

Alfredton School
Eketahuna

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

Alfredton School

1 Context

Alfredton School is a small rural school in northern Wairarapa. Students from Years 1 to 8 attend from the local farming community. The school roll has shown a steady increase over the past five years. Currently there are 62 students, with 15 who identify as Māori. A new teacher has been appointed since the August 2013 ERO review.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are to 'grow students to be confident, broad-minded, innovative learners who are community oriented and culturally aware'. The school has developed a new vision statement after a well-considered process of consultation with the community. It connects to the established vision 'Inspiring learning for a lifetime - growing little acorns into MIGHTY oaks', associated with the heritage trees onsite. The board of trustees is focused on promoting equitable outcomes for all learners.

Achievement information shows that most students achieve well in relation to National Standards. The school recognises that Māori students continue to be over-represented in the group of learners who are at risk of not achieving in relation to the National Standards. Steps taken to address this disparity have been strengthened in 2016.

The school continues to consolidate its practices in making reliable and robust overall teacher judgements about student achievement in relation to the National Standards. This occurs through teacher discussion and internal moderation by the principal. Systems have been introduced to improve the quality of evidence used for these judgements. Further opportunities for moderation, including the use of external moderation, should continue to support consistency and reliability.

Since the last ERO evaluation the school has worked to address areas identified for improvement in the ERO report. Self review has been strengthened and 'initiative reporting' has been introduced to help trustees monitor progress towards strategic goals. This provides useful information about the success of actions taken. There has been wide-ranging consultation with community about the curriculum and to develop the charter. Assessment practice has been developed to better inform teaching and planning. The school has participated in the Accelerating Achievement in Mathematics project (ALIM) and is currently participating in mathematics professional learning and development (PLD) supported by an external provider.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

A new initiative has been developed in response to a recognised lack of effectiveness in promoting progress for Māori students, along with other students, at risk in their learning. This builds on the success of ALIM strategies and is successfully promoting progress and accelerating learning of identified 'focus students'. Positive aspects include teachers:

- knowing more about the needs of the students who require acceleration
- working with parents to develop understanding of learners' strengths, interests and needs
- collaboratively establishing goals with families
- developing deliberate actions and strategies to respond to identified needs
- regularly meeting to discuss students' progress and share successful strategies
- closely monitoring students' progress.

Trustees are focused on improving the school's responsiveness to Māori students and their families, to raise students' pride in their language, culture and identities. They demonstrate a respectful approach to broadening their understanding of the aspirations held by the Māori community for students' learning. Aspects of school practice have been strengthened in response to input from whānau Māori. These include opportunities for students to participate regularly in kapahaka, weekly te reo Māori sessions for students and teachers, and promoting learning partnerships with families.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?

There has been a considered approach to building a shared vision for equity and excellence. Decision-making and direction-setting are planned, systematic and inclusive of a wide range of perspectives. A strategic approach to implementing developments and monitoring the effectiveness of actions supports ongoing improvement.

The board demonstrates commitment to addressing disparity and promoting improvement. Trustees are respectful of their community, staff and students, and recognise the importance of effective communication and evaluation. They respond to information gathered to make evidence-based decisions. Regular reports to the board ensure they are well informed about school developments and progress in relation to established priorities. Continuing to refine data analysis and reporting for identified groups of learners should assist in further promoting accelerated achievement.

The principal shows good understanding of internal evaluation and builds the evaluative capability of teachers and trustees. She values staff and fosters relational trust.

The curriculum is reviewed for relevance and effectiveness. Recent consultation with families and students has resulted in well-considered changes to documents and teaching and learning practices. Regular, useful curriculum reports contribute to the evaluation of developments and provide some useful next steps for improvement. Currently the mathematics curriculum is being reviewed to ensure learning is meaningful and integrated to promote student engagement and success. Further alignment and clarity regarding expectations for teachers' cultural responsiveness, and provision for Māori learners and success as Māori, are next steps.

Student achievement data is well analysed to support evaluation and decision-making. Teachers are using student achievement data more purposefully. A new system for managing student achievement information helps them to share and monitor students' learning progress. Regular meetings about target students provide a forum for strengthening teacher judgments. Reports to parents provide useful information about achievement and progress.

Students are well supported to participate confidently in the classroom. Deliberate actions support students at risk in their learning. Teachers help students to work collaboratively and self-manage their learning. They respond positively to students' contributions and give time and support to explore their ideas. A range of tools support students to understand and talk about their learning.

Teachers demonstrate positive working relationships and share and adapt their practices. They are developing the ability to inquire into strategies that are effective in accelerating students' progress, and strengthening an evidence-based approach to planning for teaching and learning. Their development is supported by a useful appraisal process.

Teachers value, and are respectful of, students and their families. They are building their understanding and use of strategies to promote parents' and families' roles in the learning process.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

There is clear alignment of school processes around a shared vision for improvement. Staff and trustees are developing an evaluative approach to enacting priorities. Continuing to develop and embed effective assessment and responsive teaching practices, which support Māori learners and students at risk in their learning, should sustain and promote improvement.

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

6 Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review the board of trustees 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
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014

7 Recommendation

The school should continue to focus on improving equitable outcomes for all students through targeted teaching and inquiry, development of learning partnerships with families and promotion of students' language, culture and identities. Embedding systems for evaluation and improvement is a next step.



Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

28 August 2016

About the school

Location	Eketahuna	
Ministry of Education profile number	2801	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	62	
Gender composition	Female 38, Male 24	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	45
	Māori	15
	Asian	2
Review team on site	June 2016	
Date of this report	28 August 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2013
	Education Review	August 2010
	Education Review	June 2007