



Monday, 22 May 2017

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Tēnā koe Nikki

We are a licensed home-based ECE service provider, passionate about increasing New Zealand families access to high quality ECE, particularly in more rural areas. We currently operate in Nelson, Marlborough and Canterbury.

We were recently approached by the Great Barrier Island (GBI) community regarding the possibility of offering our services to families on the island. There is a dearth of ECE options on GBI (excepting one parent-led Playcentre and a playgroup in the North), which is tough for local parents and arguably a drag on the local economy, because smart, capable, hard-working women are unable to return to work.

The community feels that having additional ECE services on the island would not only benefit the children who attend, but also parents and the wider community. They believe the not-for-profit Educarents model is a good fit for Great Barrier.

I met with residents in April and was encouraged by their proactive approach to meeting this need in their community. They have already identified two potential community spaces for care (one in the North (the Okiwi Community Room) and one in the South (the Playcentre facility - an amazing resource which is currently underutilised). Their idea is to have both these premises available for different adults to provide education and care for up to four children at any one time (as per the Educarents model), and they have already canvassed interest from parents who would either like to provide care and or have their children receive care from these premises.

We would love to be able to serve the GBI community by extending services to the island under our current Canterbury license #45338. This service has been fully licensed since 2011 and has successfully undergone two ERO reviews and two MOE funding audits to date. We understand there are no geographical limitations on the license and because it provides for up to 80 children, and we presently have only 28 children enrolled, there is capacity to do this. We have used the same process previously to provide services in Marlborough and Queenstown and attach a copy of the license for your information.

However, there remains one main obstacle. When setting up our services in any area, we would typically employ an ECE qualified and registered teacher as manager/coordinator (“Person Responsible”) in that area. This person is on call during all hours that children are in care but is not an actual hands-on carer. Which is to say, to set up on the Barrier, we would ideally require the local coordinator to be ECE qualified to ensure compliance with our licensing obligations as follows:

Clause 44.1 of the **Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008** requires every licensed service provider to whom this regulation applies -

- (a) to comply with the applicable requirements of [Schedule 1](#) (which relates to qualification requirements for adults); and
- (b) to comply with the applicable requirements of [Schedule 2](#) (which relates to adult-to-child ratios); and
- (c) to comply with the applicable requirements of [Schedule 3](#) (which relate to service-sizes); and
- (d) to ensure that, at all times while children attend the service,—
 - (i) those children, and the adults providing education and care who supervise them, **are** supervised by a person responsible; and
 - (ii) there is 1 person responsible for every 50 children.

[Schedule 1](#) dictates that the *Person Responsible* holds an ECE teaching qualification recognised by the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand for registration purposes.

The **Education Act 1989** requires that our service has a *Contact Person* and interprets a *Contact Person* as meaning; a person nominated by a service provider to represent its management, who –

- (a) is able to respond to the Secretary as soon as practicable on any issue relating to licensing; and
- (b) has authority to act on behalf of the service provider when dealing with the Secretary; and
- (c) resides locally.

There is presently nobody residing on Great Barrier who is ECE qualified. There are people with several years of ECE teaching experience, who are also trained primary school teachers, but no one who neatly ticks the box. Therefore, we propose the following in order to get a service up and running on GBI. We employ a “*Contact Person*” on the island to do the bulk of the coordination. This person is not necessarily fully ECE qualified. We then use our “*Person Responsible*” in Canterbury (under Educarents Home-based Education and Care Service License no. 45338) as a support person for that Contact Person.

As follows:

- The *Person Responsible* and the *Contact Person* for Educarents Home-based Education and Care Service license no. 45338 will remain as is.
- Educarents will employ a local resident as the *Contact Person* for the children attending and the adults providing care on GBI.
- The *Contact Person* that resides on GBI will be responsible for supervising the children attending and the adults providing care on GBI.
- The *Contact Person* that resides on GBI will be available at all times while children attend the service on GBI. This person may not be ECE qualified.
- The *Contact Person* that resides on GBI will be supported at all times by the *Person Responsible* for Educarents Home-based Education and Care Service License no. 45338, as well as Educarents wider team of teachers and management based on the mainland.

The challenge is the physical distance between children and adults on the island and the *Person Responsible* on the Mainland. It’s possible we will require a dispensation from the Ministry of Education to make this work. And it’s for this reason we’re approaching you. We are asking for your support in getting the Eduarents model off the ground on the Barrier. We believe it would be invaluable for local children and invaluable for local families. It would also mean islanders no longer miss out on the full range of Government ECE subsidies, including the 20 hours/week free for 3-5 year olds.

We have the full backing of the Great Barrier Local Board for this initiative (improving ECE services on the island is part of the Board’s new Lifelong Learning Strategy). As such, Board chair Izzy Fordham has also put her name to this letter.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we best proceed, and in particular whether you would be willing to advocate for the dispensation for the on-island coordinator.

Nāku noa, nā



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Educarents Ltd



Izzy Fordham
Chairperson
Great Barrier Local Board