

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Autumn 2014



Feedback Here's What You Think

In Summary, you think our teachers are amazing! You think that teachers are genuinely caring and respectful to you and your children, communicate well, and that you and your children are very happy at TLC.

You love our environment, but you want us to declare war on mosquitos - and we will!

You think that TLC is expensive compared to the majority of childcare, but worth it for great ratios and fantastic teachers.

While not thrilled about a fee increase most of you accept that this will happen to

keep up with things like food costs and wage costs.

You like our social events and our parent voice committee has agreed to improve existing ones, and add a few more.

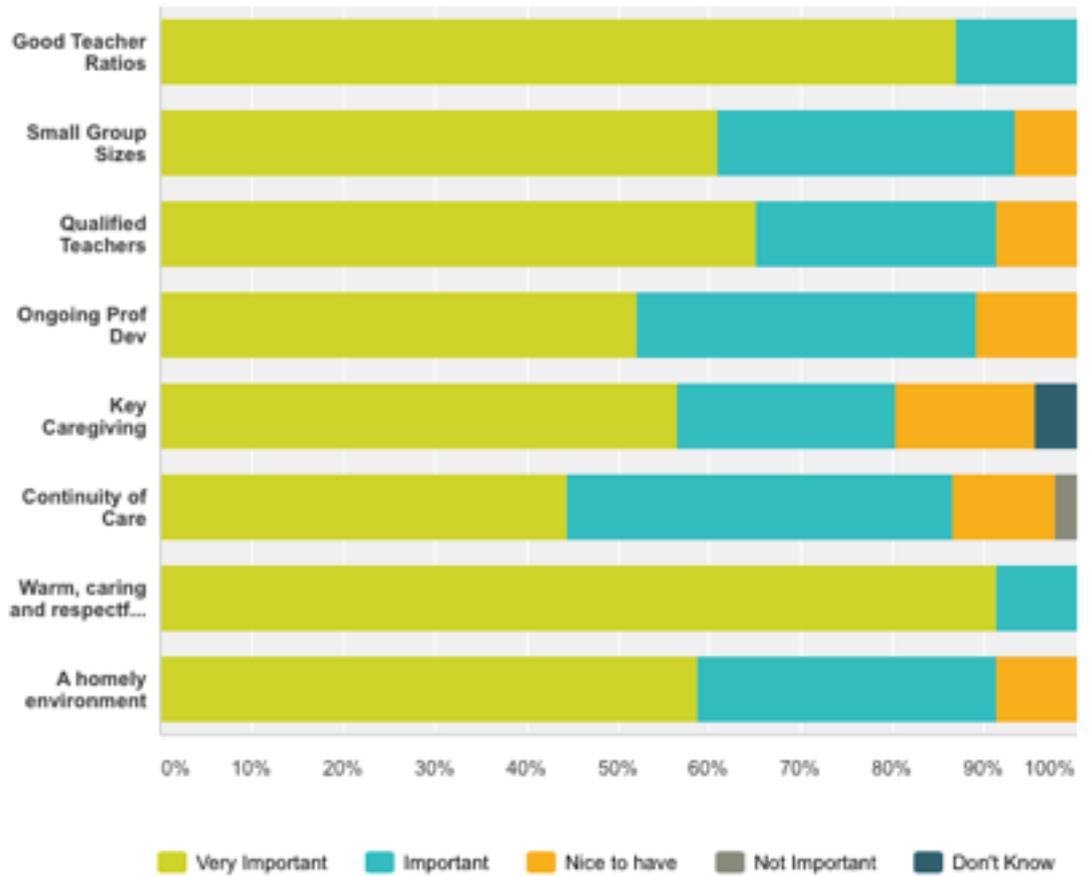
I would like to thank all of you who completed the survey, and it was a record number of you who chose to do so. For our part, we will listen to your feedback, and make our best effort to take actions as a result of your suggestions.

