



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: Steiner Cottage

Profile Number: 60069

Location: Alicetown, Lower Hutt

1 ERO’s judgement of Steiner Cottage 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 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

Steiner Cottage is one of two services governed by the Wellington Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Trust (the Trust). The Trust assumed governance responsibility in 2023. A manager oversees both services. The centre provides education and care for children aged from two to five years. A head teacher leads the curriculum and daily operations.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

The 2021 Akarangi | Quality Evaluation report identified three improvement actions, with similar key next steps identified in the ERO 2018 report. These consist of further developing assessment and planning practices by working more purposefully with parents to identify centre priorities and integrate these into assessment processes; consistently use te reo Māori in everyday practice; and continue to build the capability of leaders and teachers to effectively use internal evaluation that focuses on measurable improvements to outcomes for children.

There is limited progress across all three areas. Teachers reviewed centre priorities and sought parental input, however these priorities are not evident across all aspects of the curriculum. There are currently no clear guidelines to support teachers with assessment, planning and evaluation of children's learning. Internal evaluation on aspects of te ao Māori is evident, alongside external support in extending teachers' use of kupu Māori. However, there is minimal evidence of te reo Māori being spoken within the enacted curriculum.

Some professional learning in internal evaluation has occurred. While collaborative internal evaluation is undertaken in relation to aspects of the curriculum, there is limited understanding of the process and the impact of actions on outcomes for learners.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a curriculum that embodies the Rudolf Steiner philosophy and reflects *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum.

- The curriculum successfully promotes children’s sense of security and developing friendships within a Rudolf Steiner approach of routine and rituals. Assessment of children’s learning is yet to consistently show their progress over time, their home languages, and their parents’ aspirations.
- Daily rhythms, through song and rhyme, effectively encourage children’s calm transitions to free play.
- Relationships are highly valued, and children experience sustained interactions with their teachers and other children.

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

Leaders and teachers continue to build their professional knowledge and cultural competence to design and implement the curriculum.

- Practices to implement a culturally rich curriculum for all children are developing across the teaching team. Leaders and teachers engage in relevant professional learning and development to grow their practice.
- Leaders and teachers participate in a professional growth cycle designed to build their capability. While they actively reflect on aspects of their practice, they are yet to identify the impact of their new learning on improvements to teaching practice and outcomes for learners.
- Ongoing internal evaluation is in place, focussing on aspects of the curriculum and health and safety. The service is in the early stages of developing its understanding of internal evaluation for ongoing improvement.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

The service is establishing the conditions to develop leadership capability to support quality teaching.

- Leaders collaboratively develop and enact the strategic and improvement plans. They are yet to identify the impact of these improvements and actions on service priorities and outcomes for learners.
- Strategies to support seamless transitions into the service and on to school are successfully established for all children.
- Leaders appropriately align resources to support the service’s philosophy and priorities for children’s learning.

The organisation is taking steps to implement policies and procedures to align all aspects of service operations to guide practice.

- Governance and management facilitate collaboration between the service and the wider Rudolf Steiner community to support children's ongoing learning and wellbeing.
- Trustees are well informed about operational matters. It is timely to strengthen reporting about children's progress and learning in relation to service priorities to better support responsive decision-making.
- Increased understanding and monitoring of the licensing criteria is required.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Steiner Cottage 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?

Steiner Cottage will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Use *Te Whāriki* learning outcomes to inform assessment, planning and evaluation guidelines so leaders and teachers can effectively show children's learning and development over time against these learning outcomes.
- Build leaders' and teachers' knowledge and understanding to implement a culturally rich curriculum that responds to all children's languages, cultures and identities.
- Identify and report on the impact of improvement actions on priorities for children's learning and wellbeing.

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)

2 April 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	18 children, aged over 2 years
Percentage of qualified teachers	100%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 7%, NZ European/Pākehā 55%, British 10%, Chinese 10%, other ethnic groups 16%
Service roll	26
Review team on site	December 2024
Date of this report	2 April 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, November 2021; 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.