



# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: First Class Education and Care (Bethlehem)

Profile Number: 45024

Location: Bethlehem, Tauranga

1 ERO’s judgement of First Class Education and Care (Bethlehem) is as follows:

Domains: Ngā Akatoro	Below the threshold for quality		Above the threshold for quality	
	Improvement required	Working towards	Embedded	Excelling
The learner and their learning He Whāriki Motuhake	Improvement required	Working towards	Embedded	Excelling
Collaborative professional learning and development builds knowledge and capability Whakangungu Ngaio	Improvement required	Working towards	Embedded	Excelling
Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement Kaihautū	Improvement required	Working towards	Embedded	Excelling
Stewardship through effective governance and management Te Whakaruruhau	Improvement required	Working towards	Embedded	Excelling

For an explanation of the judgement terms used and of the evaluation process please refer to the last page of this report. These judgements are based on the evidence provided to ERO during the evaluation.

Children’s health and safety

Improvement required

Taking reasonable steps

## 2 ERO's Judgements

[Akarangi | Quality Evaluations](#) evaluate the extent to which early childhood services have the learning and organisational conditions to support equitable and excellent outcomes for all learners. [Te Ara Poutama Indicators of quality for early childhood education: what matters most](#) and [Early Childhood Education \(ECE\) Improvement Framework \(teacher led services\)](#) are the basis for making judgements about the quality of the service in achieving equity and excellence for all learners. Evaluations for improvement | Ngā Aronga Whai Hua is integrated across all of the above domains.

## 3 About the Service

First Class Education and Care is governed by the Christian Education Trust, a charitable organisation. It is one of four centres that operates under the umbrella of Bethlehem Early Learning Centres. It caters for children from 12 months old. A general manager is responsible for operations and a recently established curriculum lead takes responsibility for overseeing delivery of the curriculum. A head teacher supports the teaching team across two aged-based rooms. Through their Christian-based philosophy, teachers value open and respectful relationships with every child and their whānau to achieve positive learning outcomes.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The February 2020 ERO report identified two improvement actions. The first improvement action was to strengthen and review policies and systems to ensure the service is meeting current legislation and best practice guidelines. Good progress has been made and the service is now meeting regulatory requirements. The second improvement action discussed strengthening assessment, planning and internal evaluation processes. Limited progress has been made as the service has changed internal evaluation and assessment and planning processes. However, the learning for individual and groups of children is more clearly documented.

## 5 Learning Conditions

### The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children benefit from an environment that increasingly extends and supports them to develop their social competencies, oral language skills and an understanding of Christian beliefs and values.

- All age groups have opportunities to explore, be creative and lead their own learning in a well-resourced play-based environment. This facilitates toddlers to develop a sense of self and build their theories about the world, and older children to develop independence and critical thinking skills.
- Parents' goals for their children are regularly gathered and are reflected in curriculum assessment and planning documentation. There is some intentional planning and evaluation evident for individual children's ongoing learning.
- Children and parents have opportunities to share aspects of their own cultures and there is some reflection of this in the learning environment. Teachers are at the early stage of using te reo Māori tikanga Māori in their practices with children.

## Collaborative professional learning and development builds knowledge and capability | Whakangungu Ngaio

Leaders and teachers are collectively building their professional knowledge and capability that results in improvements and responsiveness to children's learning needs.

- Evaluation is a shared process that is linked to teachers' professional growth cycles. This is beginning to support teachers to consider aspects of the curriculum and how well it promotes children's learning.
- Teachers are increasing their expertise to design a culturally responsive curriculum. A current internal evaluation is focusing on how teachers are responding to the languages, cultures and the identities of children and their families.
- Documentation reflecting children's individual languages, cultures and home identity is not yet strongly reflected in planning and evaluation practices.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leadership is increasingly accountable and collectively responsible for the wellbeing and learning of all children at the service.

- The stable teaching team demonstrate high levels of relational trust that fosters their collaboration. Mentoring support and opportunities for professional sharing promotes ongoing growth of teacher capability.
- Leadership provides opportunities for parent voices to be heard. Some external and internal expertise is utilised to grow leadership capability.
- There is yet to be evidence of how well the curriculum lead role is supporting head teachers to make positive changes to curriculum delivery and share high-quality practices across the group.

### Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance is taking steps to develop systems and processes that aid strategic priorities and decision making.

- Governors are beginning to align policy review and systems across the group.
- The Trust's Christian underpinnings are strongly reflected through operations. Strategic planning that identifies further priorities for children's learning and development is not yet in place.
- Governance provides well-resourced environments, adult: child ratios that support children's developing capabilities and some strategies to remove barriers for children's participation.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of First Class Education and Care (Bethlehem) completed and *ERO Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist*. In these documents they attested that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

- curriculum
- premises and facilities
- health and safety practices
- governance, management and administration.

During the review, ERO looked at the service's system for managing the following areas that have a potentially high impact on children's health and safety:

- emotional safety (including positive guidance and child protection)
- physical safety (including supervision; sleep procedures; accidents; medication; excursion policies and procedures)
- suitable staffing (safety checking of staff, ratios)
- relevant evacuation procedures and practices.

All early childhood services are required to promote children's health and safety and to regularly review their compliance with legal requirements.

## 8 Where to next for improvement?

First Class Education and Care (Bethlehem) will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Strengthen assessment and planning to more intentionally respond to children's developing learning and evaluate this aligned to the valued outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.
- Increase the visibility of teacher's responsiveness to children's individual languages, cultures and learner identities within curriculum documentation.

The Bethlehem Early Learning Centres group will include the following in its quality improvement planning to improve consistency of quality across the group:

- Build teachers' and leaders' collective capability and shared understandings of using all aspects of effective evaluation to guide improvement.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum lead role in supporting curriculum delivery and networking across the group, to enhance decision making about the role, responsibilities and enactment of the position.

### Activities undertaken by the evaluation team

- Pre-visit contact with the service provider/manager.
- Reading documentation and records of children's learning and development.
- Scanning the learning environment and resources.
- Observations of interactions and teaching practice while onsite.
- Meetings and / or conversations with leaders and teachers.
- Sampling of information related to compliance.

[Further information about how ERO evaluates early childhood services is available here.](#)

Patricia Davey

Patricia Davey  
Director of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

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## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	50 children, including up to 15 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	100%
Ethnic composition	Māori 5%, NZ European/Pākehā 68%, South African 14%, Fijian 2%, other ethnic groups 11%
Service roll	63
Review team on site	August 2024
Date of this report	15 November 2024
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	Education Review, February 2020; Education Review, May 2015

### Description around ERO's judgement terms

ERO's judgements are based on *Te Ara Poutama* and the *Early Childhood Education Improvement Framework (teacher led services)*.

	<b>Above the threshold for quality</b>
Excelling	The service is excelling in the learning and organisation to support high quality education and care for children
Embedded	The service has embedded its learning and organisational conditions to support ongoing improvement to the quality of education and care for children.
	<b>Below the threshold for quality</b>
Working towards	The service is working towards establishing the learning and organisational conditions to support improvements in the quality of education and care for children.
Improvement required	The service has not yet developed the learning and organisational conditions to support quality education and care for children.