



# ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Little Citizens Early Learning Centre

Profile Number: 83002

Location: Dunedin

1 ERO’s judgement of Little Citizens 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<br>He Whāriki Motuhake  | Improvement required            | Working towards | Embedded                        | Excelling |
| Collaborative professional learning and development builds knowledge and capability<br>Whakangungu Ngaio | Improvement required            | Working towards | Embedded                        | Excelling |
| Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement<br>Kaihautū   | Improvement required            | Working towards | Embedded                        | Excelling |
| Stewardship through effective governance and management<br>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

Little Citizens Early Learning Centre is supported by the governance and management of the Methodist Mission Southern (The Mission), who provide a range of community services. The centre is a full-day early childhood education and care service located in South Dunedin. The Mission offers a range of support services to families of children enrolled at the centre.

A new centre manager and senior leadership team have been established since 2023. The centre manager is responsible for day-to-day operations and curriculum. She works collaboratively with three senior teachers. There are three designated learning spaces resourced to cater for the specific needs and abilities of infants, toddlers and young children. An all-day food service is provided for children.

Valued learning priorities are for children to develop social and emotional competence, oral language skills and become kaitiaki (carers) for the natural world.

## 4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The 2022 Akanuku | Assurance review identified a number of non-compliances with the *Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Services 2008*. Significant progress has been made in developing and implementing sound systems and processes to meet and maintain the legislative requirements of the licensing criteria.

The Ministry of Education has provided extensive support including professional development to help the service develop and implement systems, processes and practices to support the operations of the service. This resulted in a comprehensive and systematic review of all policies and procedures. A new senior leadership team was created with responsibility of day-to-day compliance and curriculum design, including the development of a specific learning space for toddlers.

Closer professional relationships and communication between the Mission and Centre manager have been established, including specific expertise in management, finance, human resource and maintenance.

## 5 Learning Conditions

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

Children's learning, development and wellbeing are actively fostered through caring, learning-focused relationships with their teachers.

- The uniqueness of each child is recognised within a responsive curriculum that incorporates their cultures and family backgrounds. Parents' wishes are valued and underpin children's individual assessment and learning plans.
- Flexible transitions into and within the three learning spaces, and onto school allows teachers to respond sensitively with a range of intentional teaching approaches that support children's social and emotional wellbeing. Children, including infants and toddlers have their specific needs, abilities and preferences well catered for within purposefully planned indoor and outdoor learning environments that are adaptive to their changing daily requirements.
- A strong focus on supporting children's oral language is very evident. Intentional teaching practices demonstrate teachers' specific knowledge, understanding and range of skills to promote and support language development.

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

Leadership and teaching teams are building their professional knowledge and competence to design and implement a responsive curriculum.

- Professional learning has been aligned to the service's priorities for children's learning, including oral language and social and emotional competence. Teachers have been supported to grow their capability and understanding of intentional teaching approaches.
- Leaders and teachers have benefitted from opportunities to increase their understanding of undertaking planned evaluations that result in changes to teacher practice. Further work is required to continue to build their capability to do and use evaluation for improvement and consider further what is working well or not for groups of children.
- Leaders have developed a shared understanding of expectations about the documentation of children's learning. Teachers receive support and feedback from leaders to grow their understanding and capability to use assessment information to design a meaningful curriculum.

## 6 Organisational conditions

### Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders work together to enact the service's philosophy, vision, learning priorities and values.

- Collaborative leadership fosters relational trust that enables sustained improvement. Leaders have clear expectations and hold teachers professionally accountable for children's learning and wellbeing.
- Leaders provide mentoring and coaching to develop teachers intentional teaching strategies. Teachers are being supported to implement a bicultural curriculum; they recognise the need to continue to increase their confidence to use te reo Māori and implement aspects of tikanga Māori.
- Leaders model effective practice regarding planning, coordination and evaluation of the curriculum and teaching and learning. Reporting on the quality of teaching and learning is currently under review.

## Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Management works collaboratively within the wider Methodist Mission organisation to support the governing body's broader educational and social outcomes for children, their parents and whānau.

- Strategic planning is well aligned to the organisation's four strategic objectives, vision, and learning priorities, including a strong focus on educational and sustainability goals.
- Governance and management work closely together. The learning and wellbeing of children are a strong shared focus in decision making and resourcing of the service's daily operations.
- Governance is well informed of progress towards service priorities through reporting processes, including review and internal evaluation, that are aligned to the organisation's strategic objectives.

## 7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Little Citizens 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?

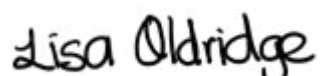
Little Citizens Early Learning Centre will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Build the teaching teams capability to lead, do and use evaluation for improvement to better know about the impact of actions on outcomes for groups of children.
- Improve the provision of a bicultural curriculum by growing teachers' knowledge and confidence to use te reo Māori and integrate tikanga Māori.
- Governance and management to complete the current review and implement changes for reporting on the quality of teaching and learning to better show learning outcomes for all groups of children.

#### 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)

9 April 2025

## 9 Information About the Service

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Service Type   | Education and care service  |
| Number licenced for  | 75 children, including up to 20 aged under 2  |
| Percentage of qualified teachers   | 100%  |
| Ethnic composition   | Māori 31%; NZ European/Pākehā 39%; Indian 22%; Filipino 10%; Samoan 9%; Cook Island 3%; Other Pacific 5%. |
| Service roll   | 97  |
| Review team on site  | February 2025   |
| Date of this report  | 9 April 2025  |
| Most recent ERO report (s)<br>These are available at<br><a href="http://www.ero.govt.nz">www.ero.govt.nz</a> | Akanuku   Assurance Review, February 2022; Education Review, February 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.                                  |