



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Learning Tree Westgate  
Massey, Auckland**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Learning Tree Westgate

## Massey, Auckland

### 13 November 2018

## 1 Evaluation of Learning Tree Westgate

How well placed is Learning Tree Westgate to promote positive learning outcomes for children?

Not well placed	Requires further development	<b>Well placed</b>	Very well placed
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ERO's findings that support this overall judgement are summarised below.

### Background

Learning Tree Westgate opened in November 2016 and is licensed for 110 children, including 36 up to the age of two years. Small numbers of Māori children and Pacific children attend the service. The centre operates from a purpose-built facility located in the Westgate business area. It is organised into three age-related areas. Each age-related area has two rooms and its own outdoor space.

The centre philosophy advocates respect for children's capabilities and the importance of positive parent, caregiver and whānau partnerships with teachers. It upholds the provision of high quality early childhood education practice, and the bicultural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand. The centre's curriculum is influenced and guided by Pikler, Resources for Infant Educators (RIE) and Reggio Emilia philosophies, and reflects the principles and strands of *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood education curriculum.

The centre director oversees four family owned and operated centres, with another centre due to open in late 2018. The experienced centre manager works closely with the centre director and other centre managers in the organisation to develop policies and implement procedures that are personalised to Learning Tree Westgate.

This is the first ERO report for the centre.

### The Review Findings

Children and families experience trusting relationships with staff. Teachers respond well to parents' requests and their aspirations. These features contribute to children being secure and settled in the centre. Children experience smooth transitions into the centre, between the centre's age-related areas, and from the centre to school.

Older children are supported as capable learners by having ready access to a variety of natural resources, and being able to move freely between indoor and outdoor areas of play. Teachers talk to children about their ideas and respond to children's requests for help and provide extra resources to support their play. Children have good opportunities to solve problems, learn collaboratively, and extend their thinking. The curriculum helps children to be considerate of their environment and others.

Infants and toddlers experience nurturing, calm interactions with their teachers. The learning spaces and resources are well matched to children's different ages and stages of learning. Teachers follow younger children's preferences and cater for their interests and exploration very well.

Teachers skilfully plan for children's emerging interests. They provide opportunities for children to develop skills and knowledge of literacy, mathematics and science in the context of their play. Te ao Māori is reflected well in the programme and environment. Māori children are encouraged to use their culture and identity as part of their learning.

Parents/whānau have access to good information about how the programme caters for their children's individual interests and strengths. Well documented assessment portfolios, planning and assessment folders, and wall displays provide parents with information about their children's progress and about early childhood education principles and practice. Parents/whānau are actively encouraged to contribute to programme planning. They are asked to provide their insights about what they notice about their children's learning. Parents value workshops that support and encourage them to maximise learning opportunities at home with their children.

Teachers have an increasing sense of ownership of their appraisals. They are setting personal goals and identifying ways that they can achieve these. Ongoing professional learning extends teachers' practice and builds on their capabilities. Staff willingly contribute their ideas and talents to achieving positive outcomes for all children. They have opportunities to lead in different areas of the centre's operations.

The centre is well led and governed. The centre director and manager are skilled in change management. They provide teachers with suitable time and resources to think and plan collaboratively about ways to improve outcomes for children. The business and centre directors make employment and resourcing decisions based on what is best for all children. Their holistic view of the child and family influences the way staff work positively with parents. There is a strong focus on meeting parents' aspirations and requirements. Teachers cater for children with additional needs very well.

Internal evaluation is very well understood and is used effectively to inform ongoing improvement. The centre has a very good policy framework and systems that guide its overall operation.

### **Key Next Steps**

ERO endorses the centre's focus on enhancing its very good quality practices. Self-identified next steps for leaders and teachers include:

- enhancing the ways that children are supported by adults to sustain their interests, and extend their thinking and complexity of play
- developing greater confidence and capability in discussing with parents/whānau, how the centre's curriculum caters for children's individual emerging interests and capabilities.

