

Tamariki School Literacy Review

Review Question:

How well is literacy supported through play at Tamariki School?

Review Process

1. Tamariki staff decided on review question.
2. Staff together brainstormed/discussed what literacy learning looks like/involve
3. Gathering information-the Tamariki staff observed and wrote down examples of literacy learning occurring through children's play activities.
4. Looking outside Tamariki-looking at literature describing literacy development in other learning environments that differ from a conventional classroom e.g home schooling and early childhood areas such as playcentres.
5. A list of early literacy skills was developed.
6. The early literacy skills list was reviewed and activities that supported the development of each skill were noted, using written staff observations, anecdotal observations, story park learning observations and learning stories.
7. As part of reviewing the early literacy skills list resources that support the development of specific skills were also noted.
8. A document was developed listing the skills and outlining play activities and resources supporting each individual skill – see document 'Resources and Activities that Support Early Literacy Development at Tamariki School’.
9. This information was then analysed to determine what was working well and areas might need to be developed – see document “Evaluation of Information Gathered During Literacy Review”.
10. From this analysis an action plan was developed – see document “Action Plan for Greater Support of Writing Development at Tamariki School”.

Resources/Activities that Support Early Literacy Skills at Tamariki School

Communicating well, talking

- Frequent, daily-Tamariki very oral culture
- Children communicate/talk with other children and adults constantly-during play, times in the kitchen, meeting room, in classes etc
- Negotiating in games, use of equipment and areas of the school.
- Meetings, both small and whole school

Conversation, discussion

- As above-conversations/discussions form a huge part of the Tamariki day.
- Forms a big part of play.
- Frequent opportunities for discussion/conversation with friends and adults

Attending/participating in meetings

- All children come to whole school meetings, though little children can ask to be excused if meetings are long
- All children will be involved in small meetings (with lots of support if necessary).

- Small children can and do chair both small and whole school meetings.
- Small children can and do call whole school and small meetings (with support if needed).
- Children develop and present arguments in both small and whole school meetings.

Non verbal communication

- Reading body language-often a skill developed in meetings, discussion and negotiation
- Understanding of body language modelled and by adults and older students

Use correct words for things

High adult/child ratio-lots of modelling of correct word/grammar (not correcting but repeating or finding opportunities to use correct terms/words/grammar).

Lots of games supporting vocabulary development.

Learning songs, waiata

Good CD player in the sunroom-often songs, waiata playing.

Learning waiata

Adults/children teaching songs to each other.

Rhyming, nursery rhymes, poems

Books shared in the Sunroom.

Songs.

Charts.

Cultural literacies, customs

Incorporating Maori Tikanga into school environment e.g. not sitting on tables, stepping over children's heads etc

Different languages e.g. Maori

Maori names for colours, numbers, Maori alphabet chart.labels, greetings etc

Stories chosen with New Zealand theme and incorporating Maori words/phrases.

Regular incorporation of Maori words into everyday activities.

Maori language learning games e.g Kei a wai? (What is it/)

Creativity – making up stories during imaginative play

Frequently occurring-daily e.g playmobile, collaborative lego games, Sylvanians etc, role playing games, making up plays. Often stories/scenarios developed.

Groups of children drawing together-drawing the stories they make up.

Learning complex processes e.g. lego creations, sand creations, hut building etc

Constant opportunities. Resources always available, children have unlimited access.

Children free to continue processes for as long as they want/need.

Listening to stories

Daily. Big part of the Sunroom culture.

Story reading by teachers, parents older children.

Respond to children's spontaneous comments and questions while stories are being read.

Frequently happening as children spontaneously discuss stories when engaged with the stories.

Children spontaneously predicting what will come next in stories

Again-frequently happens as children engage with stories.

Reader will at times “wonder” what will happen next.

Reading books

Children free to read at any time.

Popular authors/series moved downstairs to allow ready access.

Junior reading material freely available in the Sunroom.

Looking at books-discussing pictures

Again-happens frequently. Opportunities always there.

Holding/using books the right way-left to right directionality

Constantly modelled by adults and older children.

Frequent opportunities as children enjoy looking at story books and emergent readers.

Comprehension, use of pictures

Children frequently discuss stories-content, meaning etc

Children love discussing pictures in books, on the internet etc

Drawing and colouring

Every child in Sunroom has their own scrapbook for drawing,

Coloured pencils and pens always available.

Colouring always available and frequently engaged in.

