



ERO Early Childhood Service Akarangi | Quality Evaluation Report

Early Childhood Service Name: The Barnyard

Profile Number: 45414

Location: Te Awamutu

1 ERO's judgement of The Barnyard 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

The Barnyard is a privately owned, purpose-built all-day education and care service, governed by the owner who oversees daily operations and provides curriculum support. There are three areas for different age groups of children, with younger and older children having separate outdoor playgrounds. Each room is led by a team leader, who guides and support the team. Teachers have worked at the service for a long period of time.

4 Progress since the previous ERO report

ERO's 2021 report identified two improvement actions to strengthen assessment, planning, and evaluation with a focus on valued learning outcomes for children, and to increase the range of opportunities children and their families have to share aspects of their culture with others at the service.

Good progress has been made in both of these areas which were prioritised within the service's strategic plan. Service-wide evaluation has been undertaken to grow teachers' knowledge and understanding in using learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum. This has enabled teachers to demonstrate children's learning in assessment information and as part of their professional growth cycle. Children and their families have opportunities to share and engage in significant cultural events. There is some recognition of home languages reflected in assessment documentation.

5 Learning Conditions

The learner and their learning | He Whāriki Motuhake

Children experience a play-based curriculum that supports their ongoing learning and development well and that is reflective of the service's philosophy.

- Intentional and respectful teaching practices support children's social competence, independence, and their individual needs, promoting a sense of belonging. Calm learning environments are strongly grounded in the service's values of caring for the natural environment.
- Parents' goals for their children are gathered and inform intentional planning for children's ongoing learning. Leaders and teachers are working to consistently implement an individual planning process to better reflect children's progression against the valued learning outcomes from *Te Whāriki*.
- Children have opportunities to explore, make choices and extend their interests. Teachers use a good range of intentional teaching strategies to foster children's learning, however there is some inconsistency in use of strategies to promote children's creativity and support transitions between age-group areas across the service.

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

Teachers and leaders engage in relevant professional growth that grows their knowledge and capability to design a curriculum for children aligned to the service's priorities.

- A useful, collaborative professional growth cycle is in place that positively contributes to changes in teachers' thinking and teaching practice and enables them to design and implement a responsive curriculum. The professional growth cycle is well embedded and used well by teachers to grow their teaching practice and respond to specific feedback from leaders that promotes improvement.
- Teachers' improvement goals link closely with current professional learning, service-wide internal evaluation priorities and the service's strategic direction. Leaders and teachers access a range of professional learning opportunities that inform improvements.
- Positive steps are in place for leaders and teachers to grow their cultural competencies and to increasingly incorporate te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into the curriculum.

6 Organisational conditions

Leadership fosters collaboration and improvement | Kaihautū

Collaborative leaders have embedded the conditions for a shared leadership approach across the service.

- Leaders and teachers have high relational trust which enables collaboration that supports improvement. A shared understanding of the service's philosophy is evident in teacher reflections, in team discussion, and in teaching practices.
- A systematic process is in place for internal evaluation that is focused on continuous improvement. It documents changes made and some benefits for children, teachers and whānau.
- Newly appointed team leaders are continuing to build a shared understanding of the purpose and use of evaluation and the impact improvements made have had on children's learning over time.

Stewardship through effective governance and management | Te Whakaruruhau

The service's vision, plans and priorities for improvement for children's learning and wellbeing are prioritised, supporting positive outcomes for children and their whānau.

- The learning and wellbeing of children in the context of whānau relationships are the primary considerations in decision making. Identified priorities for improvement are actioned and resourcing decisions clearly align with the service's philosophy, vision and goals for learning.
- Strategic planning identifies key long-term goals to guide improvement. The owner is taking steps to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of progress towards these goals through regular evaluation practices.
- The owner's participation in external professional development continues to provide support, leadership and knowledge for staff. This has helped facilitate the development and maintenance of useful systems, policies and procedures.

7 Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of The Barnyard 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?

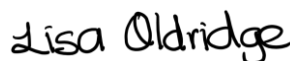
The Barnyard will include the following actions in its quality improvement planning:

- Build leadership capability across the teaching team to undertake and use internal evaluation systems to make ongoing improvements that benefit children's learning.
- For leaders and teachers to build a shared understanding of children's individual planning processes to support consistency of practice across the service.

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)

24 June 2025

9 Information About the Service

Service Type	Education and care service
Number licenced for	75 children, including up to 25 aged under 2
Percentage of qualified teachers	80-99%
Ethnic composition <i>Using rounded percentages</i>	Māori 13%, NZ European/Pākehā 93%, Pacific 4%, other ethnic groups 3%
Service roll	99
Review team on site	April, 2025
Date of this report	24 June 2025
Most recent ERO report (s) These are available at www.ero.govt.nz	Akarangi Quality Evaluation, September 2021; Education Review, May 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.