



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: The Tree House

Profile Number: 45094

Location: Whakatāne

1 ERO's judgement of The Tree House 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

The Tree House is a private service owned by a qualified early childhood teacher/manager. The service's values emphasise a turangawaewae curriculum (having a sense of belonging through whakapapa) through enacting a strong commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi practices. The bilingual-Montessori philosophy (fluent in two languages, and a focus on self-directed hands on learning and collaborative play) interweave to create culturally responsive and inclusive learning environments that honor the unique identities and perspectives of tamariki.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2023 Akanuku | Assurance Review identified two key next steps relating to growing assessment, planning and evaluation practices. There has been good progress to reflect children's life contexts, interests, dispositions and parent aspirations for their child's learning. There has also been good progress to show children's learning over time in relation to Montessori practical life experiences and valued te ao Māori (Māori world view) priorities in assessment information. Individual and group planning and evaluation has improved in relation to noticing, recognising and responding to children's learning. Aligning these more consistently with the learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum continues to be an area of growth.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Tamariki experience a range of experiences through provision of a rich curriculum, which encompasses Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Montessori practices.

- Te reo me ona tikanga Māori is highly significant for the learning community with a wide range of opportunities and experiences evident through Ngatiawa Tanga (uphold, protect culture, language and identity), mihi whakatau, te reo Māori, e tū mihi, pepeha, karakia, waiata, mahi toi, rongoa, whakapapa and whenua. Te reo me ona tikanga Māori is integrated well into day-to-day kaiako practices.
- Montessori practices are highly valued in a well-resourced environment promoting a range of child and adult-initiated experiences. Kaiako are intentional about Montessori pedagogy and draw on this knowledge, supporting the learning and development of individual tamariki.
- Individual and group planning for tamariki shows their cultural identity, capabilities and progression of learning over time through assessment, as well as shifts in practice for kaiako and positive outcomes for tamariki with some variation in documentation across the service. A focus to strengthen cohesive assessment, planning and evaluation cycles in relation to the meaningful learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki* is in progress.

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

Leaders and kaiako continue to build their professional knowledge to implement a responsive curriculum

- Kaiako mātauranga for infants and toddlers and value respectful care with aroha, and communal caregiving. For older tamariki, their mana is recognised and fostered through responsibility for their own and others wellbeing, as kaitiaki of the whenua, through tuakana-teina relationships and caring for the environment in culturally responsive ways.
- There are regular opportunities for kaiako to collaborate and design a rich curriculum. Internal cultural expertise is used to grow mātauranga Māori, enabling provision of a bilingual curriculum for Māori and non-Māori tamariki.
- Professional growth cycles are in place and show some shifts in practice for kaiako. Professional development is ongoing and kaiako are working with their professional early learning community to engage in learning opportunities that contribute to improved outcomes for tamariki.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders work collaboratively to enact the service's vision and continue to build relational trust to enable collaboration and improvement.

- Distributed leadership enables a shared understanding of the mission statement and philosophy to enact a bilingual-Montessori curriculum. Leaders ensure policies and practices value and support culture, language, identity, wellbeing and the learning of all tamariki.
- The service has a stable, long-serving teaching team; an identified strategic goal is to foster future leaders to support continuity. Kaiako in-training are well-supported, their views are considered in regular curriculum hui, and they lead aspects of curriculum planning including regular excursions to the taiao.
- Internal evaluation and self-review processes are used to develop aspects of the curriculum with input from multiple perspectives informing changes and improvements made. These processes are yet to show intentional consideration of the impact of improvements on outcomes for individuals and groups of tamariki.

The learning and wellbeing for tamariki are primary considerations in resourcing, decision-making and the intent of the Articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is enacted in planning and policies.

- There is a strong commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the implementation of a bilingual curriculum. Clear expectations are set for kaiako to support their primary role in enacting this curriculum and to use their connections as mana whenua to enhance their understanding of a te ao Māori localised curriculum.
- Parent and whānau Māori aspirations are reflected in the service's plans and priorities for the learning and wellbeing of tamariki. Māori learners are well supported in a learning environment that affirms their culture, language and identity.
- Equity of access and participation supports tamariki and whānau. The service works collaboratively with relevant agencies and community organisations to support broader educational and social outcomes of tamariki.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of The Tree House 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?

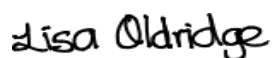
The Tree House will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Strengthen cohesive assessment, planning and evaluation cycles to better notice, recognise and respond effectively to the learning of tamariki in relation to the learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*.
- Continue to build the capability of leaders and kaiako to monitor and evaluate internal evaluation over time to show progress, improvement and learning outcomes for individual and groups of tamariki.

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.*](#)



Lisa Oldridge
Director of Early Childhood Education (Acting)

19 March 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	42 children, including up to 18 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	50-79%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 90%, NZ European/Pākehā 5%, Bangladesh 5%
Service roll	38
Review team on site	October 2024
Date of this report	19 March 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akanuku Assurance February 2023; Akanuku Assurance Review 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)*.

	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.