

ERO External Evaluation

Waitati School, Waitati, Dunedin

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for students. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

School Context

Waitati School is a full primary located in a coastal community on the outskirts of Dunedin. It has a current roll of 76 students, 17% of whom are Māori. There has been an increase in the roll since the 2014 ERO review.

The school's overarching vision states that 'Our whānau will be engaged participants who enjoy learning and want to come to school'. This vision is underpinned by the values of manaakitanga (care and respect), turangawaewae (a sense of connectedness), rangatiratanga (developing leadership) and kotahitanga (a sense of unity). The strategic aims of the school relate to the mission statement which is 'Light the mind, Fire the heart, Engage the whānau'.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to the school's achievement expectations
- achievement in other learning areas
- progress for targeted students
- progress towards the strategic goals.

Since the 2014 ERO review, the school has appointed a new principal and several staff members. The board has several new trustees.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school is effectively achieving positive outcomes for most students in reading and mathematics and the majority of students in writing. The school's data over the last three years shows some disparity for boys in reading and writing.

In 2017 and 2018 Māori student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics was proportionally greater than achievement for non-Māori students. This was also the case in 2016 in reading and writing. The school's data in 2018 shows an upward trend in reading, writing and mathematics. Students with additional needs are well supported through targeted planning and a collaborative approach to promoting success.

1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

Most Māori students are achieving at or above the school's expectations in reading and mathematics and the majority in writing. In 2017 some Māori students were part of an accelerated progress group for mathematics. The students made significant progress.

In 2017, nine of twelve targeted students made accelerated progress. The 2018 data shows accelerating the progress of targeted students in writing has been less successful.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Students benefit from the strong, supportive relationships at all levels. They participate and learn in a caring, collaborative, inclusive environment. Students told ERO that the school is accepting of difference and that diversity is valued.

Students experience a broad, rich curriculum. Expertise and resources within the local community are used well to enhance students' learning. There is a strong acknowledgement and inclusion of the Māori dimension across all learning areas. This is clearly evident in the environment, the values, tikanga and connectedness with the local marae. In each learning area students engage in purposeful learning opportunities that relate to real-life contexts, issues and experiences. This includes participating in a highly successful school-wide environmental care programme. Students are increasingly able to work independently, manage themselves and make decisions about their learning.

Parents, whānau and the community are welcomed and actively involved in school activities. They are respected and valued partners in learning, promoting learning and wellbeing. Learning experiences for students are enriched by this partnership.

The principal is a capable professional leader. She:

- builds relational trust at all levels
- seeks out the perspectives and aspirations of students, parents and whānau
- involves students, parents and whānau in the development of an environment and a curriculum that supports students' learning and wellbeing
- supports teachers to engage in collective inquiry to improve teaching practice and raise the achievement of specific students who need extra help to succeed.

A robust teacher appraisal system helps teachers grow their professional practice. Teachers feel confident to critique each other's practice, take risks and grow professionally. The focus on having students take responsibility for their own learning is well supported through teachers' professional development.

The focus of the board is to prioritise student achievement, wellbeing and positive outcomes for all. It works with the school community to develop the school's vision, values and strategic direction. Student and parent voice is actively sought and influences decision making.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

The school and ERO agree that there is a need to:

- continue to develop guidelines to support curriculum delivery
- strengthen understanding and implementation of internal-evaluation processes at all levels
- include all students achieving below school expectations in reports on progress to the board throughout the year, with an associated comprehensive analysis and interpretation
- ensure strategic planning reflects current priorities.

3 Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board and principal of the school completed the ERO board assurance statement and self-audit checklists. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legislative obligations related to the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- finance
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student safety and wellbeing:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students

- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in the:

- caring, supportive relationships that exist at all levels of the school and community
- provision of a broad, rich curriculum that draws on the strengths of the community
- strong acknowledgement and inclusion of a Māori dimension in all aspects of the school
- collaborative working relationships at all levels.

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in:

- further developing the curriculum guidelines
- strengthening the implementation of internal evaluation
- expanding the scope of reports to the BOT to include all students who need to make accelerated progress and provide an explanation of the data
- ensuring the strategic plan reflects the current priorities of the school.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

ERO is likely to carry out the next external evaluation in three years.



Alan Wynyard
Director Review and Improvement Services Southern
Southern Region

5 March 2019

About the school

Location	Waitati, Dunedin
Ministry of Education profile number	3857
School type	Full primary (Years 1-8)
School roll	76
Gender composition	Boys: 38 Girls: 38
Ethnic composition	Māori: 13 Pākehā: 59 Other ethnicities: 4
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	December 2018
Date of this report	5 March 2019
Most recent ERO reports	September 2014 June 2011 May 2009