

CIVIC CHILD CARE CENTRE

25 - 29 NOVEMBER 1991

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1. DESIGNATION/DESCRIPTION OF CENTRE

Name of centre : Civic Child Care Centre

Address of centre Street : Cnr Armagh/Montreal Streets
 Town : Christchurch
 Box No : P O Box 237

Telephone : 665-133

Name of person with responsibility
 for management of the centre : Alistair Graham

Name of supervisor/headteacher/kaiako : Gaye Davidson

Names of staff, qualifications
 and areas of responsibility :

Gaye Davidson, Supervisor, RSOH Certificate in Childcare.
 Marie Keys, Teachers Certificate.
 Peter Ellis, NZCA.
 , Kindergarten Diploma.
 Jan Buckingham, Teachers Certificate.
 Debbie Gillespie, Teachers Certificate.
 , Playcentre Certificate.
 , Playcentre Certificate.
 , Karitane Certificate.
 , NZCA.
 , Certificate in Early Childhood Education.

Administration Organisation - : Christchurch City Council
 community trust, parent association,
 umbrella organisation, or owner
 providing administrative services

Category of Centre : Full day

Session Times : Monday - Friday
 7.30 am - 5.30 pm.

School term only : No

Total number of children on the roll : 79

Number of children the centre is licensed for :

Under Two : 15
 Over Two : 30

Age Range of the children : 0 - 5 years old.

Number of children on the waiting list : 34

Agreed staffing ratios : 1:4 Mixed and under two
 Over two up to 1:10.

Table of fees	:	Under 2	Over 2
		2.90 hourly	2.70 hourly
		21.00 daily	19.00 daily
		90.00 weekly	85.00 weekly
Date of most recent financial report	:	August 1991	
Collective contracts under which staff are paid	:	Southern Local Bodies.	

2. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the review was to evaluate and report on how children are learning and developing and the extent to which the centre has implemented charter goals. This report can provide directions for development and assist with future self-review processes.

The review is based on the goals and objectives of the Early Childhood Education charter guidelines, *A Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices*, and the centre's charter, management plans and policies.

The consultative approach used during the review included involvement with management, staff and parents. Findings, areas for development and recommendations were based on an analysis of centre documentation, and observations and discussions undertaken during the review.

The Learner, Curriculum and Programme

including Special Needs;
Equity;
Treaty of Waitangi.

Relationships with Parents, Families and Communities

including Relationships with Parents/Whanau;
Responsibilities to Community and Users;
Treaty of Waitangi.

The Environment

including Health, Safety and the Environment;
Land, Building and Equipment.

Management

including Staffing;
Staff Development and Advisory Support.

3. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Overall responsibility for the management of the centre lies with the Christchurch City Council. A parents' committee and staff are responsible for the day-to-day administration and operation of the centre. Management procedures are generally sound. Adequate procedures have been developed to ensure that complaints or concerns can be brought to the management's attention.

The central location and the staff's relaxed, accepting attitudes have ensured the centre crosses cultural and economic boundaries. Emphasis is placed on children developing positive social skills and an understanding and acceptance of the needs of others. The quality adult-child interactions ensure that children's progress is monitored and that they develop skills in all curriculum areas. Staff members demonstrate by example that each child is valued and unique. Tikanga Maori is positively and unobtrusively integrated into the programme. The staff value and respect cultural diversity.

The programme is balanced and age appropriate. The centre is divided into two separate areas for the under two year olds and for the over two year olds. The programme in each area is similar and planned to meet the developmental ages and stages of the children in the group. A full range of activities in all curriculum areas is available in each area. The staff ensure personal needs are met with warmth, care and consideration. The children appear happy, inquisitive and sociable. They respect each other and understand personality differences.

The centre provides a warm, accepting and welcoming environment where personal wellbeing is promoted. The staff ensure all children and their families are comfortable and personally welcomed by name to the session. The relaxed atmosphere enables parents to be included in the programme if they wish. Time is also available to discuss children's progress and to ensure settling routines are flexible and family directed. Each family is valued and important. The programme is flexible, stimulating and fun. The children's play demonstrates positive attitudes to learning and the environment.

4. THE LEARNER, CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMME

The centre was observed to provide a warm, relaxed, accepting environment where children's self-esteem and personal development is nurtured. The children appear confident, independent and sociable. Their play demonstrates positive attitudes to learning and the environment. Staff and parent awareness of cultural and gender equity issues ensure each child has an understanding of tikanga Maori and plays and develops in all activity areas. The programme is balanced, stimulating and child-directed. The self-choice programme and staff encouragement allows the children to exercise choice, solve problems and discover knowledge through first hand experience.

