



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: The Blue Cottage Early Learning Otumoetai Road

Profile Number: 47617

Location: Brookfield, Tauranga

1 ERO's judgement of The Blue Cottage Early Learning Otumoetai Road 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 Blue Cottage Early Learning Otumoetai Road is one of two services under shared governance. The owner, alongside a recently appointed centre manager and a curriculum manager work across both services to oversee daily operations and support a newly formed teaching team at this site. There are three rooms for different age groups of children.

The service is located within an ethnically diverse community. The philosophy is underpinned by relationships and aims to provide a home away from home within a nurturing learning environment. Children are viewed as being confident, independent and respected. Responsibility for self and others is promoted.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The service changed ownership in 2023. The new owner has worked closely with the Ministry of Education to address significant non-compliance inherited when the change of ownership occurred. This included prioritising and maintaining licensing requirements to support the health and safety of children at the service.

ERO's 2021 review identified key next steps to improve provision for children's languages and cultures in assessment information, and to strengthen use of the learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum. The new leadership team spoke with ERO about improvements that have been actioned. The service has good records to show how curriculum systems have been improved.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Teachers are working to enact the clear guidance and expectations for curriculum and teaching practices provided to them by leaders.

- Teachers provide a play-based curriculum that reflects aspects of *Te Whāriki*. They are yet to consistently use the valued outcomes of *Te Whāriki* to plan for, monitor and evaluate children's learning over time.
- Teachers and leaders are establishing learning-focused partnerships with whānau. They are beginning to use information gathered from whānau to inform curriculum decisions.
- Assessment documentation captures children's learning over time, including their strengths, interests and dispositional learning. These records are yet to consistently reflect the diverse cultures and languages of children.

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

Leaders are establishing the conditions to support teachers to build their professional capability.

- A high level of relational trust is evident between teachers and leaders. There is a focus on communication and teamwork.
- Teachers engage in a newly established professional growth cycle in which they are beginning to inquire into aspects of their practice. They are yet to document shifts in their practice or consider the impacts of these on children's learning.
- Teachers and leaders have regular opportunities to engage in professional learning and development. They are yet to intentionally evaluate how new learning has impacted on outcomes for children.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders are intentional in building relationships with teachers, families and external agencies to support positive outcomes for children.

- Leaders have a shared understanding of the service's philosophy and vision and work collaboratively with teachers to respond to priorities for children's learning. They seek input from external agencies and community groups to support children and families.
- Service leaders and management have prioritised the wellbeing of their staff. They actively implement strategies and initiatives to support a positive team culture.
- Leaders and teachers create opportunities for whānau Māori to be heard, listened and responded to. They are yet to capture the voices of Pacific children, their families and respective communities.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

New service leaders have some systems and processes in place to support ongoing improvement.

- A comprehensive strategic plan states the service's goals, plans and priorities for improvement, incorporating the perspectives of whānau, teachers and leaders. An annual plan includes actionable strategies to monitor progress towards these goals.
- Priority is given to reducing barriers that may limit children's participation at the service. Positive strategies that promote equity for children and families include flexible enrolment, fee relief and provision of food if needed.
- A useful process supports the regular review of policies and procedures to ensure regulatory requirements are met. A framework to undertake an internal evaluation process that guides improvement is in the early stages of being implemented.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of The Blue Cottage Early Learning Otumoetai Road 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 Blue Cottage Early Learning Otumoetai Road will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- For leaders and teachers to improve planning and assessment documentation to better reflect the languages and cultures of all children and to consistently monitor and evaluate children's learning over time based on the valued learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*.
- For leaders and teachers to develop a shared understanding of, and capability to do and use, an evaluation process as a tool to improve teaching practices and outcomes for children.

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)

23 April 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	54 children, including up to 12 aged under 2.
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 10%, NZ European/Pākehā 63%, Indian 6%, Pacific 4%, other ethnic groups 8%, not stated 10%
Service roll	52
Review team on site	November 2024
Date of this report	23 April 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akanuku Assurance Review, June 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.