

ERO External Evaluation

Valley School, Pukekohe

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

Valley School is located in Pukekohe. It provides education for students from Years 1 to 6. The current roll is 524 including 50 students who identify as Māori. The Māori roll has decreased over time. The leadership team continue in their roles supported by a new board of trustees elected since the last ERO review in 2015. The school hosts a satellite class from Parkside School catering for a small number of students with high and complex needs.

The school vision states that they develop students who know what they are learning, include everyone, discover their individuality and strive to succeed. The school values are courage, loyalty, honour and endurance.

The school's stated strategic aims are:

- all students making accelerated progress against New Zealand Curriculum expectations
- teaching and assessment that reflects best practice to inform and make positive changes to teaching and learning programmes
- engaging Māori children and their whānau in learning to achieve educational success as Māori through a curriculum that recognises the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
- parents, caregivers and whānau empowered to support their child's learning through effective engagement and communication.

Teachers have undertaken professional learning and development in improving digital fluency alongside inquiry learning, literacy, mathematics and oral language.

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

- reading, writing and mathematics
- attendance.

Trustees and leaders have responded positively to the 2015 ERO review.

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 achieving equitable outcomes between gender groups, but there is significant disparity between Māori and their Pākehā peers. Achievement information shows most students are achieving at or above curriculum expectations in reading and writing and a large majority in mathematics. Achievement in all three areas has continued to improve over time.

The majority of Māori students achieve well in relation to curriculum expectations for reading, writing and mathematics. However, there is significant ongoing disparity in reading, writing and mathematics for Māori as compared to other groups. Girls are achieving at higher levels than boys in reading and writing. This disparity is reducing over time. Girls and boys are achieving at comparable levels in mathematics. Students with identified learning needs are well-monitored and are making progress against their individual learning goals.

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

The school is effectively accelerating the progress of most groups of learners who need it.

Achievement information shows:

- effective acceleration for students who are underachieving in reading and mathematics, including Māori
- strategies to accelerate learners in writing were less effective for Māori than non-Māori learners
- the school's success in accelerating progress is contributing to a reduction in the achievement gap between boys and girls in reading, writing and mathematics.

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?

Leadership has successfully built teacher capability to accelerate the progress of those students who are underachieving. Collaborative and targeted professional learning and development is growing teacher practice in a well-established culture for learning. Expectations for quality teaching and learning have been developed. These provide a strong foundation for building consistency of practice school wide.

Reciprocal relationships between home and school support learning and progress. The school actively seeks the aspirations and the involvement of parents and whānau in the life of the school. As a result there is a strong sense of belonging for students and their families.

A well-considered approach to an integrated curriculum is contributing to positive outcomes for learners. Students are well engaged and confidently share their learning activities. Strong respectful relationships reflect that teachers know their students well. Achievement information is used well to plan programmes and interventions focused on accelerating at-risk learners in reading and mathematics.

Inclusive practices for children with additional needs are evident. Leaders and teachers work collaboratively alongside parents and whānau as well as external agencies to plan and implement programmes for students. The school proactively seeks professional learning and development to support teachers to support learners with additional needs. There is a well-considered approach for planning for learners with additional needs to ensure equitable opportunities to learn, progress and achieve over time.

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

The leaders and trustees now need to:

- refine achievement targets to enhance the focus on those students who are at risk of not achieving at expected levels.

This should:

- increase the alignment and focus on accelerating learning for all those who need it
- support more responsive reporting to the board on the progress and achievement of these students.

Implement and embed the learning progressions that have been developed in the school, so that all students know, understand and can articulate their learning journey. This should enhance the responsive planning and delivery of the integrated curriculum. This is particularly important for students whose progress needs acceleration.

Extend the te ao Māori programme throughout the curriculum and daily practice.

This should:

- strengthen teacher's confidence and competence in te reo and tikanga Māori
- build teacher's knowledge and understanding of effective pedagogy for accelerating Māori learners' progress and achievement to enhance equitable outcomes.

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.

Actions for compliance

ERO identified non-compliance in relation to police vetting and workforce safety checking.

In order to address this, the board of trustees must:

1. Ensure the regular police vetting of employees.
[Education Act 1989 Sections 78c to 78cd]

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- a strategic approach that effectively builds teacher capability to accelerate learning
- responsive relationships that support effective partnerships for learning
- curriculum design that is contributing to success for learners.

Next steps

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

- alignment of target setting for students whose learning requires acceleration
- teaching practices that promote student ownership of the learning journey
- an approach to teaching and learning that supports culturally responsive pedagogy.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



Phil Cowie
Director Review and Improvement Services
Central Region

28 February 2019

About the school

Location	Pukekohe
Ministry of Education profile number	1540
School type	Contributing Primary Years 1 to 6
School roll	524
Gender composition	Boys 51% Girls 49%
Ethnic composition	Māori 10% Pākehā 72% Indian 5% African 5% Other 8%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	December 2018
Date of this report	28 February 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review May 2015 Education Review December 2011 Education Review November 2008