



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Footprints Early Learning Centre

Profile Number: 45259

Location: Waihi

1 ERO’s judgement of Footprints Early Learning Centre is as follows:

Domains: Ngā Akatoro	Below the threshold for quality		Above the threshold for quality	
	Improvement required	Working towards	Embedded	Excelling
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
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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

Footprints Early Learning Centre is managed by the owner, who works alongside a team of teachers in a distributed leadership model. The philosophy places emphasis on partnerships with parents, kindness, respect, and a calm environment in which children can explore at their own pace.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2023 Akanuku | Assurance Review identified areas of non-compliance with licensing requirements. Governance has addressed these areas and has well-embedded systems in place to maintain compliance.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a play-based curriculum that supports their learning, independence and decision making well.

- Children learn in a calm environment where their thoughts and feelings are acknowledged and teachers model ways for children to self-regulate and play positively alongside their peers. The environment and resources prompt children's curiosity and foster their problem solving.
- Infants and toddlers experience unhurried and respectful practices that are responsive to their individual needs. All children are provided with opportunities to develop self-help skills and independence.
- Teachers skilfully support children's early numeracy knowledge within meaningful play-based contexts. Children's oral language and early literacy knowledge is fostered through group times in which children take an active part and have opportunities to lead.
- Children experience the bicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand through teachers capably including tikanga Māori practices in the daily curriculum. Children from diverse ethnic groups experience elements of their culture through celebration of some cultural events.

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

Teachers continuously improve their practice through meaningful reflection, inquiry, and collaboration.

- Teachers participate in a professional growth cycle aligned with centre-wide improvement priorities, through which they have opportunities for peer observation of their teaching practice. They implement new learning gained from professional development opportunities and reflect on how changes to their practice impact on outcomes for children.
- Learning-focused partnerships with parents that facilitate equity of access and participation for all children are established. Multiple communication approaches are in place to collaborate with families and to gather aspirations for their children's learning.
- Children's engagement in the curriculum is documented in ways that show their learning over time. Teachers and leaders are not yet planning, assessing or evaluating children's learning using the learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders positively promote the philosophy and vision of the service in the curriculum provided for children.

- Leaders model professional responsibility and accountability. They monitor enactment of the philosophy through their active involvement in daily operations.
- Leaders have taken intentional steps to foster relational trust across all levels of the service, facilitating an openness to change and growth. Opportunities for teachers to lead aspects of the curriculum is helping to identify future leaders and build collective capability.
- Internal evaluation is understood by leaders and used to facilitate change and improved outcomes for children. There is no consistent framework in place for ongoing improvement that evaluates outcomes for children against the valued learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance and leaders allocate resources and network with external agencies in ways that promote positive outcomes for children.

- Governance prioritises the wellbeing of staff and children in resourcing and decision-making. Extensive professional learning opportunities and environmental changes to better meet the needs of children have facilitated implementation and enactment of the service's vision.
- Positive steps are in place to promote children's and families' access to education and care. Children with additional learning needs are identified and supported by external agencies, alongside their parents.
- Governance has an extensive professional network that benefits the wider early learning community positively promoting collaboration and social and educational outcomes for children, community and whānau.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Footprints 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?

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

- Improve planning and assessment practices by consistently evaluating teaching strategies and children's progress based on the learning outcomes of *Te Whāriki*.
- Build service-wide evaluation capability through using a consistent framework to evaluate the impact of improvements on 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.](#)



Vivian Ruth
Director of Early Childhood Education

15 December 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	34 children, including up to 7 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 25%, NZ European/Pākehā 63%, Dutch 5%, Filipino 5%, other ethnicities 2%
Service roll	40
Review team on site	September 2025
Date of this report	15 December 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akanuku Assurance Review, June 2023; Akanuku Assurance Review, December 2020

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.