



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Stepping Stones @ Braebrook  
Ashburton**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Stepping Stones @ Braebrook

## Ashburton

### 13 February 2018

## 1 Evaluation of Stepping Stones @ Braebrook

How well placed is Stepping Stones @ Braebrook to promote positive learning outcomes for children?

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

### Background

Stepping Stones pre-school provides full day education and care for up to 70 children aged from birth to school age, in a purpose-built centre. Children learn and play in three separate spaces with adjacent outdoor areas.

Two directors provide governance and support. The centre manager and three head teachers manage the day to day operations of the centre including provision of the curriculum. Most staff are fully qualified and certified early childhood teachers.

The Centre focuses on quality education particularly related to fostering respectful and caring relationships.

The service opened in 2016. This is its first ERO report.

### The Review Findings

Children and their families experience a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. Teachers know children well and respond effectively to their needs and interests. Relationships between teachers and children are caring and respectful. Thoughtful and considered interactions with families and whānau are helping to build effective learning partnerships.

Children are well supported to develop skills to confidently lead their own learning. They have meaningful opportunities to make choices and extend their learning through feedback from teachers which acknowledges their effort and success. A sense of security is supported by routines which teachers use to provide learning opportunities. Priority learners and children with additional needs are well provided for.

Well managed and flexible transitions into, within and beyond the centre are supported by authentic partnerships with families and whānau, external agencies and schools.

Infants and toddlers benefit from responsive caregiving at a calm pace. The learning programmes and routines are flexible, unhurried and valued as learning and relationship-building opportunities.

Teachers work collaboratively to provide intentional teaching within flexible play-based learning. Programme planning is aligned to Te Whāriki early childhood curriculum and the centre's philosophy.

Leaders and teachers have a focus on accountability and continuous improvement to provide relevant experiences for children. Professional development is aligned to the centre's strategic and annual plans.

A useful induction and mentoring programme for new teachers is building capability and capacity. An effective performance management system, including purposeful reflection and feedback, is further strengthening teachers' practice. Parent and child views are actively sought to inform decisions made at the centre.

Internal evaluation is focused on positive outcomes for children and ongoing improvement of the centre. Actions taken as a result of internal evaluation enhance children's learning experiences and their environment.

### **Key Next Steps**

ERO and centre leaders agree that the next steps are to:

- embed and extend bicultural perspectives into philosophy, centre programmes, practices and guidelines
- further develop understanding and use of internal evaluation, specifically within teaching as inquiry, appraisal and teacher effectiveness
- strengthen assessment and planning with a particular focus on planning for learning and groups of children.

### **Management Assurance on Legal Requirements**

Before the review, the staff and management of Stepping Stones @ Braebrook 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.

## **Next ERO Review**

### **When is ERO likely to review the service again?**

The next ERO review of Stepping Stones @ Braebrook will be in three years.



Dr Lesley Patterson  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern  
Te Waipounamu - Southern Region

13 February 2018

## **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	Ashburton		
Ministry of Education profile number	46914		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	70 children, including up to 19 aged under 2		
Service roll	116		
Gender composition	67 girls and 49 boys		
Ethnic composition	Māori	3	
	Pākehā	91	
	Pacific	5	
	Other	17	
Percentage of qualified teachers 0-49%   50-79%   80%+ <i>Based on funding rates</i>	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:4	Better than minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:8	Better than minimum requirements
Review team on site	December 2017		
Date of this report	13 February 2018		
Most recent ERO report(s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	First ERO report		

### 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 and Next Review

The overall judgement that ERO makes and the timing of the next review will depend on how well placed a service is to promote positive learning outcomes for children. The categories are:

- Very well placed – The next ERO review in four years
- Well placed – The next ERO review in three years
- Requires further development – The next ERO review within two years
- Not well placed - The next ERO review in consultation with the Ministry of Education

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.