



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

External Evaluation and Review Report

Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o
Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa

Date of report: 26 July 2024

About Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa

Playcentre Aotearoa provides training in early childhood education and care to the parents, grandparents and/or caregivers who attend Playcentre centres with their young children. This allows Playcentre centres to meet their legislative requirements as well as enable the communities and families of Playcentre to gain knowledge and skills that can be used in family, community and industry sectors.

Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa, Playcentre Education National Service Centre, PO Box 57217, Mana, Porirua 5247, Wellington/ Kapiti.
Eligible to enrol international students:	No
Number of students:	Domestic: as at December 2023, 1272 students (112.6 equivalent full-time students) ¹ Priority learners: Māori 96 (7 per cent), Pasifika 24 (2 per cent), learners with a disability 16 (1 per cent) International: nil
Number of staff:	Two full time staff, six permanent part-time, 70 casual teaching staff – 12 full-time equivalents
TEO profile:	Te Whanau Tupu Ngatahi o Aotearoa - Playcentre Aotearoa – provider page on NZQA website Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa: Playcentre Aotearoa is a nationwide organisation which provides practice oversight and strategic direction and growth for

¹ Playcentre students are required to complete modules of learning to support the teaching of their children at Playcentre and home. These modules of learning are only a few credits each, hence a lower equivalent full-time student number. Students can do a number of modules, building towards awards and a level 4 New Zealand Certificate.

Playcentres around New Zealand. To support the operation of each centre, a regional and centre-level management structure is in place. Playcentre Education, the PTE, is another division within Playcentre Aotearoa that trains each parent who joins Playcentre, as these parents are the primary teachers of the children. Parents are encouraged to enrol in modules of learning but can, if they decide, gain Playcentre awards and a New Zealand qualification by stacking those modules.

Last EER outcome:	In March 2021, NZQA was Confident in the educational performance and Not Yet Confident in the self-assessment capability of Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Education.
Scope of evaluation:	New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 4) [ID: 121764] leading to 2850 New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 4)
MoE number:	8809
NZQA reference:	C57238
Dates of EER visit:	9-11 April 2024

Summary of results

Strong achievement and highly valued outcomes for all stakeholders meet the purpose and direction of Playcentre Education and Playcentre Aotearoa.

Strong, effective use of data and multiple information sources has informed effective operational, programme and support review.

Highly Confident in educational performance

- Achievement is high, with very strong completions of modules of learning, and increased confidence and parenting skills. Increased participation, retention and completion of the internal awards and the New Zealand qualification confirms development of an effective programme pathway. Strong review of achievement data and stakeholder feedback supports effective and continuous improvement.

Highly Confident in capability in self-assessment

- Priority learner groups are achieving at parity. Playcentre Education makes a conscious effort to acknowledge and embed cultural world views throughout the teaching and learning, supporting inclusive practice.
- Playcentre Education provides high value outcomes to all stakeholders that have a clear link to the purpose and direction of the PTE. Student, family and community wellbeing and knowledge are enhanced.
- Programme review is regular and effectively informed by both qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources. Regular and varied methods of engaging with students and stakeholders maintains the relevance and currency of the programme.
- Comprehensive, positive internal and external moderation findings and robust policies and processes support effective programme review and ensure assessment is valid, authentic and consistent.
- Holistic support from within centres, from tutors and at regional and PTE levels ensures prompt

targeted responses to emerging needs and minimises learning barriers.

- Strategic guidance from governance and use of effective data analysis provides a strong operational platform from which the PTE can grow and meet future challenges. Strong processes and systems have been established and are working effectively after significant organisational restructure.
- Staff are effectively deployed to use their strengths and passions in their roles. Staff feel valued and part of the organisation.
- The PTE effectively manages and monitors all compliance accountabilities.

Key evaluation question findings²

1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Achievement rates for Playcentre Education students are high. With the Playcentre Aotearoa philosophy of ‘a parent is the child’s best and first teacher’, all Playcentre caregivers are given the chance to complete modules of early childhood learning.³ Over 90 per cent of these caregivers (enrolled as students) complete the module they engage with. The marking ratification and moderation processes and results verify the achievement results. Additionally, these caregivers gain confidence in themselves, the Playcentre environment, and in their role as a caregiver.</p> <p>Priority learner group information is gathered and analysed. While small numbers of Pasifika and disabled students has a disproportionate effect on achievement percentages, it can be said that priority learners are achieving at parity.⁴</p> <p>Some Playcentre caregivers choose to continue their studies towards either internal Playcentre awards⁵ or the New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 4). Of those who choose to progress, the vast majority complete. Less than 1 per cent formally withdraw from their programmes of study – since 2021,</p>

² The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation’s activities.

³ Playcentre offers a large number of modules designed to upskill their caregivers and persons responsible (those who are legally recognised as in charge of the Playcentre operation) in skills and knowledge that meet emerging needs. These modules are funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). See Appendix 1 for completion figures.

⁴ See Appendix 1 for completion data.

