

# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

**Early Childhood Service Name:** Tiaki Early Learning Centre

**Profile Number:** 40331

**Location:** Owhata, Rotorua

1 ERO's judgement of Tiaki Early Learning Centre 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

Tiaki Early Learning is one of two services under private ownership. Governance and qualified leadership work across these centres to support curriculum delivery and daily operations. Older and younger children learn in their own age-based settings with opportunities to mix whilst in the service, or on regular walks around the community. The newly forming team includes certificated and uncertificated teachers. Together the service aspires to deliver a philosophy where children are confident, resilient learners who can walk comfortably in a multicultural environment.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The previous Education Review report in June 2020 identified two key next steps:

- Extending on the intentional approaches to the identification of individual learning goals in relation to the centre's local curriculum; and more clearly show how teachers plan to respond to these goals and monitor progress over time.
- Growing the use of te reo Māori by children, with the aim of extending their functional fluency by the time they leave for school. This would align with the government of the time's policy for Māori language revitalisation.

Due to a change in ownership in April 2023, and almost all new teaching staff, there has been limited progress against these key next steps. Those responsible for governance have implemented processes that meet and maintain compliance with regulatory standards. Governance and leadership have been focused on building relationships with children and their whānau. The new owners, alongside the teaching team, have participated in a range of professional learning relative to the key next steps to build new, and to enhance and progress existing, systems and practices across the service.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Children engage in a curriculum that supports them to learn about the natural world, and play alongside others.

- Children experience respectful teaching practices that promote their social and emotional competencies. Teachers know children well and use some intentional teaching strategies to enhance their foundational literacy skills, discussing this learning regularly with parents and whānau.
- A large outdoor environment is utilised to encourage children to think about sustainability, and to respect and enjoy nature-based experiences. There is yet to be intentionality in the indoor environment to promote creativity, wondering and complexity of play.
- Assessment and planning for children are in the early stages of design and enactment. The service has begun to use a range of tools to support their understanding of how to intentionally plan for children's ongoing learning.

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

New teachers and leaders are pursuing actions to grow and improve their cultural competencies and professional knowledge to enhance children's learning.

- Te reo Māori and tikanga Māori practices are naturally embedded into the experienced curriculum for children; with some teachers purposefully growing their place based bicultural practice through goals in their individual inquiries. This facilitates bicultural knowledge growth and learning for all.
- Children have opportunities to experience and learn about other cultures alongside whānau. Teachers and leaders are starting to intentionally document their responsiveness to support and honour all children's home languages, cultures and identities.
- The new team is beginning to engage and reflect on their inquiry-based practices and professional learning to inform ongoing change. Formal mentoring opportunities for growth have been irregular due to staff changes.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders are building upon systems, practices and processes to grow teacher capability that supports the enactment of a quality curriculum design

- Leadership is focused on working alongside whānau and upholding the values, philosophy and priorities of the service. This commitment and adaptable responsiveness, contribute to building on improved outcomes for children's learning, their development and sense of belonging.
- Relational trust between leaders and teachers is aiding teachers to build their capability. Informal mentoring opportunities provoke some reflection and contribute to some positive change.
- Internal evaluation practices are established and beginning to inform positive changes for children. The service is in the early stages of fully utilising the potential of internal evaluation and is continuing to build understanding of inquiry and evaluation practice.

Governors' decision making positively promotes the learning and wellbeing of children and their whānau.

- A range of proactive health and equity strategies enhance wellbeing, access, participation and inclusion for all children.
- Responsive partnerships with the local marae, kaumatua and other networks enrich the services curriculum design. Children with additional needs are supported in conjunction with their whānau to engage and learn alongside their peers.
- Strategic planning is being considered. Relational trust and practical systems that continue to be refined, alongside worthwhile professional learning, supports teachers, leaders and governors to share and plan for positive ongoing improvements.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Tiaki Early Learning Centre 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?

Tiaki Early Learning Centre will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Leaders and teachers to intentionally focus on enabling a curriculum that supports children to explore, be creative, expressive, and extends their complexity of learning.
- Leaders and teachers to improve assessment and planning practices to intentionally plan and respond to each child's learning and evaluate children's progress using the valued learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.
- Leaders and teachers to build their understanding and use of the measurement, monitoring and evaluation aspects of internal evaluation practice, to better inform improvements for children's learning over time.

#### 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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Lisa Oldridge  
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11 July 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	24 children, including up to 5 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 83%, NZ European/Pākehā 42%, Samoan 8%
Service roll	12
Review team on site	March 2025
Date of this report	11 July 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at <a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a>	Education Review, June 2020; Education Review, November 2016

### 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.