approaches for different assessment purposes; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to understand and support children’s learning and development - to identify progress and achievement - to identify and diagnose children’s capabilities and where additional support may be needed - to evaluate how well the curriculum is helping the service to achieve its outcomes. • Assessments illustrate and support continuity in learning and demonstrate children’s progress in a range of contexts. • Assessment practices provide parents and whānau with a way of contributing to their children’s learning.
Curriculum planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers analyse assessment information to understand children’s learning pathways and then plan to continue and strengthen them. • Information from individual and group assessment is used to plan the curriculum. • Planning is driven by evidence-based formative assessment, for individual and groups of children.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR TIKANGA WHAKAAKO

How well do teaching and learning practices promote positive learning outcomes for all children?

Priority questions

What does the service know (through its self review) about the effectiveness of tikanga whakaako in:

- supporting Māori children to achieve success as Māori?
- supporting Pacific children to achieve success?
- responding to the interests, strengths and capabilities of diverse groups of children who attend the service and supporting them to achieve success?

To what extent do teaching and learning practices promote partnerships with parents and whānau?

How effective is self review in improving teaching and learning practices to promote positive learning outcomes for all children in this service?

Supporting evaluation questions

- How effectively do teachers:
 - use teaching practices that contribute to positive learning outcomes for infants, toddlers and young children?
 - use teaching practices that enhance children's sense of themselves as successful learners?
 - engage in respectful, reciprocal and responsive relationships with all children?
 - respond to strengths, interests and capabilities of all children?
 - use teaching practices that are responsive to children with special needs and capabilities?
 - interact with children to extend and challenge their thinking?
 - establish a learning environment that contributes to positive learning outcomes for infants, toddlers and young children?
 - use teaching strategies and resources that support children to become confident in Aotearoa New Zealand's dual cultural heritage?
 - engage in reflective practice that leads them to question and modify their practice?
- How well are transitions managed for children when they are: settling into the service; moving within the service; preparing to start school?

Examples of prompts for investigation

- What do teachers know about the effectiveness of their teaching practice and strategies in promoting positive learning outcomes for infants and toddlers?
- What do teachers know about the effectiveness of their teaching practice and strategies in promoting positive learning outcomes for all young children, including diverse groups?
- In what ways do teaching and learning practices engage, extend and deepen children's knowledge, skills and dispositions?
- In what ways are teachers intentional and deliberate in their teaching?
- What opportunities do teachers have to reflect on and discuss their practice with other teachers and leaders?
- How do teachers respond to children's strengths, interests and capabilities?
- How do teaching practices and strategies promote the language, culture and identity of Māori children, Pacific children and children with other cultural heritages?
- How do teachers respond to diverse groups of children, including those with special needs and capabilities?
- In what ways does the learning environment reflect and support the learning of all infants, toddlers and young children at this service?
- How do transition processes support children as they transition into, within and from the service to school?

Evaluation Indicators for Tikanga Whakaako

ELEMENTS	EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS Note: There are separate indicators specifically for children up to two years of age at the end of this section
Connecting elements	
Tikanga Whakaako and partnerships with parents and whānau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service is welcoming to all children and their parents and whānau. • Partnerships are based on genuine attitudes of acceptance, respect and willingness to listen and change. • Teachers incorporate the skills and expertise (cultural advantage) that whānau Māori bring to the service and into the programmes. • Teachers ensure that interactions with Pacific parents and communities are culturally responsive. • Teachers ensure that any planned early intervention is culturally responsive, where family/whānau can bring 'who they are' to the process.
Tikanga Whakaako and sustainability through self review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - systematically evaluate their teaching practices and the impact of these on outcomes for children. - are reflective practitioners who critique their own practices through a process that is ongoing and intentional - engage in discussion and debate that challenges and informs improvement of their practice. • Self review includes a focus on the impact of the service's bicultural curriculum for all children. • Self review leads to improved practices that are 'enabling' and based on principles of advocacy, equity and social justice.
Contributing elements	
Relationships and interactions with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have positive, sensitive and responsive relationships with children - take time to genuinely listen to children and explore the deeper meanings in their learning - foster children's language development - provide for authentic dialogue in meaningful contexts - ask open questions of children to allow their interests to lead learning - actively promote peer interactions to support learning - use te reo Māori in ways that recognise it as a living language, indigenous to Aotearoa New Zealand. • Children's talk is encouraged, accepted and respected.
Children's rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - talk with children about decisions that affect them - respect children's rights to express a point of view and be involved in decisions that affect them. • Children are empowered to take increased responsibility for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the wellbeing of themselves, others and the group - their immediate and wider environments.

