



5 October 2004

To the Parents and Community of Lancaster Learning Centre

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on
Lancaster Learning Centre.

Lancaster Learning Centre is a long established centre with a very stable management and staff team. There is a strong sense of community and belonging at the centre. Children, families and staff enjoy warm, friendly relationships and know each other well.

This report evaluates the quality of education provided for children and the quality of management planning. It identifies areas of good performance and areas for further development and notes a number of actions required for compliance with regulations. The report comments on the centre's readiness for new qualification requirements that come into effect in January 2005 and concludes with recommendations for increased training levels and strengthened self review and planning systems. Managers should consider contracting an advisory service to support further development.

Children are active participants in the carefully planned and purposefully implemented programme. They particularly enjoy numerous opportunities for sharing books and experimenting with writing. Children's oral language development is well supported and they frequently engage in extended conversations with adults and each other. Adults become involved in the programme with children and provide support, affirmation and encouragement. They have high expectations that children will contribute to day-to-day tasks, demonstrate respect and care for each other and take responsibility for their actions.

The outdoor area offers interest, stimulation and challenge, and provides an appropriate setting for children's learning experiences. The centre is well resourced and children have ready access to a variety of equipment and creative materials.

The educational programme for children could now be enhanced by a greater focus on child-directed learning. Staff should increase the extent to which children's emerging interests and ideas are used as a basis for documenting planning and learning outcomes. Trained staff continue to refine programme planning so it reflects the move to further supporting children's independent learning.

Managers have recently reviewed the centre's charter, plans for the implementation of the *Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices 1996*, and some policies. They have established annual management and strategic plans. It would now be useful to develop longer-term planning, systematic self review, and specific processes for

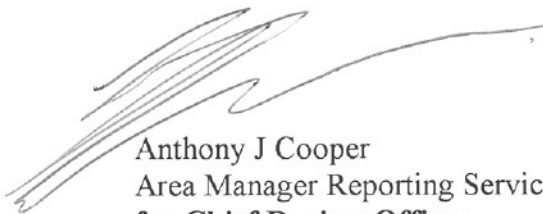
consultation with staff and the parent community. Although the centre employs three teachers with early childhood education qualifications, managers should continue to consider ways to increase staff training levels.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the service is being managed in the interests of the children. Therefore ERO will review the service again as part of the regular review cycle.

When ERO has reviewed an early childhood centre we encourage management to inform their community of any follow up action they plan to take. You should talk to the management or licensee if you have any questions about this evaluation, the full ERO report or their future intentions.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the centre or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.



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for Chief Review Officer