EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Cambridge Montessori

Profile Number: 30278

Location: Cambridge

1 ERO's judgement of Cambridge Montessori 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.

ERO visited this service prior to 1 September 2026, at which point the responsibility for regulatory oversight for Early Childhood Education transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Education Review Office. As such, this report is presented under the approach that ERO was using at the time of the visit.

3 About the Service

Cambridge Montessori is one of two services under the same ownership. The ownership has changed and teams have merged since the previous review. The owner oversees governance and management, with support from an assistant centre manager who helps kaiako and manages the centre's daily operations and curriculum. Children learn across two age-based indoor learning areas, with a shared outdoor area. The overarching philosophy promotes respectful and inclusive learning through Montessori principles, positive relationships, and culturally responsive practices.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2022 evaluation report identified three improvement actions.

- Strengthen relational trust to enable collaboration and sustained improvement.
- Review the centre's philosophy to ensure it reflects the community's priorities for learning.
- Ensure whānau Māori aspirations materially influence planning, the philosophy and strategic goals for children's learning.

Good progress has been made. Team building, ongoing professional conversations and clearer allocation of teachers to two separate learning areas have strengthened relationships, collaboration and communication. Leaders report smoother transitions for children and greater confidence across the team.

The centre's philosophy and strategic direction have been collaboratively reviewed, considering organisational changes and clarifying future priorities. Parents have been consulted throughout, and their values and priorities are reflected in the final decisions and documentation.

Regular engagement with a local cultural guide, whose knowledge supports te reo Māori, tikanga, whakapapa, pūrākau (local stories) and community connections has contributed to Māori perspectives being increasingly reflected in curriculum experiences. Children's family contexts and home cultures and languages are being acknowledged.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children benefit from a curriculum that is informed by Montessori principles and *Te Whāriki,* the early childhood curriculum, and that increasingly responds to each child's ways of learning.

- Children's developing communication, social skills and emotional competence are promoted through teachers' practice. Teachers use purposeful strategies such as descriptive language, encouragement and commenting to promote oral language development.
- Partnerships with parents and external agencies enable children with additional learning needs to participate and learn alongside their peers. The youngest children transition smoothly through open communication and a focus on building a sense of safety, security and belonging.
- Children's opportunities to develop early literacy skills are fostered. Teachers respond to children's interests, aligned with the Montessori approach, using a wide range of specialised resources that enrich literacy learning.
- Planning and assessment practices are individualised and track children's developing skills, dispositions, and working theories in relation to the outcomes of *Te Whāriki*. Assessments identify teaching strategies, but do not consistently show how these contribute to children's progress or learning outcomes.

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

Collaborative professional learning is well established and contributes to strong teaching practices and improved outcomes for children.

- An ongoing culture of collaboration and openness to improvement builds shared understandings and professional growth across the teaching team. This enhances teaching practice and a shared focus on outcomes for children.
- Teachers and leaders actively participate in professional learning that aligns with the service's improvement priorities. Individual and team learning are encouraged through professional growth cycles that contribute to teachers' knowledge and leadership capabilities.
- Teachers regularly participate in review and inquiry as part of improvement work, and information gathered is used positively to plan for children's learning. These opportunities enable teachers to use the knowledge and skills they have gained to plan a responsive curriculum for children.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Relational trust is increasingly enabling team collaboration and a growing focus on improvement.

- Leaders model professional accountability and collective responsibility for the wellbeing and learning of all children, promoting consistency of practice. A system for monitoring and auditing quality is beginning to support consistency of practice across the leadership team.
- The service uses evaluation processes that include parent and teacher voice, with teachers working together to improve practice. These processes link to the service's priorities, but they are yet to include clear, measurable outcomes and strong evidence of how actions are monitored, what changes they create, and their impact on all children.
- Leadership intentionally supports professional learning and provides regular mentoring opportunities for teachers. This contributes to strengthening teachers' knowledge and practice.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Those responsible for governance make well-considered improvement decisions that enhance the wellbeing of children and their families.

- The wellbeing of children and teachers is well-considered through the conditions enabled by governance. Resourcing for professional learning and development, release time, and relievers is well-established and supports the smooth operation of the service.
- Governance supports leadership growth through the provision of professional learning opportunities. This enables a focus on continual improvement and development of leadership capability.
- Strategic planning demonstrates a commitment to ongoing improvement, equity and inclusion. Governance is continuing to monitor and evaluate initiatives however objectives and success measures are not yet clearly defined, making it difficult to determine their impact on children.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Cambridge Montessori 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?

Cambridge Montessori will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Leaders and teachers to consistently include teaching strategies in assessment practices and evaluate their effectiveness in extending children's learning.
- Governance in partnership with whānau and leaders to monitor and evaluate progress towards strategic goals to inform decision-making and understand how well outcomes are being achieved for tamariki.

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

8 October 2026

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	45 children over the age of 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	100%
Ethnic composition *Using rounded percentages*	Māori 12% NZ European/Pākehā 69% Australian 8% South African 8% Chinese 6% Indian 4%,
Service roll	51
Review team on site	August, 2026
Date of this report	8 October 2026
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi | Quality Evaluation, November 2022; Education Review, June 2019

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.