



# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Fernside Preschool Limited

Profile Number: 70166

Location: Rangiora

1 ERO's judgement of Fernside Preschool Limited 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

Fernside Preschool is a stand-alone, family-owned service. It is located on a rural site and includes farm animals as part of the learning programme. There are two separate areas designated to cater for the education and care of infants and toddlers, and for young children over the age of two years. The core values of the service give emphasis to, Kindness, Relationships, Empowerment and Love.

The owners are responsible for the governance and management of the service. An assistant manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service. There has been a significant change in staffing since the 2021 ERO report. Governance, management and leadership has remained stable.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The 2021 ERO Akarangi report identified three key improvement actions. Good progress has been made with two of these improvement actions. This includes establishing priorities for children's learning using the outcomes of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum; and strengthening the use of internal evaluation to promote ongoing improvement.

There has been limited progress with building teachers' capability in te reo me ngā tikanga Māori due to a significant turnover of teaching staff. This improvement action remains a priority in this report.

## 5 Learning Conditions

### The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

The learning dispositions and outcomes of *Te Whāriki*, form the basis of assessment, planning and evaluation processes and practices.

- Teachers have established a systematic approach to an assessment, planning and evaluation process that makes children's learning and progress visible. They value and make good use of whānau aspirations; however, the languages, cultures and identities of children are yet to be given emphasis in documentation.
- Children have many opportunities for exploration, physically active play, and to learn about animal care and the natural world. Teachers intentionally focus on developing children's positive sense of self as a capable learner by building independence and self-help skills during long periods of uninterrupted play.
- Infants and toddlers experience a calm, child-paced, unhurried curriculum that allows them space and time to lead their own learning. Transitions into, between areas and beyond the service are personalised to the individual needs and preferences of children and their families.

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

Leaders value a collaborative approach to professional learning and development to increase teachers' capability to reflect and improve on their practice.

- Leaders and teachers actively engage in a systematic approach to internal evaluation processes. Some evaluation activities are in-depth and contribute towards their knowledge about how well the curriculum is responding to identified needs and improvements to teaching and learning.
- There is an established professional learning cycle that promotes reflection, intentional shifts in practice and working as a collaborative learning community.
- There are opportunities for teachers to participate in individualised and team-focused professional learning and development.

## **6 Organisational conditions**

### **Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū**

Leaders are continuing to build relationships across the new teaching team to enable collaboration and sustained improvement.

- Leaders have clear expectations for teams' professional accountability and collective responsibility for the wellbeing and learning of children in the service.
- Leaders engage in external mentoring to build their own capability and capacity to guide teachers and set clear expectations for curriculum implementation, outcomes and documentation.
- Leaders foster positive relationships with local schools. They are regularly involved with the Kāhui Ako o Puketeraki professional learning community to enrich curriculum provision and advocate for young children as they transition to school.

### **Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau**

Those involved in governance and management continue to have a strong focus on building a collaborative solution-focused team culture.

- The owners and managers collaboratively set strategic priorities to realise the service's vision and philosophy and focus on ongoing improvement.
- Emphasis is given to the allocation of resources that promote a rich curriculum which encourages children's curiosity and exploration of the spacious, natural environment and the care of animals.
- Owners and managers are yet to regularly monitor and evaluate strategic priorities to determine 'what is working or not working and for whom', to help inform timely changes to processes and adaptations to practices.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Fernside Preschool Limited 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?

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

- Leaders and teachers to continue to build a deeper understanding of te āo Māori including extending the use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori.
- Teachers to make children's languages, cultures and learner identities visible throughout their learning documentation.
- Owners and managers to refine the strategic plan to determine annual priorities and regularly monitor and evaluate these to show progress towards achieving the service's strategic goals.

### 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)

5 May 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	62 children, including up to 11 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 5%; NZ European/Pākehā 93%; Other ethnicities 2%
Service roll	79
Review team on site	January 2025
Date of this report	5 May 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	Akarangi   Quality Evaluation, Oct 2021, Education Review, Feb 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)*.

	<b>Above the threshold for quality</b>
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.
	<b>Below the threshold for quality</b>
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.