



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Songbird Early Childhood Centre

Profile Number: 40286

Location: Aongatete

1 ERO’s judgement of Songbird 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

Songbird Early Childhood Centre is privately owned and is under new management. The service is situated in a rural setting halfway between Katikati and Omokoroa. The owner works in collaboration with a curriculum leader to oversee daily operations and support a long-serving teaching team. The service's philosophy is based on aroha (love), takaro (play) and whanaungatanga (relationships).

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

There has been a change of ownership since ERO's 2022 Akanuku | Assurance Review. All reasonable steps are being taken to meet legal obligations related to the early childhood regulatory standards. Teachers have successfully embedded the good curriculum practices that were previously identified, while also implementing systems and processes to ensure that all children continue to experience good quality learning.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children engage in a responsive curriculum that extends their social and emotional competencies, independence and growing capabilities.

- Children are empowered to make choices and be responsible for their own learning within a play-based curriculum. Teachers reinforce children's innate curiosity and encourage exploration, enabling children to confidently develop their own working theories of the world alongside their peers.
- Parents' aspirations for their children's learning are intentionally gathered and used in planning processes. Learning-focused partnerships with parents extend on the emerging interests of children and support their progress and development over time.
- Teachers' assessment practices to show children's learning are well-established. However, they do not clearly respond to the diverse cultures, languages and identities of various groups of children.

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

Teachers and leaders continue to build their professional knowledge and expertise enabling them to provide positive learning outcomes for young children.

- Children benefit from teachers collaborating as part of shared professional learning opportunities. This learning impacts positively on teaching practices and is shared with families.
- An established professional growth cycle for teachers promotes constructive change and shifts in their practice. The impact of these changes and the difference this is making for children's learning is not yet documented.
- Teachers and leaders are working to improve their cultural competencies. The accessibility of cultural resources to enrich children's play is limited and does not adequately represent the contributions of Māori children and their whānau.

7 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders work effectively in continuing to enact the service's identified learning priorities.

- Leaders collaborate to provide mutual support, enhance practices and oversee the improvement of systems and processes across service operations. These efforts include opportunities for inter-professional engagement and networking with leaders at other services.
- The improvement of evaluation, inquiry and reflection practices has been consistent. The service's process promotes changes in teaching practices that contribute to improved outcomes for children.
- Leaders enhance professional practices by deliberately assisting the monitoring and guidance of teachers' goals and achievements. This approach has also resulted in positive changes that foster and extend children's ongoing learning.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

New governance effectively supports a cohesive team to prioritise children's learning and capability in decision-making.

- Relational trust between teachers, leaders and parents is embedded. This enables ongoing systems and processes to be monitored and evaluated.
- Parents, families, and other organisations within the community are recognised for their valuable support in facilitating the inclusion, access, and participation of each child.
- Governance is committed to maintaining smaller group sizes and improving teacher-to-child ratios. This approach has successfully contributed to children's sense of belonging and their connections with others.

8 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Songbird Early Childhood Centre completed and *ERO Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist*. In these documents they attested that they 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.

9 Where to next for improvement?

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

- Enhance the bicultural and multicultural resources within the environment to better reflect and represent all children's cultures and learning identities.
- Develop the professional knowledge and expertise of leaders and teachers to design and implement a culturally responsive curriculum that includes learning opportunities for children that reflect the local and wider community.

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

Lisa Oldridge
Director of Early Childhood Education (Acting)

26 March 2025

10 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	25 children, aged over 2.
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition	Māori 7%, NZ European/Pākehā 93%
Service roll	30
Review team on site	December 2024
Date of this report	26 March 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akanuku Assurance Review, October 2022; Education Review, June 2018

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.