

Deaf Education ECE Trust Minutes of Meeting held 28th February

Present: Sarah de Heer, Grace Covey, Mekeal Knewstubb, Tania Drain
Attended part of meeting: Krista Clifford, Shannon Bennett

Apologies: Shu Wai Tan

Interpreters: Melody Faaiu and Catherine Winfrey

Secretary: Vanessa Burrows

Welcome and Karakia

(A copy of these minutes to Board Chair for signature after the meeting)

Actions from Previous Minutes

Induction document (distributed to Trustees)

Document explains:

- What our role is
- Code of Conduct
- Priorities
- Where the ECE Trust sits (diagram Pg 6/19) – Trust Board separate to Ko Taku Reo but connected (shows where responsibility lies for curriculum and governance and everything on other side of the table Sarah's responsibility e.g., strategic planning/meeting licensing criteria)
- Early years licensed for 2 (not under 2)-6 years of age (compulsory education starts at 6 years of age)
- Policies
- Example of Agenda and Quarterly Report (Krista Clifford)
- Glossary of Educational Language

Feedback welcomed

Sarah proposed this become our Induction document for all board members
Krista/Grace. Carried

Service Level Agreement

Sarah – There is a Service Level agreement between the two Boards (Ko Taku Reo Board/ECE Trust Board). Ultimate responsibility with ECE Trust Board. Ko Taku Reo does Finance, HR etc. Trust board responsible for following their processes. Service Level Agreement drawn up outlining what

we are asking them to do. Commissioner very keen to have legal and binding agreement. Have lawyers helping draw that up. Some new questions from the lawyers (forwarded to Shannon Bennet – Finance). Questions are around how we are going to be invoiced for services and what that is going to look like. Service Level Agreement only as good as what is written, and we all need understand it and sign it (expected timeframe that by the end of next term we are happy with it and by middle of the year will become a binding document). We are a registered charity.

Shannon – historically ECE set up as separate legal entity with separate bank account but under Ko Taku Reo umbrella for preparation of annual financial statements and auditing etc. ECE has been seen as a subsidiary sitting outside of Ko Taku Reo direct management but part of Ko Taku Reo as staff in early years employed by Ko Taku Reo and we get funding for it from Ministry of Education which is paid to Ko Taku Reo. The resourcing notice specifies this is the contribution to early years how many staff paid for etc. Preparation of annual financial statements should have been happening which wasn't. Should have effectively had Ko Taku Reo profit and loss and balance sheet etc. in one column and early years in another and consolidated figure at the end and everything audited. We continued for 2022 as conflicting opinion between Auditor General and Deloitte's. The Auditor General said separate and consolidated figure as separate entity. Ko Taku Reo will invoice early years for financial and administrative management. Effectively ECE Trust will have control over sessional funding which gets paid into the bank account and those funds will then be used when Ko Taku Reo invoices the trust. Calculated out of the total amount of funding we receive from ministry contribution for early years is 1.6 percent. Will look at management, administration, purchase of assets, property maintenance etc. Every benefit from being under Ko Taku Reo will apply, 1.6 percent will be annual fee to early years. Monthly invoice between \$10-12,000 at this stage. Need to look at assets, early years is on Ko Taku Reo land (ministry land), so anything purchased is sitting in Ko Taku Reo assets register. If early years decided to move away or expand out their needs to be a decision on who owns assets and if early years wants to have on their balance sheet (currently just an operational expense) and if ECE Trust wanted to build up assets and equity to grow trust and offer opportunity to expand independently of Ko Taku Reo. Good thing about separation is separate bank account and separate Xero in terms of funds. If there is a deficit Ko Taku Reo will top up. It is a symbiotic relationship - work well together but must be seen as two separate entities. Caution against making big financial commitments this year as when going into budgeting process Ko Taku Reo may be concerned the separation has created a large shortfall and may increase monthly charge out to cover increased costs of running.

Sarah – a wider conversation will be had regarding budgets and Sarah will advocate for early years, that we have what is needed to run and be sustainable going forward and that value is given to deaf and hard of hearing learners. This is where we need to be putting resources.

Shannon – As an organisation Ko Taku Reo recognises the importance and significance of early years and that early intervention is key. A deficit is not expected but see how the new system runs for the first year on how the accounts have been structured.

Head of Centre Report

Krista Clifford – Quarterly Report Dec 2022. Numbers a little low but balance of Deaf and hearing the same. Licence allows 30 max. Eight or nine expressions of interest and many under two years old, think numbers will traffic up. Normal for numbers to be up and down. Five students left, most transitioned into school. Students with additional needs about the same, under 50%. No Covid T4. Absences because of fever and children needing to go home from the preschool with this. Changes in terms of van service. Three vans (south, west, south central). Van driver (Mel) left at the end of last term, decided to reduce service, and run two vans for this term, as five children left therefore numbers reduced. Going forward if enrolments increase, we can reinstate the third van. Saves cost and can readvertise for van drivers when required. Children spending longer time in the van with increased traffic this term, may need to go back to three. Van service not part of licence part of something extra we offer so is a risk in terms of health and safety so need to be aware of that. Removes barriers to children attending the preschool. Five on the van from south Auckland. Last term curriculum focused on celebrations. Set up Whānau board with photos helping children understand the concept of Whānau. Have information about sign language assessments many of the children have significant language delays. Some because of Covid. More intensive therapy sessions needed - goal for this term. New platform "Playground" (replaces Storypark, can communicate with parents, record routines etc. Report talks about information sharing, shade sail replacement, big focus on policies ready for ERO visit, accidents and events and incident reports