## Management Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the staff and management of Learning Tree Westgate completed an *ERO Centre 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 systems for managing the following areas that have a potentially high impact on children's wellbeing:

- emotional safety (including positive guidance and child protection)
- physical safety (including supervision; sleep procedures; accidents; medication; hygiene; excursion policies and procedures)
- suitable staffing (including qualification levels; police vetting; teacher registration; ratios)
- evacuation procedures and practices for fire and earthquake.

All early childhood services are required to promote children's health and safety and to regularly review their compliance with legal requirements.

## Next ERO Review

### When is ERO likely to review the service again?

The next ERO review of Learning Tree Westgate will be in three years.



Violet Tu'uga Stevenson  
Director Review and Improvement Services  
Te Tai Raki - Northern Region

13 November 2018

## **The Purpose of ERO Reports**

The Education Review Office (ERO) is the government department that, as part of its work, reviews early childhood services throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. ERO's reports provide information for parents and communities about each service's strengths and next steps for development. ERO's bicultural evaluation framework Ngā Pou Here is described in [SECTION 3](#) of this report. Early childhood services are partners in the review process and are expected to make use of the review findings to enhance children's wellbeing and learning.

## 2 Information about the Early Childhood Service

Location	Massey, Auckland		
Ministry of Education profile number	47081		
Licence type	Education & Care Service		
Licensed under	Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008		
Number licensed for	110 children, including up to 36 aged under 2		
Service roll	128		
Gender composition	Boys 70 Girls 58		
Ethnic composition	Māori	54%	
	Pākehā	10%	
	Chinese	9%	
	Indian	7%	
	Korean	4%	
	other Pacific	5%	
	other ethnic groups	12%	
Percentage of qualified teachers	80% +		
Reported ratios of staff to children	Under 2	1:5	Meets minimum requirements
	Over 2	1:10	Meets minimum requirements
Review team on site	October 2018		
Date of this report	13 November 2018		
Most recent ERO report(s)	No previous ERO reports		

### 3 General Information about Early Childhood Reviews

#### ERO's Evaluation Framework

ERO's overarching question for an early childhood education review is 'How well placed is this service to promote positive learning outcomes for children?' ERO focuses on the following factors as described in the bicultural framework [Ngā Pou Here](#):

*Pou Whakahaere* – how the service determines its vision, philosophy and direction to ensure positive outcomes for children

*Pou Ārahi* – how leadership is enacted to enhance positive outcomes for children

*Mātauranga* – whose knowledge is valued and how the curriculum is designed to achieve positive outcomes for children

*Tikanga whakaako* – how approaches to teaching and learning respond to diversity and support positive outcomes for children.

Within these areas ERO considers the effectiveness of *arotake* – self review and of *whanaungatanga* – partnerships with parents and whānau.

ERO evaluates how well placed a service is to sustain good practice and make ongoing improvements for the benefit of all children at the service.

A focus for the government is that all children, especially priority learners, have an opportunity to benefit from quality early childhood education. ERO will report on how well each service promotes positive outcomes for all children, with a focus on children who are Māori, Pacific, have diverse needs, and are up to the age of two.

For more information about the framework and Ngā Pou Here refer to [ERO's Approach to Review in Early Childhood Services](#).

#### ERO's Overall Judgement and Next Review

The overall judgement that ERO makes and the timing of the next review will depend on how well placed a service is to promote positive learning outcomes for children. The categories are:

- Very well placed – The next ERO review in four years
- Well placed – The next ERO review in three years
- Requires further development – The next ERO review within two years
- Not well placed - The next ERO review in consultation with the Ministry of Education

ERO has developed criteria for each category. These are available on [ERO's website](#).

#### Review Coverage

ERO reviews are tailored to each service's context and performance, within the overarching review framework. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to positive outcomes for children and useful to the service.