- * The philosophy of the centre is incorporated in all aspects of the curriculum. The centre provides a welcoming, accepting and secure environment. Each child is seen as special. Their individual developmental requirements are recognised and met with care and respect. The parents and staff share the children's development and progress. Equality and recognition of the dual cultural heritage of Aotearoa are an integral part of the programme.
- * The environment is attractive, challenging, developmentally and culturally appropriate. There is easy and prolonged accessibility to all basic activities and equipment. Children move freely between the activities and make choices about the degree, type and manner of participation. Display cabinets that provide easy self selection at the children's level would encourage greater self choice. All indoor climbing equipment must have secured gym mats. For the children's safety, procedures must be developed to ensure children do not climb on the wall bars to an unsafe height. 1.8 metres could be used as a reasonable guide in developing these procedures.
- * Staff interactions were observed to support the children's wellbeing and encourage growth and development. The staff constantly work with different children at their eye level. They encourage purposeful conversation, extend ideas, offer suggestions and use open ended questions. They give praise, positive encouragement and firm direction. Children are encouraged and supported in decision making. They appear happy and confident in the centre. They have high self-esteem.
- * Individual differences are recognised in programme planning and implementation. Regular staff discussion and evaluation ensure individual children's progress is monitored, and evaluated. Children play in all activity areas. Staff awareness ensures all play material, books and rhymes are gender free. Families from other nationalities are relaxed and communicative in the centre. They enrich the programme by sharing aspects of their cultures. The charter supports the involvement of children with special needs and their families.
- * Tikanga Maori is positively incorporated into all aspects of the programme. The children and staff use te reo Maori in conversation. They understand aspects of Maori culture and protocol. Books, posters and newsletters positively support tikanga Maori. Karakia and waiata are part of the daily programme. A staff member has responsibility for strengthening tikanga Maori and supporting the growth and understanding of other staff members.

- * The programme promotes children's social, emotional, cultural, cognitive, language and physical development. Children appeared to have established positive social relationships. They show an understanding of other people's perspectives, and they negotiate and apply social rules to group situations. Children appeared confident and assertive. They communicate their ideas and listen to others. The programme provides time for children to socialise, to make choices and decisions about their play and to work with guidance in facilitating productive, satisfying and interesting experiences. The children resolve conflict and respect the feelings of others. The staff give positive direction and support.
- * The children are confident in using language. They communicate effectively with other children and with adults. Dramatic play is creative and innovative. The wide range of simple props and the direction and encouragement given by the staff enable the children to effectively use their imagination. Music is an integral part of the programme. The songs sung and asked for by the children reflect the cultural and environmental philosophy. A wider range of materials at the collage and carpentry tables would provide a greater variety of tactile and creative experiences. Children's work is attractively displayed.
- * The programme is planned to extend children's knowledge and understanding by practical experience. Children's progress is monitored and discussed at staff meetings. Themes are planned to extend children's understanding of the world and are unobtrusively incorporated into the weekly programme. The centre is developing and trialling procedures to ensure each child's progress is monitored and that programme evaluations are meaningful and useful for future programme development and extension.
- * Snack and meal times are occasions of pleasant interaction. They are culturally appropriate. Children are well mannered and sociable. Hygiene procedures and self-help skills are encouraged. Health and safety routines are positively incorporated into the daily routines. Nappy changing and toileting routines support positive self-esteem and independence. Emergency procedures are displayed and regularly practised. Children are encouraged to wash their hands, tidy up activities and respect each other and the environment. Arrival and departure procedures are well established.
- * Children appeared happy and settled. Entry and settling procedures are well established. The parents appreciate the relaxed, flexible procedures which met the settling needs of individual children and their families. Transition to school procedures are discussed with each family. The staff help families develop transition procedures which are appropriate to them and the schools their children will be attending.

Recommendations

- * The accessibility and availability of some equipment and materials should be discussed and evaluated.
- * All indoor climbing equipment must have secured gym mats.
- * Procedures must be developed to ensure the children do not climb on the wall bars above an unsafe height.

5. RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

The friendly, relaxed atmosphere and the personal interest the staff members take in each family have ensured families feel welcome and comfortable in the centre. The personal approach adopted by individual staff members ensures parents are aware of daily procedures and forthcoming events. The many methods of communication within the centre have enabled friendships to develop between families and for children's lives to be enriched. Parents commented on the dual role the centre shares with them in bringing up their children and providing an appropriate philosophy and set of ideals in educating their children.