Regards and thanks,
Marie

1)

What You Think Contributes to Quality of Care

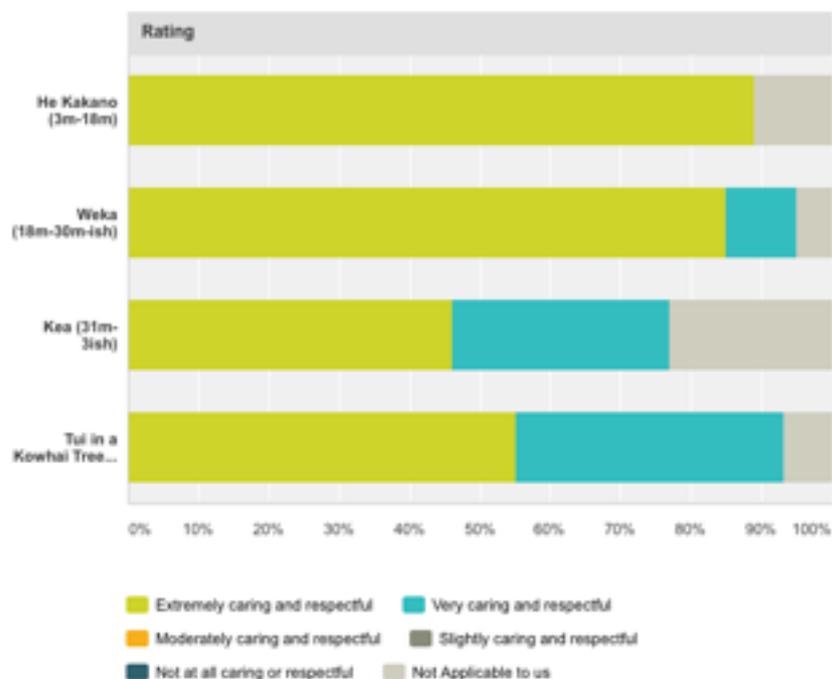
Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



The most important contributor to quality of care in your opinion is warm, caring and respectful staff, followed by good ratios. It makes a lot of sense then, that you give our highest ratings for respectful care to the group who have the best ratios, our He Kaakano room.

How Caring and respectful are our teachers towards you and your child?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



Value For Money

When we look at ‘customer satisfaction’ there are two elements. One is how happy is your child at TLC (we will come to that later in the survey), the other is what is important to you the adults, and therefore what you are paying for, and do we deliver? We think our philosophy means we have warm, caring and respectful staff. Providing good ratios with qualified teachers is expensive, but overall it looks like you think you are getting what you pay for.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very good value	33.33%	15
Good value	44.44%	20
Average value	22.22%	10
Not good value	0.00%	0
Very bad value	0.00%	0
Total		45

Showing 8 responses

but the quality of the teachers makeup for this
3/11/2014 8:24 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

Acceptable value meaning, you get what you pay for and we pay higher fees than almost all other centres charge.
3/7/2014 10:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

We chose TLC initially based on the teacher / child ratio, so it's very important to us
3/6/2014 1:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

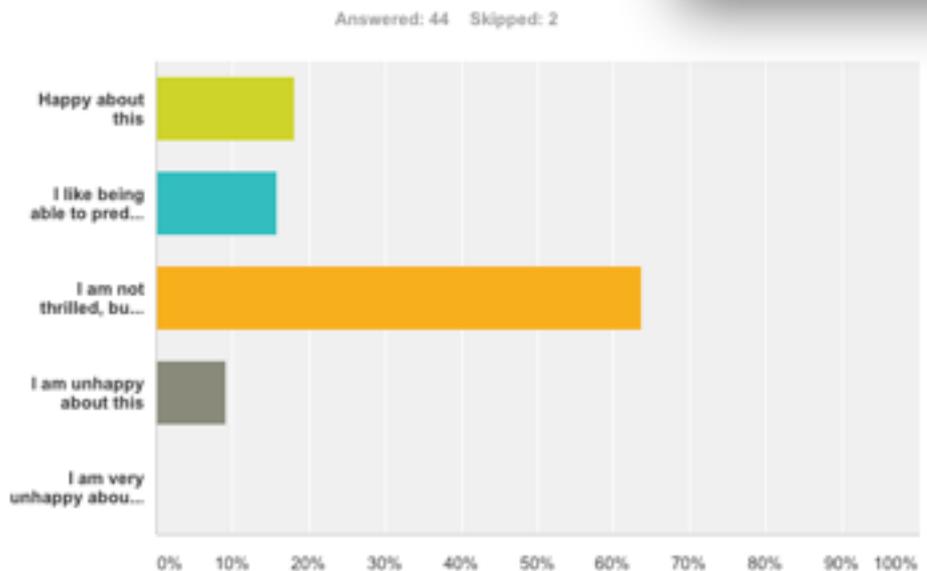
Its expensive but you take into account the quality of the care, which is more important to us.
3/6/2014 12:24 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

It certainly eats up a lot of my salary - great for people in higher paying roles but for more average earners it is still expensive.
3/6/2014 12:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

its hard to quantify, we have made the choice to spend more at TLC and it cuts my salary in half, but we are happy with this decision because of the quality of care.
3/1/2014 7:26 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Proposed Fees/Charges Increase

The next section of the survey looked at how you felt about the proposed annual fees/charges increase to cover cost increases, such as the cost of food, and staff payrises. For the majority, there were not thrilled, but accepted this.