<p>Effective teaching practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are attuned to the variety of ways children express and explore their working theories, and they use a range of strategies to encourage the development of these theories - use a range of teaching strategies and practices to respond to the cultures, languages and identities of all children - are intentional in the way they recognise and respond to all opportunities to engage in, and extend, children’s learning. • Intentional teaching includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - co-construction between children and teachers - joint involvement in child and adult-initiated activities - teacher involvement in children’s self-initiated play activities. • Sustained, shared teaching episodes extend children’s thinking and value their contribution to the learning experience. • Teaching practice reflects an understanding of the essence of the Māori child such as mana, wairua and mauri. • Teachers : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support children’s problem-solving and experimentation - make links across time and activities by revisiting children’s ideas, interests and deepening understanding • Children are provided with feedback that acknowledges their effort and success. • Teachers and children have fun as part of the learning process. • Children are supported to change roles between teacher and learner. • Routines are consistently implemented giving children a sense of security in being able to predict what will happen next. • Teachers make links to and provide opportunities for children to learn about the local and wider community • Teaching practice includes a focus on sustainable environmental practice
<p>Literacy and mathematics Links to the school curriculum Domains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers provide a repertoire of literacy practices that enable children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observe, listen and play with language - use literacy for a purpose - critically question. • Teachers provide good quality language resources to support children’s first languages including Māori and Pacific. • Teachers provide meaningful learning contexts for children to develop print awareness and alphabet knowledge. • Children’s mathematical learning is enhanced through meaningful and interesting opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use mathematics in everyday life - use open-ended resources for mathematical exploration - engage in games in which children can vary the level of challenge. • Teachers extend children’s understanding of literacy and mathematical concepts from a te ao Māori perspective. • Teachers provide opportunities for children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - make sense of the natural, social, physical and material worlds - be creative and imaginative - use information communication technologies (ICT) meaningfully

<p>Te Tiriti-based practice</p> <p>Bicultural curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are open to 'listening to culture', allowing space and time for whānau Māori to tell their stories, create their own images, and listen to their own voices. • Teacher practice incorporates the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (partnership, participation and protection). • Programmes include Māori concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes, reo, practices, customs, values and beliefs. • Teachers use te reo Māori. • Teacher practice reflects the competencies in Tātaiako¹
<p>Inclusive practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - share a philosophy and commitment to inclusive education that includes particular beliefs and values based on social justice, fairness and human rights - take full responsibility for the education and care of children with special needs, ensuring that they participate fully in all aspects of the programme alongside their peers - identify and remove barriers to a child's full acceptance, participation and learning - help all children and families to celebrate their differences by reinforcing the rights of individuals and groups to be different - provide children with positive ways of thinking about and understanding disability and the place of children with disabilities in early childhood settings and communities. - enable children to explore gender and gender roles in ways that are non-stereotypical and open-ended.
<p>Learning environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical environment is safe, while offering challenges and interest that invite children to explore and become fully involved in a wide variety of activities. • The environment encourages critical thought, wondering and creativity. • Teachers provide resources and environments that encourage exploration that is meaningful and enjoyable for children. • The level of resourcing supports children to choose, experience challenges and revisit prior learning • The languages and symbols of children's cultural backgrounds, including the diversity of Pacific heritages, are visible. • Teachers use Māori symbols and natural resources to contribute to the richness of a vibrant learning environment. • The environment includes a wide range of natural materials and cultural artefacts that reflect the cultural backgrounds of children and their families and whānau. • Teachers include children in decisions about the resources and space in the learning environment. • Teachers organise and manage the learning environment so that challenging behaviour is minimised or less likely to occur
<p>Transition into and within the service and to school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's sense of belonging is nurtured during and after transitions into and within the service, and when moving to school. • Transition practices honour the cultural uniqueness that Māori and other children bring with them and nurture their sense of belonging. • Teachers foster children's friendships and engagement in a group to enhance their security and confidence at settling in and transition times. • Successful transitions are supported by effective partnerships between families, services, and schools.

