



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Learning Links Te Awamutu

Profile Number: 47589

Location: Te Awamutu

1 ERO's judgement of Learning Links Te Awamutu 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

Learning Links Te Awamutu is one of eight services under the same ownership. One of the co-owners is a certificated teacher and provides governance support alongside another director. The centre manager alongside a mainly stable teaching team supports daily operations. The service provides for children over two years of age in three age-based rooms, with shared outdoor areas. The philosophy is play-based with a focus on supporting children to develop confidence, work creatively and explore with curiosity.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The 2021 Akanuku | Assurance Review was the first ERO review of this service. ERO identified next steps relating to developing the local curriculum and increasing the opportunities children have to hear te reo Māori. Significant progress has been made in both of these areas. As a result, children have regular opportunities to participate in excursions into the community where they make links to people, places, and things related to their emerging learning interests. There is regular and meaningful integration of tikanga Māori practices and te reo Māori, as well as opportunities to visit the nearby high school marae to participate in pōwhiri. Some teachers incorporate pūrakau and use Te Whatu Pōkeka (Māori assessment framework) to guide assessment and planning processes.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children have regular opportunities to learn within a responsive curriculum that positively reflects their interests and supports their development of knowledge and skills.

- Children learn in an environment that supports their social competencies, independence and decision-making through sustained play opportunities alongside others. Intentional teaching practices extend older children's thinking and help younger children to deepen their communication skills.
- Learning-focused partnerships with whānau support the sharing of aspirations and cultural knowledge with teachers that guide curriculum decisions and assessment and planning for children's learning. Intentional teaching practices within planning are not yet evaluated against learning outcomes to determine if they are making a difference for children's learning.
- Children's language development is supported by teachers incorporating sign language into routines. Networked relationships with external agencies support children with additional needs to be included in the curriculum and to participate alongside their peers.

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

Teachers and leaders are continuing to embed collegial processes that contribute to building their professional knowledge and expertise.

- Teachers and leaders actively participate in professional learning as individuals and with colleagues. They have useful systems to share new knowledge with each other to support ongoing growth of the team's capabilities.
- Teachers' reflections as part of a professional growth cycle clearly show that they make improvements to their teaching practices over time. There are some good examples of teachers making clear links with how improved teaching practices have impacted positively for children's learning.
- Parents share, and teachers' document some responses to children's diverse cultures and languages. Teachers are yet to strongly reflect how they respond to diverse cultures in the learning environment, teaching practices and curriculum records.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Leaders positively support teachers to grow their professional practice, and they continue to enable effective team collaboration for improvement.

- High levels of relational trust between leaders and teachers support the ongoing sharing of professional knowledge across the teaching team. This includes teachers having opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of service operations.
- Internal evaluation practices are embedded. There is good evidence to show that evaluation practices result in improvements to teachers' practices and support positive outcomes for children's learning over time.
- Leaders ensure that governance decisions are implemented and well-monitored to support positive changes for children and families.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

Governance effectively implements and monitors systems and practices that inform the organisation's strategic priorities and decision-making.

- Governance implements, monitors and evaluates a range of improvement planning processes across its' eight services. These systems contribute well to ongoing improvements that positively support children's learning.
- Relational trust, positive working conditions, and systematic sharing of practices and processes between governance, leaders and teachers supports collaboration and professional growth. The service's vision, values and philosophy are reviewed in consultation with whānau, with governance ensuring their perspectives are valued and enacted.
- Children enrolled benefit from well-resourced environments, good adult: child ratios and equity strategies that promote inclusion and remove barriers for participation.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Learning Links Te Awamutu 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)

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?

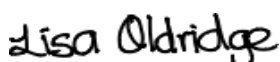
Learning Links Te Awamutu will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Identify intentional teaching strategies and evaluate how well these approaches contribute to children's progress in relation to the learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.
- Increase the extent to which children's diverse cultures and languages are reflected in the learning environment, teaching practices and curriculum records.

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)

22 April 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	70 children, including up to 12 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 20%, NZ European/Pākehā 42%, Fijian 1%, Samoan 1%, other ethnic groups 36%
Service roll	63
Review team on site	November 2024
Date of this report	22 April 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akanuku Assurance Review, May 2021

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.