Fee Structure Review

We reviewed all your feedback regarding possible changes to our fee structure, and as a result we have amended our 'part day' from being between 8:45am and 15:15pm to being a flexible seven hour 'short day'. We still need you to let us know WHEN you typically want this seven hours to be for ministry records, and so we can plan staffing for our ratios.

The consensus about the fee structure was that the vast majority of you are happy with it as it currently is.

Indoor Environment - Your Priorities

21 of 46 of you answered this question. Here is what you said:

- *No. Good set-up.*
- *Any change of keeping the toilet facilities a bit tidier, (down stairs) , especially when group sizes increase? I like everything else*
- *I'd like there to be some separate smaller group activity in the tui/kowhai area to encourage children to have quieter/ focused activity without the acoustic intrusion of others - not sure how you'd manage this - but it seems desirable to help them calm outside 'quiet time'.*
- *happy with environment*
- *Bathroom re-vamp? Its so clinical - does not seem to blend with the aesthetics of TLC.*
- *Love the new carpet at the front of the downstairs area - much more homely!*
- *No, I think the place has a great range of things to keep the kids busy*
- *Lots of numbers and letters. Recent research indicates that these skills benefit children starting school.*
- *Nothing that I can think of*
- *Love the environment and its simplicity*
- *You do a great job of keeping this new and exciting for the kids. I know Amy gets very excited about getting new things for the kids to explore upstairs and we appreciate this.*
- *no comment happy with indoor environment*
- *A quiet area, not in the middle of the daycare or near the entrance, where children can focus on play more easily without interruption*
- *Not sure*
- *i like the no-shoe policy in the kakano room. i would much prefer that natural materials were used on the floor. wool carpets are better for children with allergies and they keep air warmer and drier in winter and cooler and drier in summer.*
- *Looks great!*
- *Kids toilet upstairs would be great More books/reading material always available*
- *downstairs now much tidier than it was. much easier to navigate and lots of clutter removed*
- *I like the joint rooms downstairs now. It makes more sense. Can't really think of any improvements.*
- *Currently think it's great so have no monumental change suggestions, though we believe it should have the flexibility to change according to the children's make up (age mostly) - for a period when there a lot of babies/young children it might make sense to return to segmented areas and later (like now) not. Bring back the science corner?*
- *I think you have great outdoor area*

My takeaways in terms of your suggestions were 'quiet areas', more homely/wool carpeting when we come to replace the existing carpet and to keep on investing in books and maths resources. Thank you for all your kind words, we continually try to improve and refresh our environment, and I personally do most of the painting and decorating, so your kind words were appreciated.

Outdoor Environment

One of our key points of difference for TLC is our outside environment, and the emphasis on as 'natural' and 'healthy' an environment as we can achieve. 25 of our survey respondents had the following to say:

- *Indoor outdoor bit so children can still go outside in bad weather. Better use of upper garden. Seems under-utilised.*
- *I think the outdoor area for the upstairs children is too small. the sectioning off of the top garden to give more space at times only makes the outdoor area for the downstairs children too small. has consideration been given to claiming some of the driveway area (where the sheds have recently been located) for extension of the upstairs garden. and perhaps a door / windows connecting to this space on the side of the building.*
- *War on mosquitos!*
- *Planting to discourage Mosquitos ?!*
- *Are there distinct outdoor activities that are done - most of outdoor play is free play - and it might be interesting to see the children in project like play outside. Gardening/ learning basic science of water/physics - at their level of course and under guidance.*
- *More shade sails for the kids outside.*
- *no thoughts*
- *Lets change the Wendyhouse!! Move it? Burn it? Paint it? make that area different? Mozzies need to DIE!!*
- *It seems a shame that the front outdoor area/sandpit doesn't get used any longer owing to the challenges of supervising across such a large outdoor space front and back - I wonder if it could be repurposed for something that is not intended for play e.g. some edible garden space?*
- *I don't tend to go right out the back of the garden, I must go and have a look! Maybe a vege garden?*
- *Mosquito control!*
- *It can be frustrating sometimes when child's name comes home covered in dirt, so more grassy sections would be nice*
- *The downstairs outdoor space seems a bit dark*
- *Again an amazing outdoor space*
- *If its possible to change something from time to time, kids value these subtle changes.*
- *Our daughter gets a lot of mozzie bites daily..... i would like to see some sort of treatment to the gardens to minimise amount of mozzies, say twice a year spraying garden.*
- *No*
- *Maybe more garden with veges etc*
- *as many natural materials as possible.*
- *Looks great!*
- *Mosquito control upstairs (outside) not sure how you do this, citronella burner out of reach? Sunscreen scent free. Maybe a little vege/flower garden for the children to help with*
- *the board across the climbing wall that is there sometimes is pretty ugly - why is it used?*
- *Would the kids enjoy perhaps bigger veg/fruit garden? Just a thought.*
- *Currently think it's great so have no monumental change suggestions*
- *You may already but swan plant are great plants for the garden particularly when the monarch butterfly lay their eggs and ther caterpillars turn up*