1 Ministry of Education (2011). *Tātaiako – cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners*. Wellington.

CHILDREN UP TO TWO YEARS OF AGE

These indicators focus on factors that contribute to high quality provision for children up to two years of age. They are particularly focused on Tikanga Whakaako and Mātauranga.

ELEMENTS	EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS
Connecting elements	
Positive, sensitive and responsive interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure, child-teacher-family relationships promote the development of children’s positive sense of self. • Responsive caregiving supports infants’ and toddlers’ need for strong and secure attachments. • Consistent caregiving enables teachers to respond sensitively to each child’s changing needs and preferences. • The social and emotional climate created by a responsive curriculum supports children’s engagement and learning. • Teachers’ practice reflects a commitment to a pedagogy of care. • Teachers learn about te ao Māori perspectives to support their care of Māori infants and toddlers. • Teachers understand the concept of aroha: including compassion, respect, connectedness and obligation to whānau to help them provide appropriate care and education for Māori babies. • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engage in one-to-one responsive interactions (where teachers follow the child’s lead) - recognise that consistency and continuity are important in establishing a secure foundation for young children’s care and education. - Teachers respect children’s rights to be informed and consulted about decisions that affect them. • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - know the narrative style (language development) of the children they care for and the level of communication and language used by each child - are responsive to children’s temperaments, preferences and interests - interpret and respond to the subtle cues offered by infants and toddlers including body language, for example gaze, pointing - are flexible and respond to the needs and rhythms of children up to two years of age - offer infants and toddlers choices about what is to happen to them and wait for them to respond to the choices offered - are available to infants and toddlers, supporting them in their learning, but resisting the urge to intervene unnecessarily in their problem-solving efforts and mastery of their own physical development - are sensitive and responsive to differences in children’s social and cultural backgrounds. • The importance of play as a vehicle for learning is respected and valued. • Teachers recognise and use learning opportunities within routines. • Teachers maintain a calm, slow pace in which younger children have space and time to lead their learning.

<p>Learning environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical environment provides for the safety, physical and emotional wellbeing, intellectual stimulation and social support of very young children. • Children have easy access to an environment that is well resourced and encourages exploration. • There is sufficient space to prevent overcrowding and to minimise children’s exposure to infectious diseases and excessive noise. • Infants and toddlers experience a low-stress environment that actively avoids placing them in situations where they are exposed to stress that they cannot control and where there is no support from an adult who can soothe and comfort them (toxic stress). • There are comfortable, safe spaces that cater for children who are not yet mobile, able to sit by themselves, and for those who are crawling and learning to walk.
<p>Structural aspects of quality for infants and toddlers</p> <p><i>Responsibility for these aspects lies mainly with Pou Whakahaere and Pou Ārahi.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures maximise children’s sense of security and provide them with continuity of connection with teachers. • Structures and systems ensure teachers are available and have the time to develop positive relationships with infants and toddlers and their parents and whānau. • Adult to child ratios of 1:3 are considered necessary to promote high quality. (minimum required by regulations is 1:5) • Group size of no more than 6–8 children (research-based high quality provision). • A positive working environment facilitates low turnover of teachers and is conducive to their relationships with infants and toddlers. • Teachers have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevant qualifications, knowledge and skills to support infants and toddlers to experience positive outcomes - professional knowledge of quality care and education practices for infants and toddlers.

**PART
SEVEN****Process Guidelines for Reviews****Notification**

ERO begins the process with a notification letter that gives the early childhood service time to prepare for the external review.

With the notification letter ERO sends *He Pou Tātaki* (this document), the *Guidelines, Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklists*, a hard copy of the *Self Report* and links to electronic versions of relevant documents.

