

ERO External Evaluation

Dairy Flat School, Auckland

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

Dairy Flat School is a semi-rural school north of Auckland that caters for learners in Years 1 to 6. The school roll of approximately 280 students includes six percent Māori. Chinese and African children make up a fifth of the roll and there are also small groups from other ethnic backgrounds.

The school's vision 'Striving for excellence while caring for others' is practised by students, staff and the community. Values of being 'respectful, responsible, resilient, considerate, honest and fair' support the vision and the holistic growth and wellbeing of students and staff.

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

- progress, achievement and accelerated learning in reading, writing and mathematics
- the engagement, participation and achievement of Māori and Pacific students
- support for students with additional needs and special abilities
- impact of schoolwide professional development on accelerating student learning
- impact of the school's wider curriculum focus on Science, Technology, English, Arts, Mathematics (STEAM), and the wide range of school-based activities, including the Agricultural day.

Since the 2015 ERO evaluation the school has increased its roll and opened a modern learning environment. Staff have participated in whole-school professional learning in Accelerating Learning in Literacy (ALL), and Mathematics (ALiM). The school is introducing Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L). Play-based learning is being developed in the younger classrooms, and across the school.

The school is part of the Orewa Community of Learning | Kāhui 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 successful in promoting equitable and excellent outcomes for students. School achievement information from the past three years shows that most students achieve at or above curriculum expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Good work has been done to address any disparity in student achievement. The school is successfully reducing disparity between boys' and girls' achievement in reading and mathematics.

Students demonstrate other valued outcomes that are integrated into curriculum planning. They apply their learning through purposeful experiences, including:

- many opportunities for leadership and tuakana/teina relationships
- collaborative problem solving
- opportunities to build resilience and positive self-worth
- a wide range of sporting and creative arts opportunities
- sharing skills in digital technologies
- practical life activities, including those relevant to the school's rural context, and the revival of play-based learning.

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

The school is accelerating learning for Māori and other students who need this. Student achievement information shows good examples of accelerated progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leaders provide effective support for teachers to engage students in their learning and accelerate their progress. Teachers and students use clear progressions, benchmarks and expectations to measure students' learning. Students co-construct their goals and next learning steps with their teachers. They are carefully monitored and supported to achieve at expected levels.

Leaders and teachers personalise programmes to support students' individual learning needs. They work collaboratively with a strong focus on the whole child and their learning and wellbeing. Students needing additional assistance are well supported through effective intervention programmes. Additional support includes a focus on improving students' oral language to ensure a good foundation for literacy learning.

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?

Senior leaders promote an inclusive school culture that supports student and staff wellbeing. Students feel a strong sense of belonging and appreciate their teachers. They demonstrate caring attitudes with each other. Leaders and teachers know their students and whānau, and are advocates for students. They promote collective responsibility for students, including strong partnerships and trusting relationships with parents.

Leadership strongly promotes equity and excellence for students. Staff are empowered to develop their expertise and leadership skills. Leaders and teachers continue to extend their curriculum content knowledge and skills, and the pedagogy of accelerating learning in literacy and mathematics. Leaders foster collaboration among teachers and between children to promote learning. Student leadership is valued and promoted.

Student engagement is high. Students have access to the breadth and depth of the *New Zealand Curriculum* in a rural environment. Leaders and teachers relevantly plan and evaluate the school's curriculum. They demonstrate a strong commitment to:

- a school curriculum that supports effective teaching and learning practices, and personalises students' learning
- a localised curriculum that reflects the rural environment and children's home life
- developing te ao Māori in the school, including pōwhiri, kapa haka and aspects of te reo and tikanga Māori
- purposeful learning programmes with strong links to real life contexts
- providing students with input into the design of their learning programmes
- building learning from students' interests and strengths to ignite their curiosity
- making good use of digital technologies to stimulate further learning.

Leaders use strategic and coherent approaches to build teacher capability. Leaders and teachers demonstrate professionalism and high expectations, and value continuous improvement. Teachers inquire collaboratively into the impact of their teaching practices. They are encouraged to trial new and innovative approaches to build professional capacity. Well-considered and relevant professional learning supports school goals and individual initiatives.

Leaders and teachers make considered decisions and implement improvements through planned change processes. Students benefit from teachers' purposeful, co-constructed learning intentions and genuine focus on improving outcomes for students.

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

Leaders have identified internal evaluation as an area for continued development. This will include systematic internal evaluation to inform decision making, and an increased focus on reflective evaluation in teachers' professional inquiries.

Leaders and teachers have established relevant practices and pedagogy to accelerate student achievement. Leaders now plan to embed these developments across the school, including:

- continuing to develop effective practices from ALL and ALiM
- making student agency at the forefront of learning
- increasing the data literacy capability of staff and the board
- maintaining strong links with community and whānau, and seeking further ways to consult with families.

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*.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016* (the Code) established under *section 238F of the Education Act 1989*. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. At the time of this review there was one international student attending the school.

International students benefit from the school's welcoming and inclusive environment. High standards of pastoral care support their wellbeing. International students are integrated well into the school's learning programmes, and in all aspects of school and community life.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- an inclusive school culture that values collaboration, respect and innovation
- effective leadership that supports teachers and promotes students' learning
- a relevant and responsive curriculum that purposefully engages students
- the strategic and coherent approach to building teacher capability, including the content knowledge, skills and the pedagogy of acceleration.

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success leaders have set relevant priorities for further development in continuing to:

- strengthen internal evaluation and professional inquiry
- build consistency of practices across the school to sustain initiatives
- strengthen home-school partnerships.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

ERO is likely to carry out the next external evaluation in four-to-five years.



Violet Tu'uga Stevenson
Director Review and Improvement Services
Te Tai Raki - Northern Region

6 December 2018

About the school

Location	Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	1258
School type	Contributing (Year 1 – 6)
School roll	278
Gender composition	Boys 51% Girls 49%
Ethnic composition	Māori 6% Pākehā 46% African 11% Chinese 8% other European 20% other Asian 5% other ethnic groups 4%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	October 2018
Date of this report	6 December 2018
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review November 2015 Education Review November 2012 Education Review September 2009