



# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Polykids

Profile Number: 83054

Location: Dunedin

## 1 ERO's judgement of Polykids 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

Polykids is administered by, and located next to, the Otago Polytechnic. In February 2023 the centre was relicensed following management changes at Otago Polytechnic. Polykids provides a mixed age setting for children from birth to school age. A centre manager has responsibility for the day-to-day operations and is supported by a curriculum leader and an operations coordinator.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2021 report identified four areas for improvement.

Significant progress has been made in developing policies and procedures that clearly guide the process of assessment and planning for children. Documentation shows progression of children's learning overtime in relation to the learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum. Leaders acknowledge some refinement is needed to show better guidance around evaluation of teachers' use of intentional teaching strategies.

Good progress has been made towards the three areas identified for improvement. Written documentation shows leaders and teachers are increasingly responsive to children's cultural identities There is evident growth in teachers' bicultural understanding. Internal evaluation has been strengthened. However, some aspects of the process require further refinement.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Highly responsive teachers plan and implement a well-considered age-appropriate curriculum.

- The mixed age setting is inclusive and enables the youngest children access to the learning environment and to participate in a curriculum alongside their older peers. Teachers foster children's social and emotional competence, emerging oral language, literacy, and numeracy skills.
- Teachers engage in learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau, acknowledging their aspirations that recognises their cultural identity, values, beliefs, and contexts.
- Children's learning in relation to the outcomes of *Te Whāriki* is evident in documented assessment, and clearly shows progression of learning overtime.

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

Professional development continues to support leaders and teachers to build their knowledge, expertise, and cultural competence to design and implement a rich curriculum.

- Professional growth cycles align with strategic goals and actions focus on what matters most to the service's embedded priorities for learners.
- There is an ongoing whole service commitment to building bicultural competence and confidence in the use of te reo Māori across daily practices.
- The service has systems to monitor professional practices such as internal evaluation and professional growth cycles and planning assessment and evaluation. However, leaders identify that evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness and impact of intentional teaching and improvements made is required to better know the impact on outcomes for children.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders role model professional accountability and collective responsibility for the wellbeing and learning of all children.

- Relational trust is evident. Leaders work collaboratively and successfully embed operational and curriculum expectations.
- Leaders engage in and provide regular feedback to be assured the design, decisions, and resource allocation is focused on the wellbeing and learning of children.
- Leaders distribute clear roles, responsibilities, and expectations and provide efficient management of day-to-day operations.

Children's learning and wellbeing is a primary consideration for decision making.

- Management has sustained relationships with the administering organisation. The organisation is well informed about daily operations and what is happening for the health, safety, and wellbeing of children and takes appropriate steps when required to make improvements.
- A strategic focus on succession planning is needed to enable embedded leadership practice to be sustained for the future.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Polykids 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?

Polykids will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Develop teacher capability to evaluate the effectiveness of their intentional teaching strategies to clearly identify how these impact on outcomes for learners and their learning.
- Refine current monitoring and evaluation processes to know what is working or not working, for whom, to inform what changes are needed.
- Strategically grow capability and the capacity for leadership that supports a highly sustainable, responsive, and rich curriculum for all children.

#### 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.\*](#)



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Director of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

4 February 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	60 children, including up to 20 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 13%; NZ European/Pakeha 64%;
Service roll	45
Review team on site	October 2024
Date of this report	4 February 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	Education Review, December 2017; Akarangi   Quality Evaluation, April 2021

### 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.