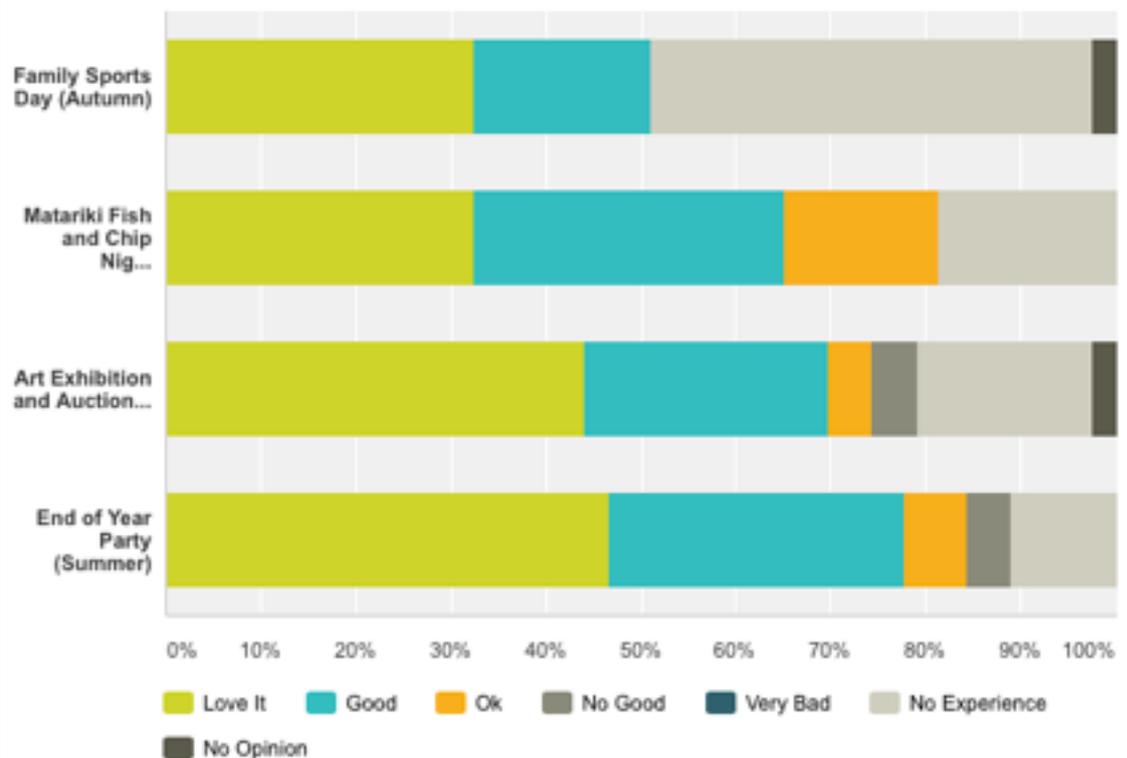
The most common theme here was MOSQUITOS. While we have tried planting mosquito repelling plants, and have used the herbal non toxic granules in the past, nothing has really worked so far. So, I have approached Rentokil for their advise. While they are willing to spray outside and inside, we could not readily identify where the mosquitos are breeding, so even this may fail. We will keep on being vigilant, and making sure that things like gutters, and planting is kept up with, but we will schedule a regular mosquito spray as well.

Another common theme was more vegetable planting - we will take this on board.

Social Events

What do you think of our social events?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



It seems you are pretty happy with the **Sports day**, and there were not any suggestions for changes.

With regards to our **Matariki Fish and Chip night**, it sounds like for a few of you, it is a bit crowded. We have talked to the parent voice committee about this, and this year, (**Thursday 3rd July**) weather permitting we plan on holding it outside in the reserve.

