



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Pohutukawa Preschool

Profile Number: 46814

Location: Whakatane

1 ERO's judgement of Pohutukawa Preschool 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
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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

Pohutukawa Preschool is privately owned, with governance oversight provided by the owners. Since the June 2021 ERO report, there have been significant changes in staff and leadership. Children learn in two age-based areas. The philosophy places value on whakamārama (learning through interests), whanaungatanga (relationships), taiao (environment), manaakitanga (inclusivity), ako (learning), whakautē (respect), aroha (love) and child led exploration. The service is a member of the Whakatane Kāhui Ako.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The previous ERO report identified an improvement action relating to strengthening assessment, planning and evaluation practices through establishing learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau. Good progress has been made to establish partnerships with some parents, and to strengthen assessment and planning practices. Self-review has enabled the aspirations of some parents to be gathered to inform children's individual planning and assessment of their learning. Monthly and termly evaluations record children's progress towards agreed goals and valued outcomes.

There has been limited progress in relation to a second improvement action. This was to build on internal evaluation using the learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum to guide intentional teaching and promote valued learning outcomes for children. This remains an area to improve.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a curriculum that reflects aspects of *Te Whāriki*, responds to their interests, and supports their physical and emotional wellbeing.

- Teaching practices vary, with more experienced teachers demonstrating their understanding of children's ways of learning by using intentional strategies to respond to their emerging interests. Newer and less experienced teachers are at an early stage of recognising teachable moments that extend older children's learning.
- Infants and toddlers learn in a suitably resourced environment, where they actively explore through a range of age-appropriate experiences. These experiences promote their sustained engagement and help to develop social competency, gross and fine motor skills, and positive attitudes towards learning.
- Actions are taken to support children with additional learning needs to participate in the curriculum alongside their peers. Connections with parents and the Whakatane Kāhui Ako (community of learning) support children's transition to school well.

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

Teachers are taking steps to build their knowledge and capability in developing the curriculum and extending their professional understanding.

- Resourcing decisions provide time for teachers to collaborate to design the curriculum. Whole-centre professional learning supports the development of teaching strategies to guide children's social competency and emotional resilience, and to build teachers' understanding of the *Te Whāriki* learning outcomes.
- Annual appraisal of teachers meets the requirements of the Teaching Council however, a system for professional growth and inquiry is yet to be developed. This limits opportunities for building teaching practice.
- Internal evaluation for improvement is not well understood. The focus is primarily on what children and teachers are doing, rather than on how effectively intentional teaching strategies impact on children's learning.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Due to recent restructuring and staff changes, no established leadership roles are currently in place.

- Several centre and team leadership roles have recently been disestablished.
- Distributed leadership is in the early stages of being fostered among qualified teachers.
- Support is needed to develop staff capability to lead daily operations, oversee and understand the curriculum, and to implement systems to enhance quality teaching practice.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance is actively working to achieve its' vision and strategic priorities.

- Strategic planning is in place, with progress towards some goals being monitored. However, the plan has yet to be intentionally aligned with the centre's other improvement processes.
- Communication and monitoring systems to track progress towards the vision and strategic priorities require further development.
- Gathering of families' and teachers' perspectives informs the regular review of operational policies and the philosophy. The priorities for children's learning and wellbeing are considered in resourcing and inform some decision-making.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Pohutukawa Preschool 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?

Pohutukawa Preschool will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Build teachers' collective understanding of how children learn, particularly those over the age of three, to support the delivery of a more responsive curriculum.
- Develop improvement systems to support teachers' professional growth, inquiry, and internal evaluation, to enable the scrutiny of curriculum practices, the impact of new knowledge, and the shifts in practice on children's outcomes.
- Develop a quality monitoring and communication system to identify the effectiveness of daily operations and curriculum implementation.

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)

14 April 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	75 children, including up to 20 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 43%, NZ European/Pākehā 25%, Indian 15%, English 4%, Filipino 4%, Pacific 4%, other ethnic groups 10%
Service roll	68
Review team on site	December 2024
Date of this report	14 April 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, June 2021; Education Review, June 2017

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.