ERO gives the service information to distribute to teachers, parents and whānau about the review.

Self reports

The self report plays a significant part in the ERO review. ERO's evaluation builds on the information that the service provides in the self report about what is going well and where improvement may be needed. It helps ERO to design a review that is responsive to each context.

The self report is largely structured on *Ngā Pou Here*. Completing the self report is an opportunity for the service to reflect on its practice in relation to promoting positive learning outcomes for children.

The self reports are available to download from ERO's website and complete electronically.

Information exchange

Before the on-site stage of the review, information is shared between ERO and the service.

Early childhood services with upcoming ERO reviews are invited to participate in a group briefing meeting, coordinated by local ERO personnel. Individual centres involved in cluster reviews will participate in a briefing meeting within their association or umbrella organisation. The briefing meeting will explain ERO's review process and general focus.

The review coordinator gives the service an opportunity to clarify information about the review process, either at the briefing meeting or through telephone contact, and explores with the service who will take responsibility for being involved in the review.

The review coordinator specifies the date for the early childhood service to provide ERO with the completed *Self Report* and *Assurance Statement* and other requested documentation.

Designing the review

Review design involves ERO deciding, often in collaboration with the service, where it will place its evaluation emphasis during the ERO review. A significant determinant of review design is the quality of self review within a service.

The organisation and nature of the ERO review is determined in response to context. Context includes the service's philosophy, community and its capacity, as indicated through documentation and other sources of information.

ERO uses information provided by the service, including the completed relevant *Assurance Statement* and *Self Report*, to scope the review. ERO also draws on internal information it has about the service including the last ERO report and reporting history. The scoping process helps ERO to determine what needs to be further explored during the review.

ERO uses *Ngā Pou Here* as a framework for organising the information it has and the investigative questions it wants to answer on the review. Consideration is given to the interrelationship between the *Pou* and where the emphasis will be placed.

The review team plans the review process taking into account the resources available for the review. The review design is shared with the service.

The focus of the review

Decisions about the balance between the *Pou* and where to focus reviews depend on information in the completed *Self Report* and *Assurance Statement*.

The time allocated to gathering information within each *Pou*, the processes used and the reporting of findings varies between reviews. ERO uses a 'one-size-fits-one' approach so that the process is tailored to be as responsive and contextual as possible. Each review will look different.

The *Ngā Pou Here* framework shows relationships between each *Pou* and outcomes for children. Areas of strength and areas for review and development that are identified by ERO and the service should lead to (or help create the conditions for) improved learning outcomes for children.

The national evaluation topics (NETs) provide a way for ERO to investigate key aspects of early childhood services' performance in relation to the Government's education priorities. Each topic is explored through the review framework, *Ngā Pou Here*, and is evaluated in this context.

In some services, reviews need to focus on compliance, because of risks to the safety and wellbeing of children. This is likely to be the case where, despite attestation made by the service in the *Assurance Statement*, there do not appear to be adequate systems for the internal checking of compliance.

Investigation and synthesis

During its time on-site the review team:

- uses evaluative questions, investigative questions and evaluation indicators as a basis to gather and document evidence
- reads the service's documentation, talks to managers and others as appropriate, and observes the programme in action
- synthesises the review findings.

The service delegates appropriate personnel to be involved in the review and negotiates the level of their involvement with the review team. Ongoing interaction between service personnel and the review team will be a feature of the process.



The scoping process helps review teams to plan with the service who else ERO should talk to during the review. Participants may include:

- teachers
- the owner of the service
- the contact person/service provider
- management
- personnel from the umbrella organisation
- children
- parents
- the Māori community
- the Pacific community
- other groups.

From the service's self-review information ERO identifies if the early childhood service is already performing well in a specific area or if there is a need for improvement.

For areas where the service is performing well, the priority is on validating the results of self review. For areas where review or development is needed ERO uses its processes to build the service's capability to evaluate and improve its own practice.

Consultation

ERO encourages the early childhood service to share information about the consultation it has undertaken. ERO is particularly interested in any consultation that shows:

- how the service works in partnership with parents and whānau
- how staff contribute to review and development in the service.