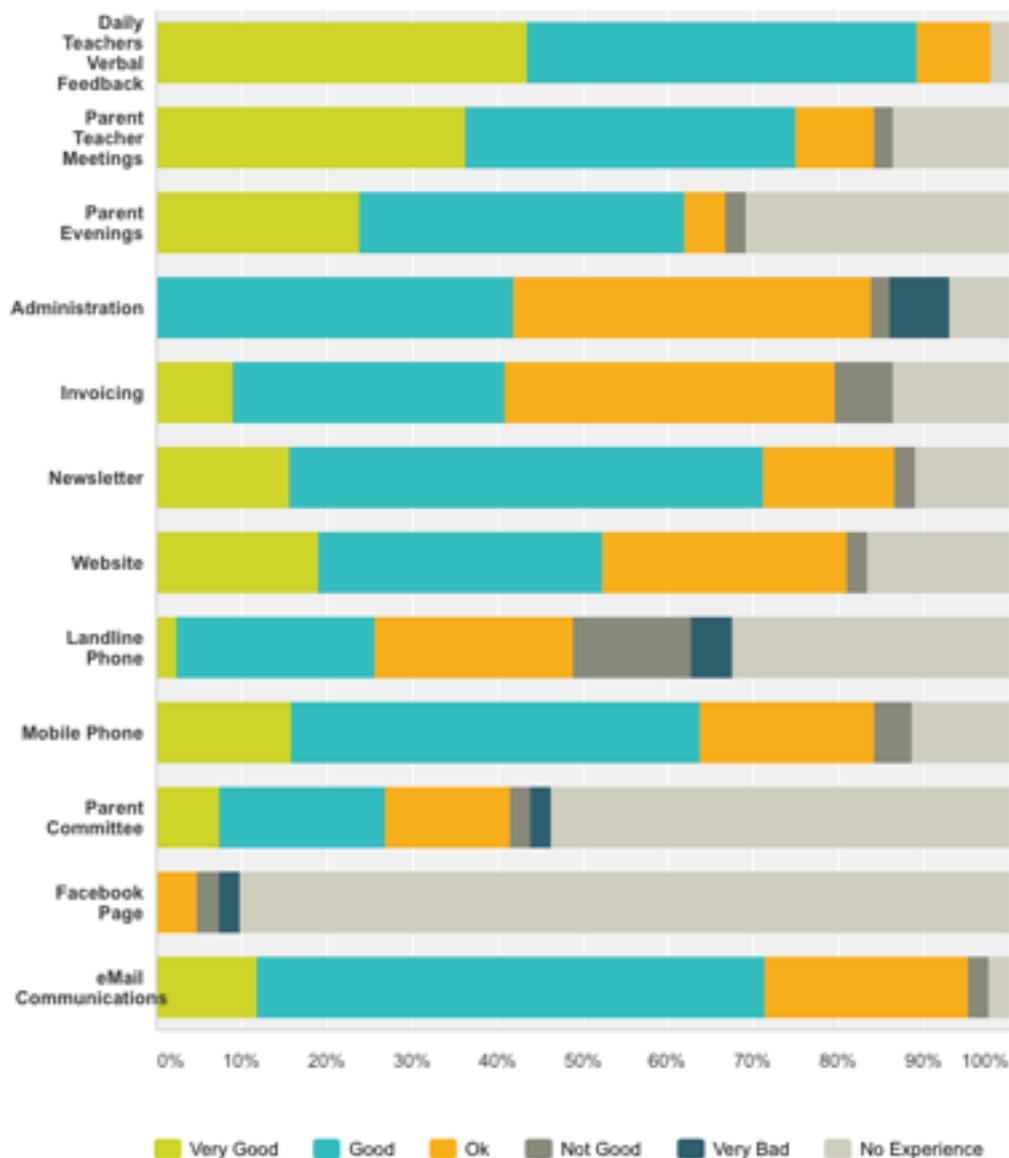
With regards to our **Art Exhibition and Auction**, most love it, however, some of you have reservations about the competitiveness of the bidding, and the whole commoditisation or children's art. I personally share these reservations, and am anxious that the child's creative process stays free of adult direction and interference, which when there is a need to produce a canvas for display and auction, I do not believe can be 100% guaranteed. The art exhibition and auction is also probably the social event that requires the most teacher preparation and work. I would like to look at 'reinventing' the Art Exhibition and Auction to address this, or replacing it with another event if I am not happy that the child's creative process can be 100% protected - just putting it out there!

