

# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Tic Tac Toe Educare Tots n Toddlers

Profile Number: 45977

Location: Huntly

1 ERO's judgement of Tic Tac Toe Educare Tots n Toddlers 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

Tic Tac Toe Educare Tots n Toddlers is one of two privately-owned centres under shared ownership and governance. It caters for younger tamariki while the sister centre caters for older tamariki to school age. A person responsible oversees the daily running of the service and is supported by a team of qualified and unqualified teachers. A newly appointed curriculum lead and the owner both work between the two services. The service priorities and values emphasise māiatanga (confidence), manaakitanga (respect), aroha (love) and whānau (family).

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2018 Education Review identified five key next steps for the service. These were to review the centre philosophy to reflect the new team; develop partnerships with whanau; build a shared understanding of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum; build the manager's knowledge of centre management; and to fully embed an appraisal system.

The centre philosophy has been revised by new kaiako and leaders. Good progress has been made to reflect the new teaching team.

Due to considerable leadership and staff changes, limited progress has been made in developing learning-focused partnerships with whānau, building knowledge and confidence in centre wide leadership, and in embedding a professional growth cycle which represents the centre's appraisal.

Limited progress has also been made in building a shared understanding of *Te Whāriki*. External support has been useful to build the knowledge of some kaiako; new kaiako to the service require ongoing professional learning to embed and document this.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Tamariki experience a mixed-age play-based curriculum in which their relationships with others and social competence are well promoted.

- Strong relationships between tamariki and kaiako positively influence their experiences. Kaiako use intentional practices that support tamariki to develop their capabilities, independence and decision making.
- Kaiako document children's learning over time in ways that capture their interests, dispositional learning and the centre priorities for learning. The languages, cultures and identity of all children is yet to be reflected in documentation.
- Positive relationships with parents and whānau are established through centre wide events. Kaiako are in the early stages of inquiring into ways to establish partnerships with parents and whānau that support the learning of tamariki.

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

The service is establishing the conditions to improve kaiako capability to plan and deliver a responsive curriculum.

- Some kaiako have engaged in professional learning and are continuing to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of *Te Whāriki*.
- Tamariki benefit from the celebration of some cultural events and some home languages spoken by kaiako. Kaiako are at early stages of integrating te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into the curriculum.
- Strong relational trust is evident across the teaching team. Kaiako benefit from informal mentoring within the team.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders are beginning to re-establish systems and processes to support ongoing improvement.

- Changes in the leadership team have impacted on the effectiveness of improvement systems. The newly appointed curriculum leader has prioritised engaging all kaiako in a professional growth cycle to contribute to building professional expertise.
- Professional learning opportunities aligned with service improvement priorities are available to kaiako. Some kaiako are implementing new learning into their teaching practice and agree that the next step is to reflect on and evaluate the impact that these changes have on tamariki learning.
- An internal evaluation framework and process is in place. Leaders and kaiako are not yet monitoring and evaluating the impact of changes on outcomes for learners.

The wellbeing and learning of children are a consideration for governance in decision-making and resourcing.

- Governance prioritises the wellbeing of kaiako and has established relationships that aid their sense of belonging and collaboration. There are good policies and practices in place to meet health and safety requirements.
- The service has established strategic goals for improvement. There has been progress in relation to achieving these goals.
- Leadership changes have impacted on the consistency and effectiveness of systems and practices. Consideration to the provision of ongoing external leadership capability building is required to enact and sustain improvement.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Tic Tac Toe Educare Tots n Toddlers 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?

Tic Tac Toe Educare Tots n Toddlers will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Leaders and kaiako provide opportunities for whānau to engage in learning-focused partnerships through sharing their aspirations and priorities for their child's learning.
- Governance, supported by external expertise, to strengthen the conditions to develop leadership capability in maintaining quality improvement systems and processes, to enable consistency across the services.

#### 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  
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14 May 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	49 children, including up to 15 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 60%; NZ European/Pākehā 28%; Samoan 14%; Cook Island Māori 7%; Fijian 3%; other ethnic groups 3%
Service roll	16
Review team on site	March 2025
Date of this report	14 May 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	Education Review, November 2018; Education Review, March 2014

### 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.