**Strategic Discussion: Full enrolment: Meet community needs for ECE**

**Statement:** When we talk about our communities we include all who interact with our services (people, services & organisations). Multiple social, economic, cultural and demographic factors constantly shape and reshape the needs of people in our communities and accordingly their ECE needs. Although the specific needs of children, whanau and employees may differ we acknowledge they also have many needs in common; safe, happy, nurturing environments with suitably qualified and engaged employees, well supported educational outcomes, stability, of high quality with consistent and reliable service provision. Aside from these considerations parents and caregivers often have needs that determine whether kindergarten is even an option for them – these include our costs, locations, hours of operation and how much of the year we are open for. The nature and quality of the relationships children have with our teachers, the focus on educational outcomes and the contentment of children are key objectives for our organisation.

The right to decide what is best for their children rests with their parents/caregivers which includes when, where and how long they are enrolled in ECE services for. The responsibility for meeting the needs of children while they are in our care rests with us and is our first consideration when offering our services( that is, irrespective of the time they spend with us, we are ensuring they have the best quality of service we can provide).

Kindergarten has a long history of being flexible, adaptable and responsive to the changing needs of our communities. We constantly monitor both directly and indirectly what is happening in our communities. When we identify that community needs have changed, we have a defined process in place for responding to those needs and a set of core values and principles underpinning our decisions and processes for change.

We recognise that an inability to meet the needs of our communities is likely to translate into a fall off in demand for our services. When considering changes to the service we offer we will not compromise on our core values, our commitment to good practice and 100% trained teachers. We’re committed to providing endurable and sustainable services to our Napier and Wairoa communities. Our ultimate goal is to keep existing services going in our local communities by meeting our communities need for ECE services and responding to the fact that the needs in each community may differ.

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| **Area** | **Ensure:** | **Further Initiatives to be explored** |
| Board | * Monitor enrolment and satisfaction levels * We ask the right questions of the right people about community needs and the extent to which we are meeting them * We show leadership where and when it is needed * We create a culture of engagement, consultation and inclusion * We’re clear about intent, and are transparent and honest * Recognise when expert advice and/or support is required * Support employees and communities through periods of change – develop resilience and flexibility * We have processes, guidelines, core values & principles in place when considering changes to meet community needs. These include undertaking of due diligence, our philosophy & vision * We consider the impacts on those already accessing our services if we are considering implementing changes * We consider the closing of a service to be an option of last resort | * Staff website – outline our processes, guidelines, values & principles when considering community needs & the services we provide |
| Staff | * We know & understand our community’s needs * Provide feedback and willingly participate in consultation about community needs * Willing to suggest ideas/solutions and maintain an open mind to exploring ideas |  |
| Finance | * We provide the Board with regular, timely information about enrolment levels |  |