

# National Report Summary

ERO publishes evaluation reports on education issues of national importance. This handout is a summary of a recent national report - it captures the key points and highlights findings which you may find useful. The full report is available on our website - [www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz)

## Improving quality: employment responsibilities in kindergartens and education and care services (May 2014)

In 2013, the Education Review Office (ERO) evaluated how effectively kindergartens and education and care services implemented employment practices to manage and develop staff.

The report, *Improving quality: employment responsibilities in kindergartens and education and care services*, presents the findings of this evaluation. The evaluation investigated the recruitment and appointment of staff, support for staff development, improvement of staff performance through appraisal, staff turnover, managing complaints and police vetting.

### What ERO found

Many of the 235 services included in this evaluation were **aware of their employment responsibilities and managed them well**.

The **effectiveness of employment practices varied** across the services. Kindergartens and education and care services that were part of an association or umbrella organisation benefited from **comprehensive employment-related policies and procedures**. Staff in these services were more likely to be very well supported with ongoing and relevant professional development.

Many services could benefit from improving their practices and, in particular, implementing an **effective appraisal system** that is clearly linked to professional development and the service's strategic goals.

The report highlights effective practices and identifies areas for improvement. It also includes **recommendations** for the Ministry of Education and all early childhood services

### Effective employment practices

Services with highly effective practices had policies and procedures that were **consistently implemented, regularly reviewed, reflected best practice** and were aligned with current legislation. Many of these services had **robust performance management systems** and had access to staff with expertise in human resource management.

**Leaders** in these services had a range of skills and knowledge to support them in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. A **team approach to leadership** supported growing staff capability. Leaders also had a good understanding of employment practices and were committed to employing staff who fitted well with the philosophy and context of the service.

Staff were **encouraged and supported** to individually review their teaching practices or critically reflect as a group. Leaders supported and appropriately resourced **professional development**.

Leaders provided a supportive, caring, open and respectful environment, and actively advocated for, and supported bicultural development and associated practices.

## Good employment practices

ERO identified the following highly effective employment practices

### Recruitment and appointment of staff

- Clear policies and procedures that reflected the requirements of current legislation and provide managers with useful guidance
- Regularly reviewed appointment policies and procedures
- Job descriptions and person specifications that reflected the philosophy and needs of the service and link to the Registered Teachers Criteria
- Regularly reviewed job descriptions
- Referees contacted; qualifications verified; and police vetting checks completed.

### Support for staff development

- Orientation and ongoing support programme for new staff
- Services proactively supported staff with ongoing professional development
- Services supported Provisionally Registered Teachers to become fully registered and supported staff newly appointed to leadership positions
- Philosophy, goals and professional development were clearly linked
- Professional development was closely aligned to individual appraisal goals
- Professional development was a priority and appropriately resourced

### Improving staff performance

- Appraisal practices were part of an annual cycle
- Appraisal was linked to professional development and included provision for ongoing coaching or mentoring.
- Processes were aligned to the Registered Teachers Criteria and expectations were made explicit through performance indicators linked to job descriptions.
- Appraisal process included opportunities for self reflection. Staff, in conjunction with the appraiser, identified specific and measurable goals, and progress towards achieving these was monitored through observations, conversations and ongoing feedback.
- Well-established practices to support newly qualified teachers.



#### FIND OUT MORE

For more ideas and information, you can read the full report online at [www.ero.govt.nz/national-reports](http://www.ero.govt.nz/national-reports)