Holding pencils/pens in a functional way

Frequent opportunities as children draw/colour, write their name and times e.g. booking sheets.

Children write signs in cards, as part of shopping games etc.

Representing own ideas through pictures

Frequent –individual and group drawing of stories.

Games such as dixit, Pictionary.

Story cards-picture cards used to give ideas for stories.

Choosing and/or drawing pictures for stories e.g. fortunately/unfortunately stories.

Six sentence story-pizza books-writing story and illustrating.

Children spontaneously discussing their pictures

Frequent-lots of time spent drawing in Sunroom, meeting room, red door room which children really enjoy discussing.

Use of literacy in life, e.g. bus ticket, making cards, letters, etc

Often happens during games e.g. shop games, letter boxes, banks, casinos,.

Lots of reading cards in games e.g. magic, monopoly, survival games

Children often write letters, make cards for family birthdays, Christmas etc, or for sick staff or children.

Phonics/sounds / words, letter/sound association, letter recognition

Games in Sunroom e.g. Silly Sentence game, word bingo, Find a Word.

CVC spelling board games-6 games level 1.

Boxed Set 8 spelling board games level 1, 6 level 2, 6 level 3.

Beat the Bear-initial consonant sounds

Beat the Elephant-consonant blends

Beat the Frog-rhyming words
Sunken Treasure-phonics beginning blends
Python Path-Phonics word ending game
Spelligator-spelling words
Construct a sentence-awareness of different types of words in a sentence
Learning games-long and short vowels
Learning games-consonant blends and digraphs
Sentence flip chart-parts of a sentence

Learning to read/write own name

Many opportunities-bookings e.g common room, computers
Names on drawing books, pictures, things made in wood work room, art room etc

Learning alphabet/spelling-write/form letters

Many alphabet puzzles
Games e.g Alphabet Go Fish
Perpetuo motor programme-pre-writing skills

Children dictating stories/learning stories

Children talk about their learning for storypark entries
Early writers frequently dictate stories for teacher to write, and then copy

Open ended questions and conversations

Frequent/constant-high adult/child ratio with teachers and parents conversing with children, having discussions.

Learning sequences and rules in games and puzzles

Wide range of games and puzzles constantly used in the Sunroom, quiet room, common room, meeting room-board games, card games, chess monopoly many many more.

Evaluation of Information Gathered During the Literacy Review

What is Working Well

The findings show that on the whole literacy development is very well supported at Tamariki by the play activities the children engage in the the resources/games available for their use.

The opportunities for the development of pre-reading and reading skills, and of speaking and listening skills are particularly strong.

There are a lot of resources that support the development of pre-reading and early reading skills

The Tamariki culture strongly values reading, and books are readily available, stories are shared constantly. Stories are incorporated frequently into children's play activities, and children have the opportunity to look at books and read at any time.

Reading often is a big part of board and card games and increasingly children read when researching on the internet.

Speaking and listening development is also very strong. The Tamariki meeting system supports the development of a big range of skills, and the children are constantly engaged in play activities that support oral language development.

The high adult/child ratio (parents as well as staff) and the nature of of the Tamariki community provide many opportunities for conversation and discussion. A lot of resources/games support oral language development.

Area for Improvement

While there are certainly many opportunities for the development of written skills, this area was identified as an area not sufficiently supported through the children's play activities and available resources.

Therefore it is necessary to make a plan of action to support the development of pre-writing and writing skills.

Action Plan for Greater Support of Writing Development At Tamariki

The literacy review has highlighted the fact that the children's play activities do not support the development of written skills as well as skills in other aspects of literacy.

Writing has been identified as an area in which Tamariki needs to lift student achievement and therefore it is important to address this need.

The children will always do a huge part of their learning through play and therefore resources are needed that support the incorporation of writing into play.

However, as writing is not as readily engaged in during play as other literacy skills there is also a need for teachers to upskill and offer more activities that help the children develop the skills they need, while always working within the special character and respecting the children's right to choose..

Action Plan

1. Tamariki staff will visit an early childhood centre and junior department of another school.
2. Teachers are keen to participate in writing PLD in 2016 if possible.
3. Management will request that the Board of Trustees will budget for the purchase of more resources that support writing development in term 1, 2016-both resources that will encourage writing to be incorporated into play activities and also teaching resources.
4. Teachers will offer a printing programme.
5. Teachers will focus on fostering enthusiasm for writing and offer classes/activities focused on making writing achievable and fun.