

ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Starfish Early Childhood Centre

Profile Number: 20502

Location: Stanmore Bay, Auckland

1 ERO's judgement of Starfish Early Childhood Centre 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

Starfish Early Childhood Centre is privately owned and operated. The qualified centre owner and manager have been long-standing leaders at the service. The owner oversees operations and governance, and the manager focuses largely on curriculum.

Children are grouped into two rooms according to their age and development. There are daily opportunities for younger children to join the older children's room in the afternoon. The service's philosophy values positive learning experiences for children, which is realised through both a structured and unstructured approach to learning. Children of diverse ethnic backgrounds are enrolled, including a few Māori and Pacific learners.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The April 2021 report identified two improvement actions relating to internal evaluation and implementation of a local curriculum that includes the history and context of the area alongside children, parents and whānau. Limited progress has been made in these areas.

Leaders have introduced a shared approach to internal evaluation but are yet to strengthen the use of questions or evaluative reasoning to identify change or improvement. As a result, insights into what is and is not yet working for children are not realised. The service's curriculum is planned around children's interests and local contexts. Children' and parents' knowledge, ideas and goals for learning are sought. However, these are not yet used to consistently plan for and respond to each child within the curriculum.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

The enacted curriculum has a focus on individual learning and the progress of children.

- There is some visibility of children's languages, cultures and identities through the programme. Aspects of tikanga Māori and some use of te reo Māori is evident in planning and the realised curriculum.
- Children experience child and adult-initiated experiences. There is a focus on children's literacy, mathematical and social competence skills through the experiences and curriculum provided.
- Teachers use the learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum, in planning and assessment processes to identify individual children's learning. Whilst there are some good examples of teacher understandings, the quality of teachers' assessment practices is not yet consistent for all children.

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

Teachers and leaders are increasingly supported to build their knowledge and capability through professional learning, mentorship and inquiries into their practice.

- Teachers access relevant learning that supports their professional growth.
- Leaders are focused on building teacher capability through systems that are both informal and formal. Critical mentorship of teachers is not yet consistently documented.
- Teacher inquiry does result in some changes to practice and a systematic process for internal evaluation has been developed. Scrutiny of data to identify how well improvement actions are supporting children's learning, and to engage in meaningful decision-making, remains an area for improvement.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders use strategic priorities and a shared approach to inquiry across the teaching team to enact priorities for improvement.

- Relational trust between leaders and teachers supports collaboration to achieve the service's priorities for learning.
- The strategic plan reflects the philosophy and vision for the service and is focused on outcomes for children. Leaders regularly monitor the plan and measure the success of implementation against agreed indicators.
- Children's individual needs and transitions to school are promoted by the leader's ongoing participation in the local Kahui Ako (community of learning).

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Leaders use resourcing to reduce children's barriers to learning and promote learner wellbeing.

- Respectful relationships with parents are maintained and leaders work collaboratively with external agencies to support children's learning and wellbeing.
- The long-standing leadership team promotes the retention of qualified teachers.
- Leaders have refined and embedded effective human resource policies, procedures and practice.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Starfish Early Childhood Centre completed and *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?

Starfish Early Childhood Centre will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Build team capability to evidence children's progression of learning.
- Strengthen learning-focused partnerships with parents by consistently responding to their child's languages, cultures and identity and their goals for their children, and showing this through planning and assessment.
- Use a systematic approach to evaluation to focus on children's learning outcomes and scrutinise improvements.

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.*](#)



Patricia Davey
Director of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

14 November 2024

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	48 children aged 2 and over
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 10%; NZ European/Pakeha 60%, South African 8%, Indian 6%, Samoan 4%, Filipino 4%, other ethnic groups 6%
Service roll	48
Review team on site	July 2024
Date of this report	14 November 2024
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, April 2021; Education Review, February 2016

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 organisation 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.