

ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Piccolo Park Early Learning Centre

Profile Number: 46732

Location: Botany, Auckland

1 ERO's judgement of Piccolo Park 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

Piccolo Park Early Learning Centre is one of four services privately owned by the same company. Governance provides shared operational guidelines, a strategic vision, and policies to guide practice.

A common philosophy across the four services values working in partnership with each child's family and providing opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Its underpinning beliefs are that all children are unique, and their play makes a big impact on their development and learning. Teachers aim to extend their play, within a curriculum based on *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

Separate learning environments accommodate shared spaces for toddlers and young children. Younger children have their own dedicated learning area.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2021 ERO Akarangi | Quality Evaluation report identified two improvement actions. These were for leaders and teachers to further strengthen the provision of opportunities for children to learn about the local and wider community, and for leaders to continue refining and strengthening their appraisal system to align with the New Zealand Teaching Council's Professional Growth Cycle.

Significant progress has been made for both improvement actions. Leaders and teachers have been deliberate in providing opportunities for children and their families to engage in developing their local curriculum. They have taken an inquiry-based approach to exploring landmarks of significance and their wider community.

Refinements have been made to teachers' professional growth cycles. There has been a purposeful focus on building the capability and capacity of the team. Evidence of changed practice is provided through leaders' observation of practice and documentation related to professional discussions.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a responsive curriculum that supports their interests and growing capabilities.

- Teachers work in collaboration with parents and whānau to support children's learning and development. Respectful and reciprocal relationships underpin teachers' engagement with families fostering children's social and emotional competencies and communication.
- The environment is well resourced and thoughtfully organised to promote cohesive learning with teachers drawing on a range of effective strategies to enhance children's holistic development. Children benefit from working both in groups and independently, with their preferences of who and where they play being respected.
- Assessment documentation and practices are variable among teachers with children's individual planning having some aspects of evaluation evident. Children's learning progress is highlighted but not consistently aligned with valued learning outcomes identified in *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

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

Management and service leaders increasingly support and enable teachers to build their professional knowledge, expertise and cultural competence to implement a curriculum that is responsive to children.

- Leaders access relevant professional learning and development (PLD) to support teaching teams and to role model practice, teaching and learning strategies. Leaders and teachers collaboratively decide who will attend what specific PLD aligned to individual professional growth cycles to build capability.
- Leaders' role model some Pacific knowledge, values and practices growing the cultural capability of teaching teams. Cultural celebrations and significant events are valued.
- Leaders have focused on an inquiry-based approach to support teachers shared understanding of quality teaching practices. They continue to build their capability to identify next steps towards improving outcomes for learners.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Management and service leaders work collaboratively to enact the vision, strategic goals, working plans and priorities for learning.

- Management and service leaders work collaboratively with their respective teaching teams to enact the overarching strategic vision, goals and plans. A key focus is supporting children's social and emotional competencies, oral language development, and communication.
- Those in management receive effective external mentoring to foster their professional growth. Regular coaching and mentoring by management are building the leadership capability to enable support for teaching teams.
- There is a useful system and process to undertake internal evaluation, but this is not well understood or effectively implemented by leaders. A shared understanding of what happens at each stage or phase of the process has not yet been established.

Children's learning and wellbeing are well-considered in the decisions and allocation of resourcing with a clear focus to support improvement.

- Service leaders share with whānau the vision, plans and some areas for improvement. Supporting whānau participation and contribution continues to be strengthened increasing the potential to foster broader educational and social outcomes for children.
- Scheduled review of policies and procedures supports services within the group to identify what areas might need addressed and to improve practices.
- Strategic plans and processes are in place. However, the system has not yet been developed to monitor and evaluate these.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Piccolo Park 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?

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

- Improve assessment documentation and practice to consistently show children's learning progress aligned to the learning outcomes described in *Te Whāriki*.
- Develop systems and processes to monitor the progress of strategic goals and service work plans.
- Build the evaluative capability of management and leaders to clearly identify and understand the difference they are making for children's learning and wellbeing, with a focus towards improvement.

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
Director of Early Childhood Education (Acting)

7 July 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	120 children, including up to 20 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 12%; NZ European/Pākehā 35%; Pacific 5%; Indian 20%; Chinese 17%; Other groups 15%
Service roll	83
Review team on site	February 2025
Date of this report	7 July 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, June 2021; Education Review, March 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)*.

	Above the threshold for quality
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.
	Below the threshold for quality
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.