

Waikanae School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Waikanae	
Ministry of Education profile number	3056	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
Decile [1]	8	
School roll	500	
Gender composition	Boys 52% Girls 48%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 71% Māori 11% Asian 5% Pacific 5% Other ethnic groups 8%	
Review team on site	July 2011	
Date of this report	30 September 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	December 2008 February 2006 May 2003

The Purpose of an ERO Report

The purpose of ERO's reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. ERO's reports are intended to be clear, concise, constructive and evaluative. An ERO school report answers the question "How effectively is this school's curriculum promoting student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?" Under that overarching question ERO reports on the quality of education and learning outcomes for children and for specific groups of children including Māori students, Pacific students and students with special needs. ERO also reports on the quality of the school's systems for sustaining and continuing improvements.

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

[1]

School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides

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1 Context

What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?

Waikanae School has a changing demographic pattern. The board and senior managers have responded by introducing a range of initiatives to support the changing student population. These include gender specific classes and targeted support for a number of recently enrolled English language learners. The growing roll has resulted in increased staffing and property development. All initiatives have enhanced student inclusion and learning.

A supportive culture is evident with students acknowledging and celebrating each other's successes. Leadership opportunities are provided and students are encouraged to take advantage of these. Students stated they feel safe in the learning environment and this is supported by the results of a recent independent survey.

The indoor and outdoor environment has been carefully developed over the years and both provide good support for learning. The school is well resourced and has a refurbished and well-used library. Students are conscious of their environment and the 'ecowarriors' make valuable contributions to the school and local community.

Parents/whānau are involved in the school through a range of community activities. The school website is particularly informative, including providing specific achievement information for parents.

2 Learning

How well are students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Students are engaged and achieving learners. The positive interactions among students, and between the students and teachers, combined with well-established routines and a clear focus on learning, promote engagement.

Student achievement information relating to a range of tests and National Standards shows that overall literacy levels are high, with students' reading levels generally above national expectations. Achievement information on writing has been well used to improve attitude and skills. Subsequent evaluations indicate that students have made good progress as a result.

While school-wide achievement in mathematics is at or above national norms, it is clear that performance levels are not as high as those in reading and writing. However, the school management has identified this as an area to further develop and has set targets and strategies to lift student performance in mathematics.

Teachers have a sound basis on which to make their student achievement judgements in relation to the National Standards. They monitor student achievement by using nationally normed tools and moderate their judgements within and across syndicates and, for writing, across the whole school.

Most students are achieving above national expectations in literacy and mathematics/numeracy. The next challenge for the staff is to increase the number and proportion of students achieving well above. Those not achieving at the expected level are identified and a number of effective strategies have been implemented to support them.

Individual student achievements are used to provide yearly cohort information but are yet to be analysed in a manner that will enable the school to evaluate students' progress over time. This is an area for development.

Anecdotally, students achieve and make sound progress in the wider curriculum areas, but there is little formal school-wide assessment information to confirm this belief.

How well are Māori students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Overall, Māori students are achieving at or above national norms commensurate with the whole school population, and in some individual assessments above their non-Māori peers.

There is an appropriate focus on raising cultural awareness within the school. An area for continued development is sharing of responsibility amongst all staff to integrate aspects of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori into teaching and learning.

The whānau support group is an effective means of community consultation. The group has identified four goals, linked to Ka Hikitia. Promoting the key values arising from this approach more visibly in school documents such as the strategic plan should better support the aim of Māori students achieving as Māori.

3 Curriculum

How effectively does this school's curriculum promote and support student learning?

The ERO review of December 2008 identified that the school needed to develop a robust and cohesive approach to curriculum self review. Progress has been made since that report. Considerable consultation and consideration has been given to The New Zealand Curriculum values, principles, and key competencies and senior staff acknowledge that there is still development needed to improve understanding and implementation in this area.

While most of the curriculum framework is complete a more structured approach and continued refinement are required. Literacy and mathematics have been reviewed and sound planning, assessment and reporting are evident. Technology and health have also been reviewed. The next step is to review science and the arts. The teaching and learning of science has not been reviewed for many years. Consideration should now be given as to how a quality science programme is implemented and documented across all classrooms and year levels.

Although there was some variability in the quality of teaching observed by ERO, in most classes teachers establish a clear sense of purpose, with routines in place and a culture of learning in operation. The classrooms are inviting and student work is displayed and celebrated. Teachers demonstrate good use of questioning and provide informative oral feedback to students. A further development is to improve the quality of written feedback on student work samples so as to improve students' understanding of their next steps.

The teacher performance appraisal system has been modified to provide better support for staff and more appropriately assess teacher performance. Implementation needs further refinement, by documenting agreed, robust performance and developmental goals.

Since 2008 the role of the special education needs coordinator (SENCO) has been better defined. Considerable progress has been made in identifying students at risk of not achieving, monitoring their progress and reporting to the board. The school managers recognise that further development is required, particularly in relation to monitoring and reporting.

Students, identified as gifted and talented, have opportunities for extension through specially provided programmes. The school recognises a range of attributes when applying gifted and talented criteria and is continuing to refine identification processes.

Teachers have undertaken professional development to raise their awareness of the needs of students who do not have English as their first language. This has resulted in effective

planning and assessment, making links with the Kiribati community and developing resources. An evaluation plan to assess the impact of the interventions is based on entry and exit data.

Overall, students are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities both within and outside the classroom. A recent arts evening for the community showcased student learning and skills. Education outside the classroom has a learning focus and covers physical and cultural dimensions.

4 Sustainable Performance

How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance?

A comprehensive charter has been developed by the board. It includes a considerable number of targets linked to student achievement in relation to the National Standards. In the charter forwarded to the Ministry of Education in late June 2011, the targets in relation to National Standards had been deleted. This does not meet the legislated requirement.

The principal's performance agreement was not developed for 2010 and by July 2011, an agreement had not been established for that year. This has since been addressed. Aligning this agreement with the school's annual plan should be maintained.

Trustees have a range of skills and experiences that contribute to sound governance. The board has initiated some elements of self review related to policies and areas for development identified in ERO's 2008 report. It has approved a new management structure as a result of staff changes and a desire to improve consistency across the syndicates, and to provide more leadership opportunities in middle management. It is expected the board will monitor the impact of this development as part of its review process. Next steps for the trustees are to seek training in developing a model for undertaking strategic self review.

The principal regularly provides the board with analysed student achievement information. He reports student attendance, but this information is not analysed to identify any patterns. Informative reports are received on many school activities and initiatives such as the special needs and gifted programme, progress in meeting charter targets, and curriculum areas such as literacy, mathematics and health.

The school has a close relationship with its community. Members participate, volunteer and are actively involved in school activities and celebrations. Newsletters are informative and are distributed to the wider community through the school's website. The board regularly consults with parents/whānau on various topics using a range of useful strategies resulting in high levels of community engagement.

Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of the school completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legislative obligations related to:

- board administration
- curriculum

- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- financial management
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

The board should address the following area of non-compliance.

- As from the beginning of 2011 all boards are required to set ambitious but realistic targets in relation to National Standards in their charters. The board at Waikanae School has publicly stated that it resolved to continue to defer the setting of achievement targets based on National Standards because of its concerns about one aspect of the National Standards, Section 2.C.1. The board must submit the strategic plan which documents how they are giving effect to the National Education Guidelines through National Standards to the Ministry of Education.

Source: [National Administration Guideline 2(a)]

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

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30 September 2011