

ERO External Evaluation

St Brendan's School, Upper Hutt

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

St Brendan's School is an integrated Catholic school in Upper Hutt. The roll of 248 students includes 15% who identify as Māori and 8% of Pacific heritage, predominately Samoan.

The school mission is to provide students with the challenge to strive for personal excellence, to celebrate their successes, grow spiritually and become positive contributors to society. The special Catholic character is underpinned by the values of faith, love, respect, courage, innovation and excellence. The school vision is to be an inspirational Catholic School that challenges students to be the best that they can.

Achievement targets are focused on accelerating the progress and achievement of students who need this at particular year levels and Māori and Pacific learners.

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

- achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- attendance
- student wellbeing.

New appointments include an assistant principal in 2017 and principal at the beginning of 2018.

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?

Well implemented systems, processes and practices support good outcomes for all students. Most students achieve at expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Identified disparities for Māori and Pacific learners are addressed by the end of Year 8.

Achievement targets in reading and writing were achieved by the school in 2017. Outcomes reported in mathematics, showed approximately 30% above expected levels.

Based on data, achievement targets in 2018 are appropriately focused on accelerating the achievement in literacy and mathematics of Māori and Pacific students and specific year groups.

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

Responsive systems, processes and practices support accelerated achievement for Māori learners and students identified with additional and complex learning needs.

School data shows that in 2017, of the 33 students identified as a priority group in writing, approximately two thirds made accelerated progress.

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?

Leaders and teachers regularly track and monitor student progress and achievement. Annual achievement targets for students requiring acceleration are suitably reflected at syndicate and teacher level and form part of teacher inquiry. Parents and whānau are well informed in relation to the achievement of their children, including involvement in additional learning programmes. Trustees receive relevant and timely information to support their resourcing decisions.

The school curriculum promotes high levels of participation and engagement in learning. Māori and Pacific students' language, culture and identity are valued through delivery of relevant and authentic learning contexts and experiences. Students have sufficient opportunities to learn through topics of high interest. Learners demonstrate high levels of self-management.

Professional capability and practice ensures a cohesive and comprehensive response to support equity and excellence of outcome for learners. Teachers are collaborative, collectively scrutinising assessment outcomes and tailoring strategies to encourage the active involvement of individuals in learning. School leaders work cohesively to guide progress toward the school's identified priorities. Well-developed educational partnerships between the school, parents, external specialists and the wider community provide opportunities to share and actively support delivery of the curriculum.

Highly inclusive school and classroom environments support positive student engagement. Shared school values are actively promoted. Interactions between individuals, peers, teachers and the community are positive and reflective of the school's special Catholic character. Student transition is well managed. Student leadership is fostered, effectively contributing to the positive school culture and decision making. Leaders, teachers and trustees regularly gather information from students to consider their pastoral needs, informing a comprehensive response to student wellbeing.

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

The school has identified, and ERO's external evaluation confirms, that next steps are to:

- review and document evolving curriculum practice and use outcome indicators for curriculum evaluation
- further implement the change and improvement plan to extend culturally responsive practice for Māori learners
- strengthen learning partnerships with whānau.

ERO identifies further development of the school's internal evaluation framework is needed. Using this to support curriculum evaluation should ensure staff extend their understanding of the impact of changed practice on equity and excellence outcomes for students.

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.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- systems, processes and practice that positively impact on the acceleration of Māori learners and students identified with additional and complex learning needs
- professional capability that enables a comprehensive response to learner needs
- school and classroom environments that promote the purposeful engagement of students in learning.

Next steps

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

- reviewing and documenting evolving curriculum practice and determining relevant outcome indicators to support curriculum evaluation
- change and improvement planning to extend culturally responsive practice and partnerships with Māori whānau
- strengthening the school's internal evaluation framework.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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

Patricia Davey

Patricia Davey
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central (Acting)
Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

15 May 2018

About the school

Location	Upper Hutt								
Ministry of Education profile number	3004								
School type	Full Primary – Years 1 to 8								
School roll	247								
Gender composition	Male 55%, Female 45%								
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pākehā</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	11%	Pākehā	70%	Pacific	8%	Other ethnic groups	11%
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Other ethnic groups	11%								
Provision of Māori medium education	No								
Review team on site	March 2018								
Date of this report	15 May 2018								
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review, February 2015 Education Review, January 2012 Education Review, May 2006								