

ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Hopscotch Preschool

Profile Number: 30322

Location: Otorohanga

1 ERO's judgement of Hopscotch Preschool 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

Hopscotch Preschool is one of two services under the same ownership that share governance and organisational systems. This service provides for children from three years to school age who transition from the infant and toddler service. The philosophy values interactions with children, whānau and the wider community. It includes an aim to foster children's confidence and competence in a nurturing environment, and teachers supporting children's social skills and showing respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2022 report identified three quality improvement actions. These were to:

- Sharpen focus at the beginning and end stages of evaluation practices, to better understand why shifts in practice have worked, and for which groups of children.
- Work in partnership with whānau Māori to strengthen teachers' understanding of te ao Māori and the places and people of significance to the local area.
- Embed a new assessment system, foregrounding the learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, to inform learning priorities, and to better reflect and affirm individual children's languages, cultures and identity.

Good progress has been made in all three areas through relevant professional learning, coaching from leaders, and quality improvement planning.

Evaluation processes are now clearer, and leaders are helping staff build their skills to use data, research, and theory to understand how changes affect different groups of children.

Children regularly experience tuakana–teina relationships (between older and younger children). They hear and use te reo Māori, waiata, karakia, and tikanga Māori as part of daily routines. Governance sets strong expectations for a bicultural curriculum, and the perspectives of whānau Māori are gathered and responded to.

Teachers have improved how they plan, assess, and reflect on their teaching, resulting in clearer assessment over time and better alignment with children's learning goals. More recently, the curriculum has begun to intentionally include Māori, Indian, African, and Swedish languages and cultures, creating a more culturally responsive learning environment.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

The curriculum promotes children's creativity, exploration and social interactions that foster positive relationships and engagement in learning.

- The well-resourced environment supports children's learning, providing good opportunities for children to be curious, be creative and to explore, including through excursions in the local area. This enables children to follow their interests and engage in sustained interactions with each other and teachers.
- Inclusive teaching that values children's home languages helps them build a strong sense of belonging and cultural identity. The curriculum includes everyday learning experiences that connect to what each child knows and brings from home.
- Teachers capably support children's social and emotional skills, using deliberate strategies to help children build relationships with others. This approach gives children strong opportunities to build their social awareness and communication skills.
- Literacy learning is well promoted through easy-to-reach materials and activities such as print recognition, name labels, sign language, music, and cultural literacy experiences. These opportunities build children's early literacy skills and encourage creative expression, providing a good base for future learning.

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

Embedded professional learning and mentoring systems support teachers to grow their practice and focus on improved outcomes for children.

- Professional growth systems are supporting each teacher through mentoring, useful feedback, and regular teacher reflection. Documents show teachers' progress and that teaching practice is becoming more closely aligned with professional teaching standards.
- A wide range of professional learning is helping teachers to build their skills, with team meetings used to share new ideas and strategies. These practices are helping teachers make purposeful shifts in their teaching, with a deliberate focus on improving outcomes for children.
- New teachers are well supported through induction and mentoring to grow their understanding of early childhood education in a New Zealand context. This support has increased their ability to plan, assess, and evaluate their teaching, leading to more responsive assessment practices and meaningful outcomes for children.

6 Organisational Conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leadership guides positive change through structured internal evaluation processes and building of relational trust through shared leadership.

- Internal evaluation processes are becoming increasingly robust. Leaders are growing teachers' evaluation capability, and better use of data and links to theory are enhancing teacher practice and decision-making.
- Shared leadership is evident, which contributes to a culture of relational trust across the team. This collaborative approach supports shared responsibility and improves consistency in how the curriculum is delivered.
- Leadership capability is well supported through mentoring and guidance from the owner, including practical tools for curriculum design and feedback about planning and individual learning plans. This support helps leaders build confidence and clarity in leading teaching and learning priorities.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance uses strong systems and practices to foster children's learning and wellbeing.

- Governance maintains sound operational practices, including thorough health and safety induction and resourcing that supports teachers' ongoing professional growth. These actions ensure teachers are well equipped to focus on children's learning and wellbeing in well-resourced and maintained environments.
- Governance and leaders use regular quality improvement planning to guide internal evaluation. This approach gives teachers a practical framework that guides ongoing curriculum development and supports teachers' reflective practice.
- Resourcing decisions prioritise smooth transitions into the service and onto school, through making connections with the sister service, local schools and external agencies. These actions support transitions at each child's pace and create meaningful opportunities for continuity in learning and relationships.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Hopscotch Preschool 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?

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

- Increase intentional teaching strategies and provide more opportunities for children to explore their own and others' cultural stories and languages.
- Build new leaders' and teachers' confidence to do and use evaluation to guide 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.*](#)



Vivien Ruth
Director of Early Childhood Education

11 March 2026

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	30 children, aged 2 and over
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 7%, NZ European/Pākehā 74%, Indian 7%, Latin American 5%, South African 5%, Cook Island Māori 2%
Service roll	41
Review team on site	November 2025
Date of this report	11 March 2026
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, October 2022; Education Review, June 2018

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.