



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Pebbles Montessori
Sumner, Christchurch**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Pebbles Montessori

Sumner, Christchurch

19 February 2020

1 Evaluation of Pebbles Montessori

How well placed is Pebbles Montessori to promote positive learning outcomes for children?

Not well placed	Requires further development	Well placed	Very well placed
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ERO's findings that support this overall judgement are summarised below.

Background

Pebbles Montessori is a privately-owned education and care service in Sumner, Christchurch. It is licensed for 31 children. Children are grouped according to their age for some parts of the day. Teachers use a Montessori approach to deliver the curriculum.

The centre's vision is for tamariki to see themselves as competent and confident learners in an environment of peace, respect and collaboration. Leaders and teachers have recently established centre priorities for learning. These priorities are: developing the whole child, confidence, respect, inclusive communication and collaboration.

This centre is one of three services. The owner and general manager provide governance, and overall organisational and professional leadership across the services. A centre manager carries out the day-to-day management of this service. Most teachers are qualified in early childhood education. One of the teachers has a Montessori education qualification.

Leaders have made good progress in response to ERO's recommendations in the November 2016 report. Since that review:

- a new centre manager has been appointed
- the general manager position has been created
- children's learning is a stronger focus of assessment and planning
- teachers are providing stronger bicultural perspectives in their practices
- leaders have further developed their evaluation for improvement practices.

This review was part of a cluster of three services within Pebbles Preschool Ltd.

The Review Findings

Children are well supported to lead their learning, consistent with the centre's vision of them being confident and competent learners. Teachers effectively use the Montessori curriculum and teaching approach to help achieve the centre's vision and learning priorities. Children work and play in a calm, settled environment. The different areas are set up well to allow children easy access to activities they wish to work with. The range of activities provide appropriate challenge, motivation and extension to children's learning and development. Leaders and teachers have established a strong sense of community within the centre. Children have a strong sense of belonging to their centre, where learning is the focus of play and activities.

Leaders and teachers are in the early stages of developing bicultural practices within the centre. The concepts of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga are highly evident in the interactions and relationships in the centre's community. Teachers use te reo and tikanga Māori throughout the day. Each child has developed their own mihi. Children are establishing an awareness of New Zealand's bicultural heritage.

Children benefit from teachers' careful planning and deliberate curriculum approach. Planning includes clear learning goals and the specific teaching strategies to support the children, including children with additional learning needs. The clarity of planning leads to intentional teaching and interactions. Children's individual records show appropriate progress in learning over time. Teachers use the progress information to effectively evaluate the impact their teaching has had on children's learning and development. Planning documentation shows that few parents take up the opportunities offered to them to contribute in meaningful ways to their children's learning pathways' planning.

Leadership for the three centres is purposeful in its support of teachers' professional practice and wellbeing. Leaders have promoted shared understanding of the services' vision, philosophy, strategic goals and priorities for children's learning. Clear roles and responsibilities ensure all teachers are aware of the expectations placed on them in the delivery of the curriculum. Senior leaders support initiatives that contribute to better organisation and positive outcomes for children. These are key factors for the provision of responsive and effective teaching and learning programmes.

Internal evaluation is used effectively to improve teaching and learning, and centre-wide practices. There is useful alignment from the vision and strategic goals to centre development, and to teachers' appraisals and inquiries. Teachers and leaders participate in relevant evaluation, knowledge building and professional learning that contribute to changes in thinking and practices. Leaders are yet to show the impact of practices, improvements and systems on outcomes for children.

Key Next Steps

Leaders and teachers need to explore different approaches to gain a greater input from parents in children's planning.

To gain a fuller picture of the impact of centre developments, leaders need to evaluate the difference improved actions and practices are having on outcomes for children, as a result of internal evaluation.

Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Pebbles Montessori completed an *ERO Centre Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist*. In these documents they attested that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

- curriculum
- premises and facilities
- health and safety practices
- governance, management and administration.

During the review, ERO looked at the service's systems for managing the following areas that have a potentially high impact on children's wellbeing:

- emotional safety (including positive guidance and child protection)
- physical safety (including supervision; sleep procedures; accidents; medication; hygiene; excursion policies and procedures)
- suitable staffing (including qualification levels; police vetting; teacher registration; ratios)
- evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake.

All early childhood services are required to promote children's health and safety and to regularly review their compliance with legal requirements.



Dr Lesley Patterson
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Southern Region - Te Tai Tini

19 February 2020

The Purpose of ERO Reports

The Education Review Office (ERO) is the government department that, as part of its work, reviews early childhood services throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. ERO's reports provide information for parents and communities about each service's strengths and next steps for development. ERO's bicultural evaluation framework Ngā Pou Here is described in [SECTION 3](#) of this report. Early childhood services are partners in the review process and are expected to make use of the review findings to enhance children's wellbeing and learning.

2 Information about the Early Childhood Service

Location	Sumner, Christchurch		
Ministry of Education profile number	46378		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	31 children		
Service roll	39		
Gender composition	Male 14 Female 25		
Ethnic composition	Māori	2	
	NZ European/Pākehā	26	
	African	3	
	European	5	
	Other	3	
Percentage of qualified teachers 0-49% 50-79% 80%+ <i>Based on funding rates</i>	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	N/A	N/A
	Over 2	1:8	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	December 2019		
Date of this report	19 February 2020		
Most recent ERO reports These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Education Review	December 2016	

3 General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

ERO's Evaluation Framework

ERO's overarching question for an early childhood education review is 'How well placed is this service to promote positive learning outcomes for children?' ERO focuses on the following factors as described in the bicultural framework [Ngā Pou Here](#):

Pou Whakahaere – how the service determines its vision, philosophy and direction to ensure positive outcomes for children

Pou Ārahi – how leadership is enacted to enhance positive outcomes for children

Mātauranga – whose knowledge is valued and how the curriculum is designed to achieve positive outcomes for children

Tikanga whakaako – how approaches to teaching and learning respond to diversity and support positive outcomes for children.

Within these areas ERO considers the effectiveness of *arotake* – self review and of *whanaungatanga* – partnerships with parents and whānau.

ERO evaluates how well placed a service is to sustain good practice and make ongoing improvements for the benefit of all children at the service.

A focus for the government is that all children, especially priority learners, have an opportunity to benefit from quality early childhood education. ERO will report on how well each service promotes positive outcomes for all children, with a focus on children who are Māori, Pacific, have diverse needs, and are up to the age of two.

For more information about the framework and Ngā Pou Here refer to [ERO's Approach to Review in Early Childhood Services](#).

ERO's Overall Judgement

The overall judgement that ERO makes will depend on how well the service promotes positive learning outcomes for children. The categories are:

- Very well placed
- Well placed
- Requires further development
- Not well placed

ERO has developed criteria for each category. These are available on [ERO's website](#).

Review Coverage

ERO reviews are tailored to each service's context and performance, within the overarching review framework. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to positive outcomes for children and useful to the service.