⁵ Playcentre Education offers three awards – the Playcentre Introductory Award (PIA), the Playcentre Educator Award (PEA) and the Playcentre Primary Teacher Bridging Award (recently introduced). These awards can also be used to build towards the New Zealand (Level 4) Certificate in Early Childhood and Care.

	<p>approximately 3 per cent have not completed. The reasons for the withdrawals and non-completions have been captured and analysed to inform programme review. The increased participation and retention seen during 2022 and 2023 indicates that Playcentre has introduced effective measures to improve achievement. These measures include delivering online and designing activities that mirror Playcentre operations and activities.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The vast majority of Playcentre Education students achieve. The PTE analyses achievement data and stakeholder feedback to provide effective support, resulting in improved participation, retention, and pathways to success.</p>

1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Playcentre Education regularly interacts with its students and stakeholders through feedback mechanisms and regular meetings to provide training that gives highly valued outcomes. The increase in Playcentre workshops and the introduction of the applied focus of version 2 of the New Zealand qualification are effective indications of Playcentre Education's response to stakeholder needs.</p> <p>Students gain life and home skills they can use among their families, within their Playcentre and local communities, and in further employment opportunities either within Playcentres or other early childhood centres. All students are able to apply their learnt skills and knowledge immediately. This is confirmed through formal tracking of student experiences and graduate destinations.</p> <p>Playcentre Education has procedures in place for recognition of prior learning, a bridging award and a flexible enrolment policy that enables students to undertake their training when and where it best meets commitments and needs. This supports each individual to be successful as well as enabling learning communities to flourish.</p>

	<p>Playcentre centres gain and retain qualified and informed, engaged practitioners. In addition to supporting centre growth and the formation of a vibrant learning community, the various programmes of study also ensure Playcentre Aotearoa meets its regulatory accountabilities⁶ and is able to maintain the service provided to their local communities. Stakeholders attest to gaining a community and a social network that enhances each individual's sense of personal and family wellbeing.</p> <p>Playcentre Aotearoa recognises the role Playcentres also have in Māori and Pasifika communities and have actively embedded Māori and Pasifika principles throughout their training modules and qualification. Having specific cultural roles within Playcentre Aotearoa supports Playcentre Education in interacting and supporting Māori and Pasifika communities effectively.</p>
Conclusion:	Playcentre Education provides high value outcomes to all stakeholders. Regular meetings with multiple stakeholders and use of multiple information sources ensures a comprehensive and current understanding of stakeholder needs and supports effective design and delivery.

1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	Through regular meetings at all levels of Playcentre Aotearoa and using the collated information from data sources and feedback, Playcentre Education reviews its training regularly. The PTE has also used the extensive data gathered to make effective changes to the modules and awards leading to the New Zealand qualification. Playcentre Education has developed programmes that now accurately reflect the expectations and operation of Playcentre centres. This means the training provided is relevant,

⁶ Playcentre and other early childhood centres are required to have a number of qualified people to ensure they meet the legislative and funding (from the MoE) requirements set by the Education Act.

	<p>meaningful and has immediate applicability which has improved participation and achievement.</p> <p>Students apply what they learn in the workshops and online activities to the sessions they attend alongside their child. Feedback from the centre-based supervisors about the success of a student’s application (of learnt skills and knowledge) is captured and used to support the student’s progress through the training as well as programme review. Assessment requires students to explore their lived experience and the skills and knowledge they have gained in their respective Playcentres.</p> <p>The authenticity of students’ work is checked through plagiarism software and feedback from centre supervisors. Marking of assessments is prompt, and the comprehensive feedback provided supports the student to further improve their knowledge and understanding. Playcentre Education analyses assessment completion to support further programme and assessment review.</p> <p>Extensive internal and external, pre- and post-assessment moderation is completed and this is positive. All findings are used to enable programme and assessment review and support effective improvement for the students. Moderation findings indicate assessment is valid, consistent and fair.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>Programmes are designed, delivered and assessed conscientiously. They comprehensively match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders. Playcentre Education has extensive sources of information which it uses in ongoing and annual programme reviews, resulting in effective improvements to the training. The training is highly relevant, current and applicable. Assessments require students to show their personal experiences and knowledge and is validated through comprehensive moderation.</p>

1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>With the Playcentre philosophy of ‘parents are their child’s best and first teacher’, the expectation of parental contribution is made clear from the beginning. Educational opportunities to support effective caregiver contribution to their Playcentre are therefore well understood at all levels of Playcentre Aotearoa and amply provided to meet stakeholders’ need. This means that support mechanisms for these students are also embedded in every part of the Playcentre organisation and PTE.</p> <p>On enrolment, comprehensive guidance is given and individual workplans are created. This purposeful direction ensures goals and needs are identified and individual circumstances are understood. Regular self and tutor monitoring alongside an extensive, organisation-wide support network⁷ ensures emerging needs and risks are promptly identified and supported.</p> <p>Playcentre Education has used information from these practices to further improve support services through the inclusion of extra open support sessions, mobile phone-accessible reference material, social media-based student groups and more workshops/webinars throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Students attest to this solution-based response as beneficial at minimising barriers to their learning journey.</p> <p>Open communication channels between the student and their tutor, student support co-ordinator and centre, as well as regular opportunities for feedback, mean the student voice is actively sought, heard and acted on. This, alongside the other information gathered, supports the PTE in their practices and review of the pastoral Code of Practice. The move in self-rating between 2022 and 2023 is a purposeful reflection on the changes brought through</p>

