

ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Hands at Play Aotearoa

Profile Number: 48066

Location: Mt Roskill, Auckland

1 ERO's judgement of Hands at Play Aotearoa 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

Hands at Play Aotearoa is a privately-owned service. The centre owner is responsible for governance, management, and daily operations. Infants, toddlers and older children play and learn in two separate learning areas. The philosophy is underpinned by the service priorities of care and providing supportive learning environments that are inclusive of all children and whānau. Teachers and children reflect the diversity of the local community.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

This is the first review for the service since opening in April 2022. Leaders have prioritised establishing a cohesive teaching team, building relationships and opportunities for parents and whānau to contribute to the curriculum and establishing transition processes to support children's sense of security and belonging.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a curriculum that reflects the depth and breadth of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

- Children's learning is supported by close, positive relationships with their teachers. The perspectives of parents and whānau are regularly sought and teachers are using this information to inform planning for the wider curriculum and individual children.
- Teachers implement a useful range of strategies to support children's growing social and emotional competence and oral language. Children experience slow and calm paced environments and teachers are responsive to their interests and needs.
- Parents engage and share their knowledge, expertise and skills increasing children's connection to their culture and language and leaders and teachers value and promote the cultural diversity of children and whānau through celebrations and events. However, they are yet to make explicit in assessment documentation children's languages, cultures and learner identities.

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

The service continues to establish the conditions to support leaders and teachers to build their professional knowledge and capabilities to deliver a responsive curriculum for all learners.

- Leaders and teachers are improvement focused. Children's learning and wellbeing are considered in the decisions and priorities for the service.
- Teachers take personal responsibility for the professional growth cycle process that leaders are refining. Identified areas of professional growth and improvement are not specific enough to support them to measure outcomes and impacts.
- While some positive outcomes result from improved evaluation practices, leaders have acknowledged that growing collective capability to do and use internal evaluation effectively is an area of growth.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders collaborate to develop and enact the service's philosophy, vision, goals and priorities.

- Leaders are advocates for children and their access to early learning opportunities. They have positive working relationships with external agencies to support children to fully participate in the curriculum.
- Relational trust at all levels supports openness to change and growth. Leaders model and support collective responsibility for children's learning and wellbeing.
- Leaders actively seek the perspectives and cultural expertise of parents and whānau and incorporate these into the service's celebrations. Relationships to support children's transitions and routines, alongside centre cultural celebrations are clearly evident.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Those responsible for governance prioritise the wellbeing and learning of children and their parents as a foundation for their decision-making.

- Governance positively encourages and supports the participation and inclusion of children and their whānau in the curriculum. The intentional recruitment of staff reflects the diverse cultures of the children and the local community.
- Policies and procedures are coherent, fit for purpose and effectively guide practice.
- The service's plans for improvement and the direction of the service are emergent. Governance and management have not yet developed a strategic plan to support them to monitor and evaluate progress against their priorities and inform decision making.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Hands at Play Aotearoa 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?

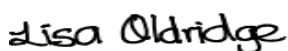
Hands at Play Aotearoa will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Extend assessment practices to better support children's culture, language and learner identity.
- Improve teachers' capabilities to measure and track improved outcomes for children through evaluative practices.
- Formalise the service's strategic direction aligned to centre priorities and monitor and evaluate progress in relation to these.

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)

21 July 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	64 children, including up to 14 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 13%; NZ European/Pākehā 11%; Samoan 25% Indian 22%; Tongan 10%; Filipino 10%; Afghan 8%; Chinese 7%; Fijian 5%; Niuean 1%, Cook Island 1%
Service roll	67
Review team on site	May 2025
Date of this report	21 July 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	First ERO report for the service.

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.