Discussion of findings

Towards the end of its time at the service the review team will discuss the review findings with the personnel nominated by the service. The discussion will highlight areas of good performance and areas for review and development. In situations where significant development is needed ERO will indicate the likelihood of an early return review.

This discussion of findings should include management, staff and any others who will have the responsibility for taking action as a result of the external review.

It may be that findings are shared throughout the review process, in which case a discussion of findings may not be necessary at the end of the onsite stage of the review.

Reporting

The audience for ERO reports includes the Government and the public, as well as those in the early childhood education sector.

Early childhood service reports will start with an overall judgement. The report will include the material findings that answer the overarching evaluation question. The report is sent to the early childhood service as an unconfirmed report within 20 working days of the completion of the on site part of the review. A service that is identified as *Not well placed* will receive the unconfirmed report within 10 days of the last day on site.

The management of the early childhood service has 15 working days from the date ERO sends the report in which to query the evidential basis for reported judgements; and/or advise ERO in writing of any errors of fact and provide supporting documentation. A service that is identified as *Not well placed* has 10 days to respond.

ERO considers any response from the service and, where justified, makes amendments to the report. The report is confirmed and a copy is sent to the service provider. The confirmed report is released publicly on ERO's website two weeks after it is sent to the service provider.

Cluster reviews

Cluster Reviews: Reviews of Individual Services Managed by Umbrella Organisations

ERO has adapted its approach to reviews of individual early childhood services managed by umbrella organisations. Cluster reviews apply to kindergartens, playcentres and other individual early childhood services that operate under an umbrella organisation. The cluster refers to the grouping of individual centre reviews together. It is not a review of an association or umbrella organisation.

Where there is an umbrella organisation, ERO refers to each early childhood service within that umbrella as the *centre*, and refers to the umbrella as the *service*.

Cluster reviews:

- make better use of the umbrella organisation and individual centre self review
- contribute to self-review capacity at the management/professional practice level of the umbrella organisation as well as at the centre level
- ensure the efficient use of ERO's resource.

Determining a cluster for review

A cluster review can only be undertaken if:

- there is an umbrella organisation that receives funding, provides services and monitors the quality of its individual centres
- there is a degree of commonality across policies, structures and quality assurance for individual centres within the cluster.

The size and make-up of a cluster takes into account the distance between centres, overall size of the umbrella organisation, and previous ERO return times for each centre.

Kindergartens and playcentres operate under associations and automatically meet the criteria for cluster reviews. This does not mean that all of the centres within an association will be reviewed at one time. There may be situations where it is more appropriate for the review of a centre to be undertaken as a stand-alone review, rather than as part of a cluster of reviews.

Notification

ERO consults with the umbrella organisation to identify the cluster size and specific centres to be reviewed.

Each centre receives a notification pack with *He Pou Tātaki* (this document), the *Guidelines, Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklists*, a hard copy of the *Self Report* and links to electronic versions of relevant documents. ERO provides the service with information to distribute to teachers, parents and whānau about the review.

ERO sends an information letter and a self report for the umbrella organisation having a cluster review. In the self report the umbrella organisation describes what it knows about the performance of each centre within the cluster and how self review in the organisation contributes to quality improvements for children.

Review process for cluster reviews

The umbrella organisation nominates representatives to be involved in the ERO process.

The review team meets with nominated representatives to explore self review within the organisation as it relates to individual centres and to develop review planning for the cluster.

The review team arranges a briefing meeting for nominated representatives and centre leaders. The nature of this meeting will depend on ERO's previous involvement with and knowledge of the umbrella organisation.

The centre and the umbrella organisation provide ERO with the required review documentation.

The review teams work with the nominated representative and centre leader as appropriate to design each review to reflect the context of each centre.

The nominated representatives negotiate their role with the ERO cluster coordinator and/or each review team.

Each review proceeds according to ERO's review process guidelines. *Refer to previous information in this section.*

ERO writes an individual education review report for each centre. Evaluation findings about governance, management or organisation leadership, to the extent that they impact on outcomes for children, will be specified in centre reports.

