



# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Above and Beyond The Lakes Ltd

Profile Number: 46941

Location: Tauranga

1 ERO's judgement of Above and Beyond The Lakes Ltd 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

Above and Beyond The Lakes Ltd is one of four services in the Bay of Plenty under the same ownership. An education leader guides the teaching team and leads service operations. Four age-based rooms provide for children from birth to school age. The philosophy prioritises relationships, connections, and respect. Since ERO's 2021 review there have been changes in the teaching team, including the education leader.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The 2021 ERO report identified three improvement actions relating to collaborating with whānau in developing a local curriculum, strengthening how children's languages and cultures are shown in curriculum documentation, and implementing community voice in evaluation.

Good progress has been made to develop a local curriculum. This is newly implemented and continues to be refined. Children have regular access to a range of community experiences where they can make links between people, places and practices related to their emergent learning interests.

Limited progress is evident in showing children's languages and cultures in curriculum documentation. Some aspects of tikanga Māori and cultural celebrations are evident in the day-to-day experienced curriculum but are yet to be fully integrated into curriculum planning.

Limited progress has been made to strengthen the inclusion of community voice in evaluation practice and this remains a priority for the service.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Children learn in a curriculum that successfully reflects and supports their interests.
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- A well-resourced environment and teachers' intentional teaching practices support children's creativity, wondering, critical thinking and decision-making. Infants, toddlers and young children benefit from caring and nurturing interactions with teachers.
- Leaders and teachers work in partnership with parents to support children's learning. Children's individual learning plans include whānau aspirations, and teachers respond appropriately to these in assessment information.
- Assessment of children's learning shows their progress and acknowledges their interests. There is variability in how well teachers utilise the learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum to show children's learning over time.

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

Leaders and teachers continue to build their professional knowledge, expertise and cultural knowledge to implement a responsive curriculum for all children.

- Children’s learning is supported through teachers’ participation in relevant professional learning and development. Teachers are yet to explore the extent to which this work is making a difference for children’s learning outcomes.
- Relational trust within the teaching team is fostering collaboration and an openness to change. This is enabling the growth of professional knowledge and expertise, and collective responsibility for the learning of children.
- Māori learners have some opportunities to experience their language and culture. Teachers recognise the need to strengthen their response to children’s home cultures, languages and identities in the curriculum, including having an increased focus to enhance the bicultural curriculum.

## **6 Organisational conditions**

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

Leaders effectively foster ongoing improvement practices that are focused on children learning.

- Leaders across the organisation assist the new education leader to model teaching strategies and provide ongoing mentoring and support for teachers.
- An evaluation framework helps teachers to consider the quality of education and care provided, and to inform ongoing plans for improvement. With support from other leaders in the organisation, the new teaching team continues to grow its knowledge and understanding of internal evaluation as a process to guide improvement.
- Systems continue to be monitored by leaders to support daily operations and promote collaborative enactment of the service’s philosophy and values.

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

The organisation’s policies, procedures, and practices align well with its overarching values and effectively promote the wellbeing of teachers, children, and whānau.

- Purposeful resource allocation clearly aligns with priorities for children’s learning across all services.
- Collaborative and targeted ongoing professional learning builds leadership and teacher capability. Successful initiatives, including networking between external agencies, support children’s access to an inclusive curriculum.
- Reliable processes to measure, evaluate and monitor strategic priorities against organisational values are not yet established.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Above and Beyond The Lakes Ltd 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.

Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008

## 8 Where to next for improvement?

Above and Beyond The Lakes Ltd will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Develop the bicultural curriculum and consistently promote and reflect children's cultures, home languages and identities in the learning environment and the enacted curriculum.
- Improve planning processes in relation to the valued learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki* to evaluate children's progress against these outcomes, including consideration of how teachers' intentional teaching strategies support children's learning.
- Develop a shared understanding of internal evaluation to undertake and use evaluation to guide improvement over time.

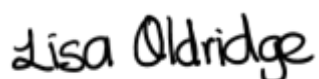
Above and Beyond governance will include the following in its quality improvement planning to improve consistency of quality across the group:

- Develop and implement a documented system to monitor and evaluate progress towards organisational objectives and values in collaboration with families and the 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.\*](#)



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Director of Early Childhood Education (Acting)

7 May 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	87 children, including up to 27 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 15%, NZ European/Pākehā 49%, Indian 10%, Pacific 7%, South African 7%, other ethnic groups 12%
Service roll	92
Review team on site	December 2024
Date of this report	7 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 Review, Oct 2021; Education Review April 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.