

Otahuhu Intermediate
Otahuhu, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report:
Arotake Paerewa

Kumāa te paetawhiti kia tata
Whakamaua te paerewa kia tīna
Tukuna te pahiranga kia topa!

Education Review Report: Arotake Paerewa Otahuhu Intermediate

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. 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.

Findings

1 Context

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

Otahuhu Intermediate School in Auckland provides students with opportunities to experience and celebrate the school's many cultures. The roll is made up of largely Tongan, Indian and Samoan students. Many of the students have home languages other than English. Māori students comprise twelve percent of the school roll. A whare learning space and murals acknowledge New Zealand's dual cultural heritage.

The school continues to demonstrate some of the strengths identified previously by ERO. These strengths include some well established pastoral care systems and good opportunities for students to lead and succeed in performing arts, cultural and sporting activities. The awards system promotes good citizenship and students continue to strive to achieve the honours badges awarded to those who display excellence in all facets of school life. Students generally speak positively about their school and its special attributes.

Besides school strengths, the 2009 ERO report also outlined significant areas for improvement. There was a need for teachers to more consistently respond to the professional development they had received over the years. More robust performance management systems were required to help raise the standard of teaching and address the low levels of student academic progress and achievement. The leadership team is working with Ministry of Education personnel and others to raise staff performance and provide the quality of education to which students are entitled.

2 Learning

How well does this school use achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement?

The school is beginning to make better use of student achievement information. School leaders and teachers are collecting more reliable information, and are regularly collating and reviewing this data at class, syndicate and school-wide levels. Teachers share assessment information more often with students, helping them to establish goals for their learning. Teachers have a growing awareness of how to form overall teacher judgements in relation to the National Standards, although much more work is required in this area. Reports to parents about how well their children are achieving in relation to National Standards do not yet meet Ministry of Education requirements.

School data continues to confirm that a large number of students, including those who are Māori or Pacific, achieve below or well below age-related expectations. This year senior managers set targets aimed at raising the performance levels of groups of students. These targets are an improvement on previous school-wide ones, but still encompass large numbers of students. Even more specificity in targets should help teachers to focus on the most at-risk learners. It could encourage teachers to teach more directly to students' strengths and next learning steps.

The deputy principal uses achievement information well to identify students who would benefit from additional learning support. Withdrawal lessons provide smaller group learning opportunities for some of these students and for students new to speaking English. Teacher aides support selected learners in classrooms. A volunteer reading programme provides an additional resource for selected students and their families. The school has limited data it can use to evaluate the effectiveness of its special programme interventions.

Student engagement in learning is variable throughout the school. In some classes students are keen to learn and to practice new skills. In other classes they appear disaffected and unmotivated. Students are not completing work, which lessens their connection and engagement with it. Although teachers know more about student learning levels, too many are still not teaching to the actual needs of students. Students lack the equipment, resources and opportunities they require to be purposefully engaged at break times, and student stand-down numbers are high.

3 Curriculum

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

Aspects of the school's curriculum have improved over the past three years. Timetables have been adjusted to highlight literacy and numeracy teaching. Studies that answer questions posed by students help provide a more integrated and relevant curriculum. Trips, camps and a high quality food technology programme are popular motivators for student learning. The school has effectively sustained its long-time focus on science teaching. Classroom learning environments are more welcoming and now display learning support materials and students' work. Teachers new to the profession are receiving support to help them succeed in their first years of teaching.

More action is now needed to ensure that the curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning and achievement. The curriculum does not yet adequately cover all areas of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and has yet to be reviewed against the principles, values and key competencies of that curriculum. Teachers have not been provided with clear expectations for teaching practice. Quality assurance processes are not resulting in enough learning programmes that are of a high standard. Teachers' overuse of activity worksheets reduces opportunities for students to undertake more challenging and age-appropriate work.

How effectively does the school promote educational success for Māori, as Māori?

The school has taken some steps to promote educational success for Māori, as Māori. Tikanga Māori is respected and has a place within the school. Māori students have opportunities to provide leadership during school protocols and through the haka waiata programme. Initiatives aimed at strengthening the self and group identity of Māori students and the home and school partnerships with whānau are underway. Some teachers successfully integrate Māori interests, resources, language and culture into their teaching programmes. This level of integration could be adopted by more teachers.

Despite the steps taken, the school is not effectively promoting educational success for Māori. This will not happen until all teaching and learning programmes are of an acceptable standard.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is not well placed to sustain and improve its performance. The school is only just beginning to develop the self-review processes and evaluative culture that are needed to focus on improvement. It requires stronger and more effective leadership, governance and management.

Trustees have willingly supported the school and have some good governance practices in place. They have worked well with the principal through refurbishments and repairs to school buildings. The board has not, however, managed to retain responsibility for setting and monitoring school policy. It has not always been involved in setting the school's strategic direction. The board will require substantial and intense support if it is to undertake the task ahead of it.

The board has not had a signed performance agreement with the principal since 2009 and no principal or deputy principal appraisals have been undertaken since that time. Teacher appraisal processes are just now being strengthened. The principal is aware of issues surrounding staff performance but requires support to manage these issues.

A newly-formed, extended, senior management team has been working with personnel from the Ministry of Education to strengthen school leadership. The team has undertaken some valuable professional development and has made some progress in improving school operations. Through this work, school leaders have begun to recognise the extent and urgency of the actions required. Although some important progress has been made, the needs of the school are great and stronger school leadership is needed to facilitate real and effective school improvement.

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:

- 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 student achievement:

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

During the course of the review ERO identified these areas of non-compliance:

- the board of trustees, through the principal and teaching staff should report to students and their parents on the student's progress and achievement in relation to National Standards. Written reports, in plain language, should be provided at least twice a year
[National Administration Guideline 2 (A)]
- the principal should ensure that all students have opportunities to achieve success in all areas of the National Curriculum
[National Administration Guideline 1(a)]
- the board should develop and implement personnel and industrial policies which promote high levels of student performance, use educational resources effectively and recognise the needs of students. It should ensure annual appraisals of the senior managers based on the professional standards are undertaken
[National Administration Guidelines 3(a)(b) and 4; State Sector Act 1997 S77c]
- the board should ensure improved hazard identification and minimisation procedures are undertaken. It should close off the adventure playground until sufficient safe-fall is in place
[National Administrative Guideline 5(a) and (c)].

Recommendations to other agencies

ERO recommends that the Secretary for Education considers intervention under Part 7A of the Education Act 1989 in order to bring about the following improvements:

- stronger and more effective school professional leadership and management
- stronger and more effective school governance
- stronger and more effective performance management of all staff.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

ERO intends to carry out another review over the course of one-to-two years.



Dale Bailey
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

31 January 2013

About the School

Location	Otahuhu, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1408	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
School roll	326	
Gender composition	Girls 55% Boys 45%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	12%
	NZ European/Pākehā	3%
	Tongan	25%
	Indian	20%
	Samoan	19%
	Cook Island Māori	9%
	Niue	3%
	others	9%
Special Features	Social Worker in Schools (SWIS)	
Review team on site	November 2012	
Date of this report	31 January 2013	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	November 2009
	Education Review	December 2006
	Education Review	December 2003