



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Aspiring Beginnings Early Learning Centre

Profile Number: 80009

Location: Wānaka

1 ERO's judgement of Aspiring Beginnings Early Learning Centre 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

Aspiring Beginnings Early Learning Centre is a not-for-profit community-based service in central Wānaka. Children from birth to school age learn in a mixed aged environment. The centre is governed by a parent-led committee including long serving members. The service's philosophy places value on tiakitanga (connection to nature), mana manaaki (positive self-worth), kōrero awhi (inclusive empowerment) and whanaungatanga (responsive relationships).

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2021 Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report identified two quality improvement actions relating to building capability in the use of evaluation for improvement and building a culturally responsive curriculum. Good progress has been made in both areas. A shared approach to evaluation generates improvement to many aspects of the curriculum. Increased teacher knowledge through relevant professional learning has enriched the bicultural curriculum with progress demonstrated in teachers' use of te reo Māori and growing their understanding of aspects of te ao Māori. A kaitiaki programme for older children features regular weekly excursions building community connections, te ao Māori (Māori world view), and learning around sustainability.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children, infants, and toddlers benefit from a broad responsive curriculum which supports play-based exploration and learning.

- Teaching practices are responsive to, and intentionally foster children's learning. Guided support promotes children's individual interests, skill progressions, varied ways of learning, and understandings about the wider world around them.
- Positive learning-focused relationships with whānau enables teachers to gather their aspirations to guide children's individual planning. Transitions into and from the service are well supported in consultation with whānau to enhance children's wellbeing and sense of belonging.
- Assessment practices reflect children's learning progress and cultural identities. However, evaluation of teaching strategies within assessment documentation is variable.

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

Leaders and teachers have developed shared understandings of the centre's learning priorities and teaching practices to guide implementation of a rich and responsive curriculum for children.

- Review and implementation of the new philosophy alongside valued learning priorities is promoting consistency of teaching practice.
- Participation in relevant professional learning and development and ongoing reflection supports leaders and teachers to inquire into aspects of their teaching practice and make evidenced based changes. Teachers have not yet evaluated how well changes to practice have made a difference to children's learning.
- Leaders' and teachers' understanding of the bicultural curriculum have increased, including developing knowledge of the service origins within the local and the wider community.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

High levels of relational trust within a distributed leadership model fosters improvement and development to the curriculum.

- Leaders expect professional accountability, collective responsibility, enactment of philosophy and valued learning priorities. This strongly contributes to a positive collaborative working environment and openness to change and improvement.
- Leaders build and support professional practice through both formal and informal opportunities for feedback.
- Leaders are currently developing and implementing guidance and systems for better tracking and monitoring individual and groups of children's learning.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance prioritises when decision making the learning and wellbeing of children, their families, and the learning community.

- Organisational conditions and allocation of resources promote staff retention which positively supports a strong sense of belonging for children and their families. Governance makes resourcing decisions that align with the strategic goals.
- Parent and whānau participation are highly valued with multiple opportunities for them to be involved. The committee receives regular reports on aspects of curriculum, implemented policies, procedures to enable well informed decision making.
- Networked relationships with external agencies positive support the learning and progress of children with additional learning needs.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Aspiring Beginnings Early Learning Centre 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?


Aspiring Beginnings Early Learning Centre will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Strengthen the consistency of assessment, planning, and evaluation practices, including monitoring and evaluating children's learning and progress overtime in relation to the valued outcomes in *Te Whāriki*.
- Build teachers' critical reflection capabilities to strengthen evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of changes to teaching practice on children's curriculum experiences and outcomes.

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)

20 February 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	40 children, including up to 12 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	100%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 9%; NZ European/Pākehā 89%, Samoan 2%, Other ethnic groups 4%
Service roll	59
Review team on site	November 2024
Date of this report	20 February 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, June 2021; Education Review, August 2016

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.