⁷ Tutors and support co-ordinators provide learning and pastoral support from the PTE. However, fellow students, bicultural advisors, centre advisors, centre managers and regional staff are also available to provide learning and pastoral support.

	programme review. This supports NZQA’s expectation that Playcentre Education is carrying out regular self-wellbeing checks (and capturing the results in work-plan journaling).
Conclusion:	Students’ goals, life commitments and needs are identified and understood early, and monitored regularly. An extensive support network within Playcentre Education and Playcentre Aotearoa ensures prompt response to any emerging barriers to each learner. Comprehensive use of all information sources and purposeful reflection ensures improvements are relevant and effective.

1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Since the last EER, Playcentre Aotearoa has completed a major restructure and embedded a new, interwoven organisational structure where all aspects of the organisation work collaboratively to put the Playcentre philosophy into action. Regular meetings with governance and staff mean all aspects of the organisation are well informed; effective strategic guidance based on research and good practice has been developed; and academic leadership is effective at ensuring that the purpose and direction of Playcentre Education is embedded in operation.</p> <p>Playcentre Education staff have extensive history within Playcentre and are effectively deployed to use their strengths and passion in their roles. Workloads are monitored regularly, making staff feel valued and that their wellbeing is supported. Regular staff meetings, peer reviews, annual appraisals and visits by management mean staff goals and needs are identified and responded to. Appropriate professional development is arranged to ensure needed skills and knowledge are gained.</p> <p>Staff regularly appraise the programme and its delivery, as well as the effectiveness of the resources used to ensure consistent practice. This information and data from other sources are regularly collated, analysed and used. Having a dedicated data analyst supports governance, management</p>

	and all staff to effectively review organisational practice and develop future opportunities that respond to change and need. Effective actions that have created improvement ⁸ can be seen since the previous EER.
Conclusion:	Regular meetings informed by collated and analysed data enable all levels of the organisation to strategically and operationally manage the PTE effectively. Staff have extensive history with Playcentre and bring their passion and experience to their roles. Staff feel valued and supported.

1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Comprehensive understanding of Playcentre Education’s compliance accountabilities – supported by a compliance calendar – ensures timely and proactive compliance practices. The calendar is updated regularly to respond to needed changes and supports both the PTE and the parent organisation in managing their compliance roles. All recommendations or findings from external bodies have been addressed promptly.</p> <p>Playcentre Education ensures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It delivers the New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 4) as approved through monitoring, through the learning management system, engagement with the teaching and learning activities, and completion of self-directed learning tasks. • It updates policies and procedures in a scheduled cycle to ensure that the health and safety of all staff and students is maintained and the PTE operates legally and ethically.

⁸ The informed, comprehensive review of the modules and awards now results in training that better meets the expressed needs of the students and centres, which in turn has increased participation in the centres and the study. This has also supported an increase in achievement of parenting skills, knowledge and confidence.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints and incidents are registered; and actions taken in mitigation follow procedures. • Licences and the presence of sufficient qualified responsible persons are monitored and managed across all centres to ensure their legal operation. <p>Playcentre Education reviews its performance against the Code of Practice annually with management. Management requests input from support and academic staff to ensure a whole-organisation understanding and fulfilment of their commitments to all students.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Comprehensive understanding and management of compliance accountabilities ensures timely and proactive compliance activity. Strong, regularly reviewed policies and procedures ensure legal and ethical practices that meet multiple accountabilities.</p>

Focus areas

This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.

2.1 The New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 4) [ID: 121764] leading to 2850: The New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (Level 4)

Performance:	Excellent
Self-assessment:	Excellent

Recommendations

Recommendations are not compulsory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.

There are no recommendations arising from the external evaluation and review.

Requirements

Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Module completion 2021-23

Year	EFTS delivered (M,P,NMP)* Number (M,P,NMP)	EFTS completed (M,P,NMP)	CC** (M,P,NMP)
2021	188 (12, 1, 175) 2124 (144, 22, 1959)	176 (10, 1, 16)	93% (87%, 78%, 94%)
2022	63 (5, 1, 58) 783 (67, 13, 705)	60 (5, 1, 55)	95% (99%, 94%, 95%)
2023	107 (9, 2, 97) 1122 (89, 19, 1016)	104 (9, 2, 94)	97% (97%, 100%, 97%)

*M=Māori, P=Pasifika, NMP=non-Māori and non-Pasifika

**Course completion

Disabled learners – 100% completion in each year

Source: TEC SDR data

Appendix 2

Conduct of external evaluation and review

All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.

Disclaimer

The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.

For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:

- *Identify organisational fraud⁹*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

⁹ NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.

Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.

In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.

NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.

This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.

External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.

External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website (www.nzqa.govt.nz). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.

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