



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Totara North Early Childhood Centre

Profile Number: 11529

Location: Totara North

1 ERO’s judgement of Totara North Early Childhood Centre 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

Totara North Early Childhood Centre is located next to Totara North School. It is governed by a community trust. Children play and learn in a mixed-aged setting. The service philosophy is based on the Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and values, and the core values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and aroha. At the time of the ERO visit, the Ministry of Education was reassessing the service's licence in relation to premises and facilities due to relocation from several to one building.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

Since the 2019 ERO review, the service has made good progress in relation to the three areas identified for improvement. These were related to using internal evaluation to inform the board and leaders about the quality of curriculum and enactment of service philosophy, strengthening curriculum planning and assessment and building confidence to integrate te ao Māori into the programme. Examples of recent internal evaluation show a focus on aligning teaching to expectations of high-quality practice to progress children's learning. The service has modified and is strengthening assessment and planning for children's learning to promote a shared understanding with whānau. Teachers and leaders are purposefully building their collective confidence and use of te reo Māori which is evident through documentation and increasingly through daily interactions.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a curriculum that responds well to their interests, learning needs and the community's priorities for learning.

- Oral language is well supported and role-modelled by the teachers. Teachers identify and implement teaching strategies that progress children's developing language.
- Children make their own choices about their play and lead their own learning. The service's values of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga are evident through the curriculum.
- Learning-focused partnerships between teachers and whānau enable many parents to contribute to their children's learning goals. Assessment of children's learning celebrates progress towards their goals, however teachers are yet to clearly plan intentional strategies or evaluate how their teaching is contributing to this progress.

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

Leaders and teachers are continuing to build their professional knowledge and expertise through a range of processes that are well aligned to the service's priorities for children's learning and improvement.

- Leaders and teachers attend professional learning and development which link to the service's strategic goals, internal evaluation and personal teaching goals. Shifts in practice are evident however the impact of this learning on outcomes for children is not always known.
- A collaborative system for professional growth is in place. Conditions are in place that encourage teachers to informally share new knowledge.
- Through inquiry and evaluation processes teachers purposefully identify what high quality practice should look like. They utilise early childhood sector publications and research to inform their decision making about what changes they need to make.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders implement clear systems, policies, processes that promote ongoing improvement.

- Leaders and teachers work collaboratively to enact the service's philosophy, vision and goals. Collective development of the local curriculum is promoting a shared understanding of what matters most in the service.
- Relational trust promotes team collaboration and stability. Peer mentoring is in place to support teachers.
- Internal evaluation processes are collaborative and focussed on improvement. They are yet to engage in ongoing monitoring of the actions being taken or examine in-depth how groups of children are impacted by changes to teaching.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance and management prioritise children's learning and wellbeing in their decision making.

- Actionable strategic goals through to 2027 reflect intended outcomes for children and associated resourcing.
- Those responsible for governance and management ensure that parent and whānau opinion and priorities materially influence the philosophy, goals and future plans for children's learning.
- Management continues to develop responsive partnerships within the community, and with external agencies, to support children's learning and development. A recent focus on building children's oral language is strengthening links to external support for children with additional learning needs in this area.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Totara North Early Childhood 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?

Totara North Early Childhood Centre will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Strengthen individual planning for learning to identify intentional teaching strategies to progress children's goals.
- Evaluate children's learning progress in relation to the learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, and parents' goals for their children to identify what is and isn't working for different children.
- Fully embed internal evaluation practices through ongoing monitoring of shifts in practice and exploring the impact for groups of children, to better understand how equitable children's outcomes are as a result.

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	27 children, including up to 5 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 69%, NZ European/Pākehā 31%, Cook Island 1%
Service roll	32
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	Education Review, November 2019; Education Review, October 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)*.

	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.