



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Curious Keas Ltd

Profile Number: 45900

Location: Pio Pio

1 ERO's judgement of Curious Keas Ltd is as follows:

Domains: Ngā Akatoro	Below the threshold for quality		Above the threshold for quality	
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

Curious Keas Ltd is a mixed-age service in the rural area of Piopio. Children learn across two different age-based spaces, with younger and older children having separate outdoor playgrounds. The managing director oversees daily operations, governance and leads the teaching team that have experienced recent staffing changes. The centre's philosophy is underpinned by relationships, inclusive practises in partnership with parents.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2021 Akarangi | Assurance review identified three improvement actions related to strengthening assessment, planning and evaluation processes, using internal evaluation for improvement, and build staff leadership capabilities. Good progress has been made to respond to children's individual learning needs alongside parent aspirations, with these evident in assessment and planning documentation. Staff changes have limited the progress made in strengthening internal evaluation practices and growing leadership capability and will remain a priority for this service.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

The service has well established relationships with families that enhance children's wellbeing and belonging.

- Parents' aspirations for their children are gathered and are beginning to inform intentional planning for children's ongoing learning. Leaders and teachers have refined their planning system to better reflect children's individual progression of learning over time.
- Children of all ages play, learn and engage in sufficient resourced learning environments that reflects the local and wider community, this supports their sense of belonging and allows them to make connections between places and familiar life experiences.
- Teachers are beginning to provide a culturally rich curriculum for all children. The service is taking steps to integrate te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into the curriculum and is beginning to recognise other cultures.

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

Leaders and teachers are in the early stages of developing conditions, systems and processes that enable ongoing improvement.

- Professional growth cycles are in place for teachers to monitor and evaluate the impact of improvements to their teaching practices but are yet to focus on the impact of these changes for children.
- Children benefit from respectful and responsive teaching practises from adults. This supports children's developing social skills and social competence that are reflected in the calm learning environments.
- Teachers are beginning to use the learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, to guide children's learning. There is variability in teacher's approaches to recording children's progress against identified outcomes.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Management is establishing the conditions to develop leadership capability.

- A newly implemented shared leadership structure is in place to share responsibilities and decision making. Leaders are yet to monitor and evaluate the impact of recent changes and the effectiveness of these.
- The use of an evaluation framework supports the service to consider aspects of the curriculum in relation to children's experiences. There is some evidence of change, however teachers and leaders are not yet identifying whether these changes are promoting improved learning outcomes for all groups of children.
- Relational trust enables collaboration between leaders and teachers, that supports professional practise.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Systems, processes and practises with a focus on improvement for children are established.

- The managing director is beginning to build her knowledge and understanding of effective strategic planning that includes identified priorities.
- Governance vision is clearly enacted within the programme. Children and whānau wellbeing are well considered in decision making to ensure all children have access to education and care.
- A useful process for reviewing systems, practices, policies and procedures is well established for the safety of adults and children at the service.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Curious Keas Ltd completed an *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?

Curious Keas Ltd will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Strengthen leaders and teachers shared understanding about how to intentionally plan for, assess and evaluate children's learning over time in relation to the learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki*.
- Continue to develop leaders' and teachers' collective understanding of and capability to do and use evaluation for improvement to curriculum and operational practices.

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
Director of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

16 December 2024

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	40 children, including up to 16 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 36%, NZ European/Pākehā 57%, 7% other ethnic groups.
Service roll	38
Review team on site	October, 2024
Date of this report	16 December 2024
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Education Review, July 2021; Education Review, March 2017

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)*.

	Above the threshold for quality
Excelling	The service is excelling in the learning and organisational conditions 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.
	Below the threshold for quality
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.