

# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

**Early Childhood Service Name:** Sunflowers Preschool Limited

**Profile Number:** 46632

**Location:** Hawarden, Canterbury

1 ERO's judgement of Sunflowers 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

Sunflowers Preschool is a small, rural, privately-owned early childhood service. The owner is the manager and has responsibility for daily operations, governance and management. Infants, toddlers, and young children play and learn in a mixed-aged setting. The philosophy emphasises the core values of relationships, respect, and empowering learners.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2021 Akarangi | Quality Evaluation identified three improvement actions. These related to continuing to embed a culturally responsive curriculum, exploring ways to promote educational success for children of Pacific heritages and building all teachers' capability to undertake in-depth internal evaluation.

Leaders and teachers have made good progress in deepening their understanding and implementation of cultural narratives within the local curriculum. Reviewing aspects of the philosophy has progressively strengthened teacher practices.

Limited progress has been made to improve provision for children of Pacific heritages. Leaders acknowledge the 2023 internal evaluation was not completed due to the decrease of Pacific families enrolled with the service.

There has been limited progress in the use of in-depth evaluation for improvement across the service's systems and processes. A current strategic priority is to access relevant professional development to enable leaders and teachers to deepen their understanding of effective evaluative practices.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Children experience a culturally responsive curriculum that positively enhances their belonging and wellbeing.

- Children learn within a curriculum that reflects their unique rural context. A strengthened bicultural curriculum enables them to learn about local cultural narratives and increasingly hear and use te reo Māori and tikanga Māori.
- Children benefit from responsive teaching strategies that promote their independence and agency. Teachers facilitate and support children's self-initiated learning in calm and unhurried ways within the spacious natural learning environment.
- There are useful systems for planning of group learning and for individual children. The contributions of parents, recognition of children's culture, interests, dispositions, and skills along with the learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, are used when planning to extend children's interests and learning.

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

Established systems and processes support professional growth and learning, and enable teachers and leaders to improve their teaching practice and outcomes for children.

- Teachers and leaders regularly collaborate to share ideas, skills, and knowledge that contribute to curriculum planning and implementation and assessment practices.
- Some documentation shows shifts teachers have made in their teaching practices and the intended outcomes for children. However, the extent to which these changes in practice have made a difference to children's learning and development is not yet well documented.
- Teachers and leaders take responsibility for their own professional learning by undertaking relevant professional development and engaging in a mentoring programme as part of the professional growth cycle. The professional growth cycle is yet to consistently provide teachers with specific, formal feedback to help grow their practice.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders have built relational trust to enable collaboration and improvement.

- Leaders and teachers collaboratively bring the vision and philosophy to life within the curriculum. They consistently consider parent aspirations, including those of whānau Māori, in planning a responsive curriculum.
- Leadership is focussed on building professional practice and considering ways to build leadership across the team.
- Internal evaluation practices lead to some positive changes and improvements. Evaluation across key aspects of the service operations (such as, planning and assessment practices and professional growth activities) do not yet show the difference that actions taken, and teaching practices, have made to improving outcomes for children.

Governance has well established systems, processes, plans and priorities for improvement.

- Organisational conditions enable high staffing ratios, well-resourced learning environments and generous access to professional learning and development.
- Those in governance enable teachers to work purposefully with parents and whānau and external agencies in supporting children with additional learning needs.
- Leaders have developed a clear strategic direction and an annual action plan which align with the organisation's vision, values, and philosophy. The evaluation and impact of progress made with the strategic direction is not explicit within documentation.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Sunflowers 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?

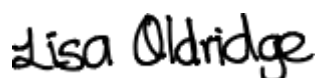
Sunflowers Preschool Limited will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Leaders to refine professional growth cycles that include providing formal feedback on practice, identifying specific areas of growth, and showing how new learning has made a difference to children's learning outcomes.
- Build all teachers' evaluation capability to better identify how effectively systems, processes and practices are supporting children's learning.

#### 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)

4 July 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	27 children, including up to 5 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 13%, NZ European/Pākehā 80%, other ethnic groups 8%.
Service roll	40
Review team on site	21 March 2025
Date of this report	4 July 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, April 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.