

Pakuranga Heights School
Pakuranga, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

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Pakuranga Heights School

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. The report answers four key questions about the school.

Findings

1 Context

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

Pakuranga Heights School is a large, contributing (Year 1 to 6) primary school located in Pakuranga, Auckland. The student roll has steadily increased since the 2009 ERO review and the number of students with Māori or Pacific heritage has also increased.

Half of the school's senior leaders have been appointed since the previous ERO review. The senior leadership team collaborates well with other leaders of learning to promote school improvement. The principal has managed change within the school thoughtfully and respectfully. He provides committed leadership and promotes leadership opportunities for students and staff.

The board consists of trustees from the previous board as well as new trustees since the 2013 elections. The board is committed to raising student achievement and has a focus on improving the school's property. Since the 2009 ERO review the information and communication infrastructure has been upgraded. The school's high quality resources and large grounds benefit all students.

Many of the positive features identified in the 2009 ERO review, such as the proud school culture, high expectations and the strong pastoral care, have been sustained. Respectful and affirming relationships with the community continue to be strengthened.

2 Learning

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

Pakuranga Heights School uses student achievement information very well to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement. Most students are achieving at or above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's public achievement information suggests that the overall student achievement continues to be higher than national results. Students with Pacific heritage also continue to achieve at rates higher than the national levels. Of particular note are Pacific students' high National Standards results in reading.

The board receives progress information over the year for students as a whole, and for ethnic, year and gender groups. It would be useful for senior leaders to consider tracking the same cohort of

students against the National Standards over their time at school. Senior managers closely monitor and report to the board on the progress and achievement of students who have been targeted for additional support or monitoring.

Students are highly motivated to learn. They are friendly, articulate and confident. Teachers know their students well and have positive relationships with them. Staff have implemented strategies that continue to strengthen the engagement of learners. Teachers provide activities that support students' independent learning and are appropriate to their age and level. Students' wellbeing is well supported through a strong emphasis on school values. There is a settled tone in the school and the strategies implemented are contributing to ongoing improvement in students' progress and achievement.

The school has an inclusive culture. There is a growing understanding among teachers of their collective responsibility for students' progress. The board, principal and senior leaders have high expectations of both teachers and students to improve learning. Teachers use student achievement information well to plan programmes for various ability groups, for whole-class learning, and to identify students needing additional support or extension. Teachers continue to implement effective strategies for students to increasingly take ownership of their learning.

3 Curriculum

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

The Pakuranga Heights curriculum continues to promote and support student learning effectively. It is based on the principles of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and strengthened through the school's concept-based approach. The curriculum is well resourced and well planned to foster learning through students' interests.

Students' influence on the direction of the curriculum has increased. The school provides opportunities for them to research their own interests around the school's concept focus. Students are developing effective skills to monitor and track the progress of their activity. This initiative could be enhanced by students monitoring and celebrating their own learning progress and achievement.

There is a very good standard of teaching across the school. Teachers regularly participate in professional development that aligns well with school strategic goals. Senior leaders and leaders of learning ensure that processes to assist teachers and strengthen teaching teams are highly supportive. Teachers' commitment to ongoing improvement in teaching and learning is evident.

Students' individual learning requirements are closely monitored by the school. The board ensures that appropriate programmes for students with special abilities or needs are available and well resourced. It would be useful for the board to receive ongoing evaluations about the impact of these initiatives on students' progress and achievement.

The principal places a high value on the strong school and parent/whānau partnerships. Parents regularly support the school and have many opportunities to contribute to the design of the curriculum through regular consultation.

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

Twenty-one percent of students are of Māori descent. This is a significant increase since the 2009 ERO review. Positive steps have been taken to strengthen initiatives that promote educational success for Māori, as Māori, and are likely to have real impact over time.

The school has a strong commitment to supporting the educational success of Māori learners, and teachers are increasing their capacity to promote the language, culture and identity of these students.

The school has experienced varied external support for the school's kapa haka. A parent volunteer now provides enthusiastic support. Students have opportunities to develop leadership skills, and to learn aspects of tikanga Māori through approaches based on ako and tuakana/teina relationships.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance. The board, principal and senior leaders are focused on making effective improvements to learning and the curriculum in order to sustain high levels of student achievement.

Trustees have been inducted into their governance roles effectively and work collaboratively. They have a high level of capability and expertise and have good systems for all their areas of responsibility.

The board is well informed about the day-to-day running of the school and is regularly updated about students' progress in relation to the National Standards. Trustees scrutinise and use this information well to guide decision making about future priorities and directions for the school.

The principal provides strong and purposeful leadership. He has encouraged a focus on growing leaders across the school and developing an effective community of learners. There has been an increased emphasis on teachers inquiring into the impact of their practices on increasing student achievement. The resulting initiatives are clearly based on the school's and students' next steps for improvement.

The board and principal agree that the inclusion of evaluations of the impact of school initiatives for students, would help them to ensure that current very good performance is sustained.

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.

Conclusion

The school promotes student learning very effectively and continues to raise students' achievement through a responsive, meaningful curriculum. The principal provides strong leadership and values the school's partnerships with parents/whānau. The board provides very good stewardship of the school.

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



Dale Bailey
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

27 June 2014

About the School

Location	Pakuranga, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1416	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	462	
Gender composition	Girls 52%	Boys 48%
Ethnic composition	Māori	21%
	NZ European/Pākehā	28%
	Chinese	11%
	Indian	10%
	Samoan	6%
	Middle Eastern	5%
	other Pacific	7%
	other	12%
Review team on site	May 2014	
Date of this report	27 June 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2009
	Education Review	October 2006
	Education Review	May 2003

