



# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Tots on The Rock

Profile Number: 45915

Location: Oneroa, Waiheke Island

## 1 ERO's judgement of Tots on The Rock 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

Tots on The Rock is one of two services under the same ownership within the Waiheke Island community. Two family members own and provide governance and management for both services. A centre leader oversees curriculum delivery and supports the teaching team. The service provides for infants and toddlers in a dedicated area and provides a mixed age setting for older children. The philosophy highlights children as unique individuals whose social and emotional wellbeing is nurtured. A small number of Māori learners are enrolled.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The previous 2021 ERO report identified two improvement actions. These related to strategically planning professional learning to build teachers' ability to continuously improve outcomes for learners, and to implement a professional growth cycle to enhance the service's current processes for internal evaluation and teachers' inquiries. Good progress has been made in relation to both improvement actions. A professional growth cycle framework has been established and implemented. Leaders and teachers attend relevant professional development collectively and as individuals. They can articulate their professional learning and the impact on enhancing learning experiences for all children.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Children experience a responsive curriculum, and their preferences and decisions are respected through a purposeful learning environment that reflects the service philosophy.

- Parents and whānau aspirations are sought and used to inform curriculum decisions. They are yet to consistently inform assessment and planning for all children.
- Assessment, planning and evaluation practices acknowledge and celebrate each child's learner identity, interests, strengths and learning dispositions. Intentional teaching strategies facilitate continuity of learning and extend children's learning.
- Teachers provide purposefully designed learning environments promoting open-ended exploration, group and independent play. They are responsive to children's preferences and support their developing social and emotional skills well.

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

Leaders and teachers increasingly work collectively to build their professional knowledge, supporting the design and implementation of a responsive curriculum for all children.

- Leaders and teachers are embedding professional knowledge, with the support of external mentoring and coaching, to strengthen the quality of the curriculum. They integrate aspects of tikanga Māori into daily practices and the learning environment to support culturally responsive teaching.
- Teachers have access to ongoing, relevant professional learning that builds their knowledge and confidence to provide a responsive curriculum for children.
- Newer teachers are supported to engage in the professional growth cycle. Leaders are refining the process to better inquire into what is working, what's not, and for whom across both services.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders have established relational trust within the teaching team, creating the conditions for collaboration and improvement.

- A distributed leadership approach has been established to support ongoing improvement in teaching practices. Service leaders recognise a need to further refine internal evaluation processes to better support teachers to inquire into the effectiveness of their teaching practices.
- Governance and management provide ongoing mentoring and coaching that helps to build the capability of new leaders and the teaching team.
- Leaders set clear expectations, with roles and responsibilities refined to support these. They intentionally use review and internal evaluation findings to inform and improve systems and practices.

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

The service prioritises the learning and wellbeing of all children in its decision-making, guided by strategic goals focused on improving outcomes for every learner.

- The service is actively refining its systems and processes to promote positive outcomes for children and their whānau.
- An efficient cycle of policy review is in place, which effectively monitors and guides the consistent implementation of policies and practices.
- A useful induction framework is embedded to support new teachers, setting clear expectations for implementing a responsive curriculum grounded in *Te Whāriki*. Service providers actively seek external professional support to uphold the service's philosophy, values and to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Tots on The Rock 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?

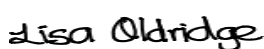
Tots on The Rock will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- For leaders and teachers to refine the professional growth cycle to better evaluate how professional learning leads to shifts in teaching practices and improved outcomes for learners.
- For leaders to further develop evaluative capability and build a shared understanding across teams to effectively carry out and use internal evaluation process to support positive learning outcomes for all 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  
Director of Early Childhood Education (Acting)

16 June 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	43 children, including up to 14 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 10%; NZ European/Pākehā 90%
Service roll	51
Review team on site	March 2025
Date of this report	16 June 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, November 2021; Education Review, August 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)*.

	<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.