



ERO External Evaluation

Otamarakau School, Te Puke

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

Otamarakau School is a small rural school south east of Te Puke catering for Years 1 to 8 students. The school roll of 78, including 37 students who identify as Māori, has increased since the 2016 ERO evaluation. Its vision statement, 'a country school with a view to the future', encourages 'creative thinking and high expectations'. The school's graduate profile and values relate to awesome, respect, ownership, honesty, and active learners.

Since ERO's 2016 evaluation there has been significant changes of staff, a new principal has been appointed, and the majority of the board are new. Trustees have undertaken training related to their roles. Professional learning and development for leaders and teachers has included cultural responsiveness, play-based learning, and writing. The school is participating in the Positive Behaviour for Learning initiative.

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

- reading, writing mathematics.

Otamarakau School is part of the Te Puke Kahui Ako.

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 working towards equity and excellence. Student achievement data for 2018 shows that most students achieved at or above expected levels for reading and the majority of students for writing, and mathematics. Māori students are achieving better than other students in reading and similar for writing and mathematics. Student achievement information from 2016 to 2018 shows consistent results for all groups of learners in reading, and a decrease in achievement in writing and

mathematics. In 2018 ERO was unable to accurately ascertain student achievement levels for gender cohort.

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

The school is working towards accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need it. Leaders and teachers monitor and track individual data to show rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They are able to show accelerated progress for many targeted students including Māori.

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?

The school is providing a broad curriculum with an appropriate focus on reading, writing and mathematics. A range of culturally responsive practices foster Māori students' language, culture and identity. Students have a range of leadership opportunities across the school and tuakana-teina relationships are evident in multi-level classes. Learners relate well to meaningful contexts and are engaged in a variety of academic, cultural, sporting and education outside the classroom learning experiences.

The teaching team work effectively to assist students to be actively engaged in their learning. Teachers know students and whānau well and plan appropriate programmes to accelerate student learning. They are involved in ongoing purposeful reflections and relevant professional discussions related to effective teaching strategies. ERO observed te reo and tikanga Māori effectively embedded in classroom programmes. Te ao Māori is integrated into learning and teaching in ways that affirm the identity and culture of Maori learners and whānau.

Leaders and the board are working collaboratively and effectively to provide an environment that promotes student learning and wellbeing. Leaders are establishing a cohesive teaching team who prioritise student learning and achievement with a focus on the acceleration of priority students. They provide opportunity for relevant professional development to build teacher capability.

Staff continue to maintain a welcoming, family-like learning environment. Parents/whānau, spoken to by ERO, value the approachability of staff, and feel well informed about their children's progress and achievement. The SENCO, (special education needs coordinator), actively engages with whānau, specialist support agencies and external experts to provide wrap-around pastoral and learning support for those students who need it. Students learn in an inclusive environment where diversity and difference are valued.

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

ERO and the school agree that further priorities are to:

- formalise a localised curriculum that reflects the principles of the *New Zealand Curriculum*
- review the school charter including annual targets focused on accelerating the achievement of all at-risk students in reading, writing and mathematics
- build teacher capabilities to ensure students are able to articulate their progress, celebrate achievement and identify next learning steps.

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 Children's Act 2014.

4 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Otamarakau School's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

ERO's Framework: [Overall Findings and Judgement Tool derived from School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success](#) is available on ERO's website.

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- leadership and trustees working together to provide an environment that promotes student learning and wellbeing
- culturally responsive practices that foster Māori students' language, culture and identity
- an inclusive environment that values diversity and difference.

Next steps

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

- formalising a localised curriculum to reflect school priorities
- reviewing the school charter including annual targets to focus on accelerating the achievement of all at-risk students
- building students' assessment and 'learning to learn' capabilities to foster independent learning.



Phillip Cowie
Director Review and Improvement Services
Central Region

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About the school

Location	Te Puke
Ministry of Education profile number	1872
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)
School roll	78 students
Gender composition	Male 43 Female 35
Ethnic composition	Māori 37 NZ European/Pākehā 36 Other 5
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	No
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	October 2019
Date of this report	10 December 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review May 2016 Education Review September 2013 Education Review November 2007