(one child choked on a grape – staff took appropriate action e.g., firmly hit back and it popped out), reminder to families regarding appropriate lunchbox food. Trips – Santa Claus show, five children attended. Pumphouse theatre is on the North Shore, so looking at South to see if pick up and go straight there (and home) to reduce travel time. Attendance – last term numbers high as Covid had disappeared and parents a lot more confident – 75% attendance. Storypark engagement time and how many engaged 52% engagement and commented and taking photos other 43% percent just looking. In summary talked about internal evaluations. ECE Guidelines relate to topics in the report. Staffing – two staff members left. Donna seconded to the village (van role but not teacher aid role).

Tania queried child illness policy.

Krista explained we have a policy regarding sickness and are looking into sharing policies on a the new “Playground” platform. Policies are currently under review and once this is done will be shared and feedback invited.

Finance (T&L – Early Years For the 12 months ended 31 December 2022)

At the time of the merger Kelston Deaf Education Centre and van Asch budgets were effectively melded together and became the budget. Not necessarily a true reflection of how things are working. Budgeted figures for 2021/2022 are not based on anything real or tangible, and without consideration of being a national organisation e.g., flights. 2023 using 2022 actuals has been a small deviation from 2021 numbers in that things have increased as the organisation adjusts to a new way of working. Covid disrupted travel so seen spike in 2022 and day to day operational. 2022 is what we are expecting in 2023. There are areas where a bit more targeted review is required. One thing that has changed there was early involvement services income under operational. Consolidated all income and put in one area and each division cost centre so focusing purely on expenditure.

Sarah – For the ERO visit we will need have to have the budget up on the wall. We need to have the income we get noted. We will need to have an idea of what comes in (operational and sessional) and what goes out. Will need up on the wall for T2 this year.

Shannon- instead of Early Years Profit and Loss will have it as Deaf Education Trust so that will cover it. Will do a that much simpler version of it.

Sarah will need up on the wall by term 2.

Shannon – Sessional funding isn’t there as comes directly to trust so will be moved out and will be sitting in the bank account. Expenditure deviation between budget and actuals based on how areas working so that’s what we’ve used for 2023 figures. Will see a lot more similarities and a lot less big variance. Operating expenses for 2022 1.6 percent. Because of that you can see deficit of \$34,000, which isn’t actually that bad as expenditure already in there.

Sarah – sessional funding fluctuates we get a pot of money for every hour a child is in preschool. Important in terms of keeping attendance and enrolment levels up, and to remove barriers. It is also important with regards to child development that we can offer a high level of staffing. Six staff full time for thirty children is a great ratio. We have got 1/5, which is needed due to high numbers of complex needs. No additional funding for special needs, get equity funding but not very much (about \$3,000). We get operational grant coming to Ko Taku Reo (about \$200,000) and two full time. So sessional funding covers other teachers and staff, van service, and allows us to keep level we have got.

Shannon – resourcing notice says will pay for a certain number of teachers but essentially dollar amount is what that equates to. Pays position for the position.

Sarah – teachers get increment each year and then capped so it is a step system. We are funded four and a half teachers for the whole country. We have 4 here in Auckland and 2.2 in Christchurch so doesn’t cover everything we do but all works out in the end.

Shannon – employee benefits, non-teaching staff salary not covered in resourcing notice. These include teacher aids, van drivers, administration.

Finance Handing over to “Solutions and Services” Ltd accounting services (Shana will look after Xero)

General Business

Welcome Parent Trustees

Official welcome to Mekeal Knewstubb and Tania Drain as new ECE Trust members. Didn't need to go to vote so automatically appointed. Nominated Grace Covey last year to be Chairperson and she has accepted. Next meeting will look at strategic plan. Will send out old strategic plan with these minutes. Strategic planning process very important. Value input from Parent Trustees, what is important to you and your children and things to focus on.

Promotion

Discussion around promotion of the Ko Taku Reo Preschool in the community. A lot of referrals come through advisors, if born deaf assigned advisor (maybe invite Advisor/s to visit preschool). Sarah to include promotion in the Strategic Plan.

ERO Visit

Make sure we are compliant with all the regulations and delivering amazing curriculum. Check financials budgets. ERO May want to connect with parents (Mekeal, Tania). May ask questions around Board (Grace). Will be coming some time in Term 2 TBC 24 April onwards. Send in a lot of information before they come then on site two-three days. As ECE Trust Board we are responsible for Health and Safety, governance, management, and curriculum. We sit inside a specialist school Ko Taku Reo and have our own people working on ECE but as a licensed centre must have a separate governance board. Have ultimate power and ultimate decision making. We are liable as a Trust Board and have our own insurance. Risk very low but be aware of the risk.

ACTIONS:	
Service Level Agreement between Ko Taku Reo and ECE Trust (requires further changes). Questions around how we are going to be invoiced for services and what that is going to look like forwarded to Finance	Sarah/Finance
Strategic Plan – to be shared with the minutes	Vanessa
Budget to put up on the wall for ERO visit	Sarah/Finance

Chairperson, Deaf Education ECE Trust

Date