With regards to our **End of Year Party**. Most negative feedback is regarding the two different pizza suppliers, and again crowding. The parent voice committee is looking into alternative food suppliers and how to avoid a repeat of running out of pizzas.

Some of you pointed out that most of the social events are best suited to the older children at TLC. So, the PVC and I have agreed we are going to do an **upstairs only social event - which will be a Mid-Winter Breakfast** - where TLC will provide bacon sandwiches between **7.30 and 9.30 am on Thursday the 26th of June!** All upstairs families are invited to come along and mix and mingle in the morning before heading off to work!

The PVC have also suggested some Mum or Dad only events. So, we are holding a **'Mothers Day' Ladies Make-Up Bobbi Brown night in May Date TBC 7.30 pm - 9.30pm**. We are also holding a **'Fathers Day' - Craft Beer and Sausage night in September**.

Communications



All of you chose to answer this question in the survey. I am very proud of how our teachers daily feedback has been rated. However, I acknowledge that we (and that is the royal we) continue to have work to do with regards administration and invoicing, I will work on trying to establish processes that ensure a more reliable turn around and response for your enquiries. With regards to the landline phone, as we do not have the office manned full time by anybody we do have a process for picking up messages, and making sure that they are responded to. However, I acknowledge that we may need to up our game on this front.

It is clear our parent voice committee needs to raise its profile, as most of you are not aware of its wonderful work and contribution. I have started posting the minutes to the Educa notice board, and we are working on a profile of the members to be added to the wall alongside the teachers profiles.

With regards to our Facebook page - it is not well publicised, and personally, I have yet to be convinced of its utility as I am NOT comfortable to post anything regarding specific children or any photos containing children to it. I am open to suggestions about how you think it can be use to you as a community, or to share the word about TLC?

Yes our newsletters have gone from being every other month (6 a year) to seasonal (4 a year) as teachers have pressures to work on other things like profiles etc. AND we completely missed doing a summer newsletter. I do not get much feedback about this - is it worth the effort?

What are we doing well?

This is what you said:

