

ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Discovery Junction Styx Mill Ltd

Profile Number: 47690

Location: Casebrook, Christchurch

1 ERO's judgement of Discovery Junction Styx Mill Ltd 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

Discovery Junction Styx Mill Ltd is one of two services under the same ownership. The service philosophy includes the values of manaakitanga, that children lead their own learning, whanaungatanga, that learning focused partnerships underpin wellbeing, and the value of kaitiakitanga, that children take personal responsibility to take care of their world. Children are grouped into three separate areas according to their age and abilities. The purpose-built centre can cater for an additional, fourth room when its roll increases. The service's owner provides overall governance alongside the centre manager. The manager is given autonomy to oversee the curriculum with a team of head teachers. Food is catered for children who attend.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2020 Akanuku | Assurance Review identified three key next steps. These were to increase the use of te reo and te ao Māori, make children's language, culture and identity more visible within assessment, and evaluate the impact of teaching strategies on outcomes for children. Since that time there have been significant changes to the leadership and teaching team. As a result, there has been limited progress in these areas.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

A well-developed planning and assessment system makes evident children's learning using the learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

- Assessment, planning and evaluation of children's learning is individualised and consistently shows children's learning progress. Documentation of children's learning is starting to evidence that parent and whānau voice is sought when designing the curriculum.
- The curriculum is purposefully designed and implemented to reflect the service's learning priorities, children's interests, and *Te Whāriki*. Teachers plan deliberate strategies to support children's learning and provide children with opportunities to learn about the wider world.
- Transitions into within and from the service are well-managed. This enables continuity of learning and responds to each child, their parents and whānau.

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

The service is establishing the conditions to build the teaching and leadership capability of staff.

- A newly implemented professional growth cycle is beginning to support teachers to design the curriculum through planned mentorship and specific action plans. They are beginning to inquire into their practice and take steps to record and share shifts in teaching practice.
- Teachers are starting to share their professional learning in team discussions, and teachers are starting to follow consistent guidelines for practice. Building teachers' cultural knowledge and expertise is ongoing.
- *Te Whāriki* learning outcomes for children are beginning to be considered as a response to professional learning. However, there are inconsistencies in teachers' evaluation of how well teaching strategies have progressed learning.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leadership have developed a collaborative professional environment that enables teachers to work together to implement the service's core values and learning priorities.

- Leaders have implemented a useful system that monitors the quality of assessment and planning practices.
- They provide regular professional feedback that is building relational trust to support teachers' practice.
- Leaders are improvement focused, however there is variable capability and capacity across the teaching teams to do and use effective internal evaluation for improvement.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance and management implement human resource, policies, and procedures that promote the learning and wellbeing of children and their families.

- Organisational conditions related to staffing and the learning environment support quality provision of the curriculum.
- A range of information is used to inform resourcing and service priorities including regular reports from leaders that informs governance on what matters most for learners and their learning.
- Those in governance support community initiatives that promote positive social outcomes.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Discovery Junction Styx Mill Ltd 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?

Discovery Junction Styx Mill Ltd will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Build all teachers cultural knowledge and expertise so that there is greater visibility and more opportunities for children to experience a curriculum that:
 - responds to the languages, cultures, and identity of each child and their whānau
 - is immersed in te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori.
- Grow the team's collective capability to do and use effective internal evaluation. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of teaching strategies and impacts of assessment cycles in supporting children's learning.

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

Lisa Oldridge
Director of Early Childhood Education (Acting)

14 March 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	80 children, including up to 20 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 10%, NZ European/Pākehā 99%, South African 6%, German 3%, Indian 3%, Scottish 3%, Samoan 1%; other ethnic groups 9%
Service roll	69
Review team on site	November 2024
Date of this report	14 March 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akanuku Assurance Review, December 2020

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.