- * The programme and environment are enriched by parent participation. Many parents spend time with their own and other children at the beginning and end of each day. Informal relationships between the staff and parents ensure parents' views and opinions are respected and included in the programme content.
- * The staff ensure parents are welcome and comfortable in the centre. They explain the centre's philosophy, programme, procedures and routines. They encourage and support a joint understanding and sharing about each child's development and progress. Staff procedures for sharing information are regularly monitored and often refined.
- * Parents and staff value each other and share in the decision making of the centre. Parents have joined the management committee. They jointly plan the centre's development and ensure its philosophy is upheld. Family teas are well attended.
- * Parents are kept informed about centre events and the daily programme by monthly newsletters, white boards, comment books, a telephone network for major issues and informal contact with the staff and each other.
- * Parents and staff share common parenting goals and objectives. Concerns and ideals can be easily discussed. A parent library and pamphlets on support services and parent groups provide additional information. An annual plan for continuing parent support and education has yet to be developed.
- * A procedure allowing parents to express concerns or lay complaints has been developed and it is written in the charter. An information sheet is given to all new parents. At the time of the review a complaint was being investigated.
- * The charter was developed by consultation between the staff and the parents. The completed charter was verified by the parents. It is displayed in the centre. The staff and parents have yet to familiarise themselves with the Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices for Chartered Early Childhood Services. Management plans to meet these requirements should be modified and developed.

Recommendation

- * The requirements of the Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices for Chartered Early Childhood Services should be met and management plans should be formulated.

6. THE ENVIRONMENT

The centre provides a natural play environment. The outdoor area has been creatively developed to include existing natural features. The centre and the equipment are maintained to a satisfactory standard.

- * The centre's licence is displayed in the centre. Procedures have yet to be developed to ensure the centre continues to meet and build on the Education (Early Childhood Centre) Regulations.
- * The outdoor environment is safe and environmentally appropriate. Health and safety practices and routines are incorporated into the daily programme. Thought and care have been given to ensuring that they are suitable for the age range of the children and that they meet the centre's conservation and environmental policies. They are regularly monitored by the supervisor.
- * Informal daily checking procedures ensure the equipment available to the children is safe and in good repair. Yearly insurance checks ensure the appropriate amounts of equipment are provided for the number of children attending. A system to regularly check and maintain the equipment has yet to be developed. The budget allocation and discussion at the management and staff meetings ensures the equipment is regularly replaced and upgraded.
- * The building exterior and interior maintenance repairs are carried out by the arts centre maintenance person. Interior decorating and cleaning and the maintenance of the outdoor play area are the responsibility of the centre. The supervisor oversees the overall presentation and monitors the cleaning standards. Formal, regular maintenance and checking procedures have yet to be developed.
- * A wheel chair ramp provides easy access into the centre.

Recommendations

- * Procedures should be developed to ensure the centre continues to meet and build on the Education (Early childhood Centres) Regulations.
- * Systems should be developed to regularly check and maintain all the equipment and the outdoor play area.

7. MANAGEMENT

Terms of reference have been drawn up which specify the respective responsibilities of the management committee and the Christchurch City Council. The management committee makes recommendations for Council approval. Some of the charter's desirable objectives and practices are being met. However, care needs to be taken that Council policies and practices do not conflict with the requirements of the centre's Charter.

- * The management committee is required to implement Council management policies and practices. Job descriptions are in place for all staff. It will be necessary to renegotiate the job descriptions with individual staff members before the planned job evaluations commence. This action will ensure that the job descriptions are an accurate record of the tasks performed. It is a requirement of the centre's charter to ensure that recruitment, selection and appointment procedures provide for the impartial selection of suitably qualified staff. A Council representative reported that the Council has a temporary policy to employ only existing council staff. This policy is not resulting in the impartial selection of staff.
- * Good and safe working conditions are provided and monitored. Staff know about health and safety procedures. A non-work space is provided for staff who make use of this facility. The council equal employment opportunities policy and programme applies at the creche.
- * Parents regularly view and confirm their children's attendance record. Clear records are kept of the funding received from the Ministry of Education and the Department of Social Welfare. A statement of income and expenditure for the 1991 financial year complies with the Local Government Act, 1974. A budget is developed for each financial year and is reported against at the monthly parent management meeting.
- * A staff development plan has not been prepared as specified in the creche's charter objectives. However, some staff are undertaking development and training, with several staff working towards attaining equivalency. Funds have been allocated for staff development although the budgeted amount was set without reference to staff and the identified needs of the centre. A staff development programme should be prepared to ensure that staff training needs and the programme needs of the centre are met in a planned and cohesive way. The charter requires all staff to participate in regular in-service training programmes developed in consultation with them.

Recommendations

- * The council and management committee should review the charter and ensure that all the desirable objectives and practices are being met.
- * The job descriptions should be renegotiated with all staff to ensure they reflect the actual tasks performed.
- * A formal staff development plan should be prepared in consultation with all staff.

8. CONCLUSION

A friendly, co-operative spirit prevailed amongst all involved during the review.

9. REVIEW TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Shirley Mercer - Co-ordinating Reviewer

Patricia Niven - Personnel Management Reviewer



Shirley Mercer
Co-ordinating Reviewer



Graham Cochrane
District Manager