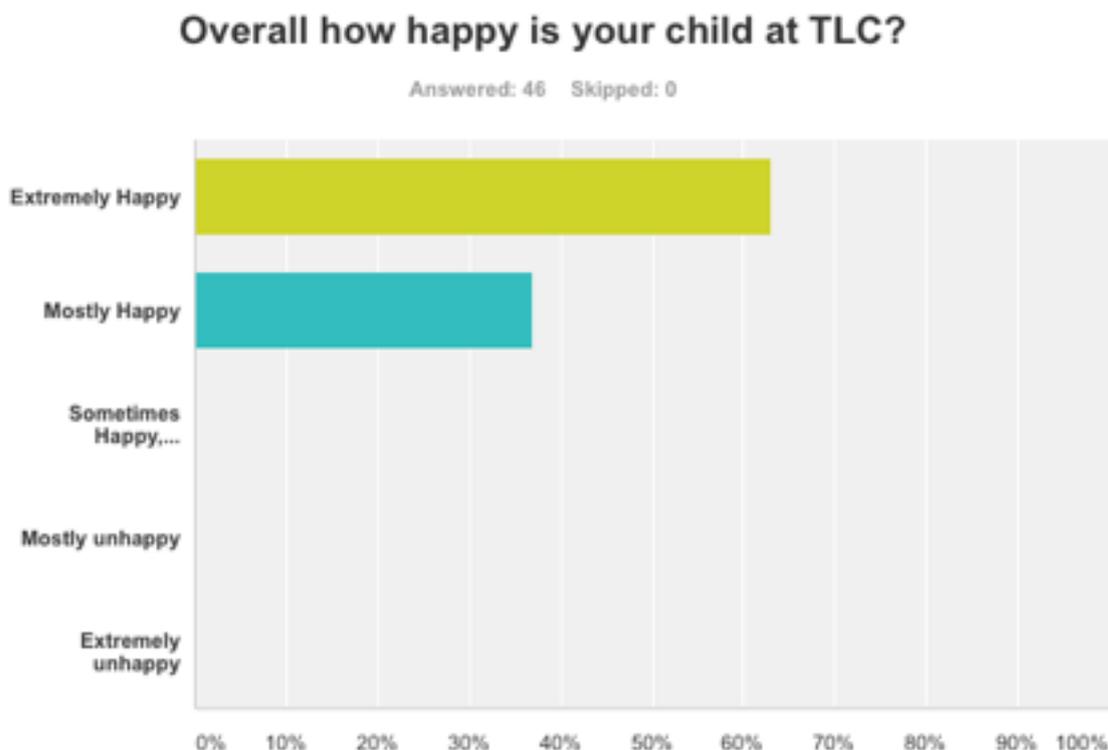
- **Creating a sense of family. Warmth, patience and kindness and respect from every teacher.** Creating lovely bonds with parents.
- **Fantastic teachers** with amazing personalities
- **Respect and communication from Teachers to Parents**
- **Interaction with kids is fantastic.** Such a pleasant and nurturing environment. My son is entertained and learns and is not bored which is really important.
- **I really like and appreciate the way your teaching / policy / care seems so conscious and considered.** Things are not just done "because" but because they have been thought about / discussed. I gives me confidence in the organization when I see that teaching staff have mentoring / support teacher systems. We love the way Amy treats our daughter. I really love / rely on the daily report - will be sad to see it go.
- **Teacher's are incredibly engaged/ dynamic people who I feel have genuine interest in my child and their profession.** This is what I hold most dear. Second to this - profession development is given high priority to thinking through the changing environment of the centre - which means changes are incorporated to help everyone. I think the staff are very skilled and learn from their interactions daily - they give lots of time to parents without diverting the children's own needs.
- **The teachers are lovely, the care the children get is great** - particularly in the baby and toddler room upstairs. The children seem happy and relaxed. There is a lovely family environment, with lots of siblings. **It is a great daycare**
- **Lovely staff.** Continuity of care. **Great environment inside and out.**
- **You live your philosophy, your teachers make TLC and my girls are happy at TLC, so this most important parts you do extremely well.**
- **Having a relatively 'hands off' approach when it comes to children learning more about their own negotiation skills - this aligns well with mine and Tim's parenting style.**
- **The respect and freedom provided to the children. Teacher/parent communication.** I appreciate that the teachers have really gotten to know our children and continually share their observations with us.
- **Stable group of excellent teachers who genuinely love their work and our children.** Excellent parent evenings and additional support/information available for parents. Great outdoor facilities and space. The PVC has proved a really enjoyable way to get to know the community and feel like I have a voice as well as being able to contribute and give back.
- **Helping develop my child and keeping them safe and happy.**
- **Fantastic communication** and were really enjoying the learning stories on the edu care website
- **The teachers are all FANTASTIC!!** They are truly caring, respectful, insightful and patient individuals.
- **TLC is just such a great place to have our child. The teachers are wonderful and great communicators and we know that they genuinely care about our child.** We are very happy with TLC. The introduction of Educare has been really great. Lovely to get regular updates that replace the daily report cards from upstairs. It would be nice to see more group stories loaded up so we can see more about how they are all engaging with each other.
- **Caring nurturing relationship with my child.**
- **Commitment to philosophy, caring and interested teachers.**
- **Teacher / child relationships**
- **Looking after both our girls, very much appreciate the care for child's name**
- **Everything!**
- **- Teachers are wonderful - so caring and genuine.** - Atmosphere (upstairs) has a lovely calmness that made us feel comfortable joining TLC. - Sharing of knowledge - I really appreciate teachers sharing observations, insights around development with us, as I've learnt a lot too.
- **Teacher care is fantastic**
- **Provide an excellent environment for learning and growing socially, educationally, and physically.** Meet the children's needs with quiet time and good nutritional food. **Teachers have great respectful relationship with children** and are very helpful when exploring ways to solve issues.
- **great teaching staff.** nice serene environment.
- **Treating the children and the parents with respect, genuine care for the children.** Depth of thought around early childhood learning.
- **We love the environment and the atmosphere.** The double backyard onto park is important to us as we do not have a garden.
- **When looking for a centre we visited a total of 5 different places. TLC was way ahead. We love how calm it is. The teachers are engaged and enthused by their work and it really shows.** The parents can tell and the kids can tell. We are so happy we chose TLC! When settling our second child into the baby room upstairs we were so impressed with Josie and Elena's communication and the standard of care they set.
- **Experienced staff - good staff retention** Good resources
- **Mostly everything!**
- **Great environment, really good teachers**
- **Continuity of care is fantastic.** Activities for kids are great. Great communications btw parent -teacher. **I really feel that the teachers work with us, we're like a team, they're involved and sort of like a part of family.**
- **Understanding, educating and caring for the children** Communicating daily with us

What would you like to change/improve?