ERO uses its evaluation criteria to make a decision about the return time for each centre. In making this decision the review team will also take into account the capacity of the umbrella organisation to generate and sustain improved performance in that centre.

ERO does not undertake a separate review of the umbrella association, or provide a written report based on the collation of trends or patterns evident through the individual reports.

ERO does however have the scope to conduct a special review of the umbrella organisation if major issues arise in the course of a cluster review.

Differentiated Return Times

The timing of the next ERO review will depend on how well placed the service is to promote positive learning outcomes for children. There are four options:

Very well placed – the next ERO review in four years

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.

Well placed – the next ERO review in three years

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.

Requires further development – the next ERO review within two years

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

After receiving the confirmed report, the service will be expected to participate in a meeting with ERO and the Ministry of Education to begin developing a plan for improvement.

The Ministry of Education will oversee the support that the service needs to become *well placed* to promote positive learning outcomes for children.

Approximately six to nine months after the ERO review, the service will provide ERO with an update about its progress. The Ministry of Education will also update ERO on the progress made. This information will be used to determine the appropriate ERO return time within the two year period.

Should ERO find that there has not been sufficient improvement the service will be identified as *Not well placed*. ERO will recommend that the service’s licence is reassessed by the Ministry of Education.

The next ERO review in consultation with the Ministry of Education

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.

The service will be expected to address concerns and prevent a continuation of poor performance. There will be licensing consequences for continued poor performance.

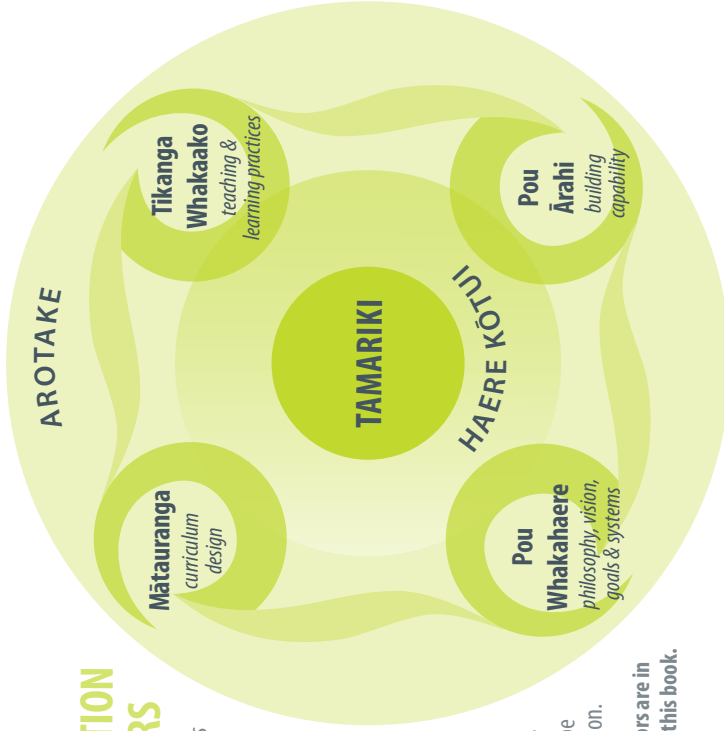
ERO will not review the service again until the Ministry of Education is satisfied that the service meets licensing requirements.

The four different review return times provide ERO with greater flexibility in how it responds to an early childhood service’s performance. ERO and the Ministry of Education will work closely with services that need to improve and help them build capability. ERO will make less frequent visits to those services that are performing very well.

Most early childhood services are likely to be considered *Well placed* and will continue to be reviewed every three years.

ERO has developed criteria to support the overall judgements and their corresponding return times. These are on ERO’s website (www.ero.govt.nz) under Review Process/Early Childhood. *Ngā Pou Here* and the evaluation indicators support the criteria and provide a deeper insight into what ERO considers to be high quality early childhood education.

NGĀ POU HERE



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.

Diagram 7: Connections between Ngā Pou Here, the Evaluation Indicators, and 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.

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.

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.

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.

2 YEARS

3 YEARS

4 YEARS

THE CRITERIA

ERO has 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



HE POU TĀTAKI
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