This is what you said:

- Maybe a **chance to ask teachers tips on parenting challenges - as a group**, not one on one parent teacher interview. More questions come up when there is a group. There's never enough time during drop off or pick ups as parents in a rush to get to work and teachers busy with all the children arriving and departing.
- I am not convinced about **losing the structured sit down together times (kotahitanga time, show and tell)** is so great. it is a good skill to learn to sit and listen even if you would rather be in the sandpit all day... I know there are other activities planned to fill this gap, but am unsure if my child will participate, or how I will know if he has participated.
- I can't think of anything specific, we are a RIE happy family
- I wonder whether (and I'm no judge of what work this would entail) a **short monthly message to the parents of how the teachers feel their child is going** would be really valuable and reassuring. A way of formalizing the short half-held conversations and pick ups and drop offs. So for example at the end of each month an email could be sent with one small paragraph of either housekeeping or a simple reminder of what the staff are noticing or liking or working on with your child.
- **More communication, better systems in place.** Also I understand that you need to be fluid with what is happening in the group but I personally think that it worked much better when you had the Mumakus, the Kowhais and Tuis. Trying to put the two year olds with the 3 & 4 year olds just doesn't work well. Each child belonged in a group and had a new group to progress too until they went to school. **I am sad that mat time has gone and show and tell.** Show and tell gave my daughter so much confidence that she didn't have before and so did mat time singing etc They may not be interested, but they have to get school ready and learning these rules and systems are really good for them. You have to sit through people talking and listen to them. At 3 and 4 they are old enough to do this. Maybe it needs to be re-named to 'News' so it is less about toys and more about an event or something big that has happened or they have seen or a holiday they went on etc. So my overall feedback is that the way you had it set up back in 2011/2012 with 2 year olds separate, having there needs catered for and two separate groups for the 3 and 4 year olds was a far superior way to set up TLC, this is my opinion who has been in both systems with two different children.
- **Hygiene** - discourage all children wiping noses with hands or on t-shirts (or not at all). Encourage use of tissues and hand washing. **Tissue boxes are placed on high shelves** which isn't much help for the little ones.
- You need to show the same commitment you show to our kids to the parents, **TLC needs to improve its administration experience and communication to parents. In particular new enrollment experience needs a lot of improvement.** Timely communication to parent questions also need improving.
- I'm going to use this space to encourage you **Marie to try to organise a 'tour' of MindAlive for interested parents** - as it sits so well alongside the philosophy, there are a few of us who would love to continue the self-directed learning after early childhood - I wonder if Clare would go for this? haha, probably not:)
- **Being aware of the kids that need to wear mosquito repellent** :) I do put repellent on Jackson in the mornings but he does continue to get bitten in the garden during the day.
- **Advise of the teacher only day as early as possible** please so we can make arrangements for alternative care!
- **More trips to the park next door**
- **Mosquito control.** Painting smocks More flexibility around drop off and pick up times for full day enrolment.
- Nil
- Cant think of anything at this time
- - Food menu seems to have gone downhill, more variety perhaps needed. **Like to see the menu for the week so we don't plan same food for dinner.** - Educare - not seeing value for money at the moment, so suggest some criteria about how often posts will be made. Monthly updates isn't ideal - I'd like to see weekly photo's and a monthly learning story as an example.
- **Web site....** do not see the value at the present moment, **only up dated sporadically.**
- our only hesitation is the higher fees. but we understand why they are higher! its just that we are probably not as financially flush as most of the parents at the centre, so this is the area that hits us a little bit. Regardless, we still put priority on choosing a great centre rather than a cheap centre! it would also be great if you could move a little closer to our house :)
- Increased gender balance of staff - we realise this can be challenging **Notice of room transitions could be better**, perhaps 2 months informal indication, with a month formal notice More opportunity for reading books
- Not sure
- **Communication regarding fees, holiday shut down** etc was poor. Marie rarely replies to emails re these matters which is extremely frustrating. The property itself is could do with **more regular repairs and maintenance (doors that stick, rubbish, piles of wood etc in driveway).**
- I quite often ask for advice how to handle certain situations with the girls and what other approach I could try if we have problems with something. The time to discuss this with teachers is very limited as it's usually during the end of day. **Would it be possible to have some "parents - teacher" sessions on different topics (eating, sleeping etc) where we could ask for advice?** The teachers know our kids so their advice is invaluable.

How happy is your child at TLC?



Thank you. This is wonderful, and I am so so thrilled with this result.

Overall, are you satisfied with TLC?



Thank you to everyone who responded to this survey, we will do our best to listen and take action on your suggestions.

Congratulations to Avril (Luke's mum) who won the draw for dinner voucher and a big thank you to Rebecca (Jarvis's mum) for providing the voucher. This survey had a record number of responses! Thank you all so much.