

ERO External Evaluation

Horahora School (Cambridge), Cambridge

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

Horahora School (Cambridge) is located on the eastern side of Maungatautari near Cambridge. It provides education for students in Years 1 to 8. The school's current roll of 30 includes a small number of Māori students. The school's data shows some transience in the student population with approximately one third of all students on the roll changing in 2018.

The school's vision documents the aim to develop students to have the self-confidence to make a positive difference to the world. The school's values are based on:

- doing our very best work
- being life-long learners
- having rights and responsibilities
- taking care of our world
- celebrating and valuing differences
- working together.

The school's strategic aims focus on improving student learning and engagement and developing ecologically sustainable environments.

The community is proud of the school's rural culture and heritage. Many families have strong generational connections with the school and are highly supportive and involved.

Leaders and teachers gather and report to the board school-wide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- reading, writing, mathematics.

Since the previous ERO review in 2016 there have been some changes to the teaching team and to the board of trustees. Leadership has remained consistent. Leaders and teachers have undertaken professional learning and development in writing with a focus on developing students' knowledge and understanding of their own learning progressions.

The school is a member of the Te Puna o Kemureti Kāhi Ako | Community of Learning (CoL).

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 achieving excellent and equitable outcomes for most students.

The school's data from 2018 shows that most students achieved at or above expected levels in reading and mathematics and the large majority of students is achieving these levels in writing.

Boys and girls are achieving at comparable levels in mathematics, however girls are outperforming boys in literacy. This pattern of achievement for boys and girls has been consistent over time.

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

The school is accelerating learning for some students who need it.

School achievement information from 2018 shows effective acceleration in reading, writing and mathematics for individual students, as a result of targeted programmes and interventions.

Students with additional learning needs are well supported to make appropriate progress in relation to their individual goals.

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?

Teachers respond well to the learning needs of all students. Students at-risk of not achieving are clearly identified through a range of appropriate assessment information. Individualised planning and support is in place to effectively accelerate learning for these students. Teachers know their students and families well and beneficial partnerships for learning are enhanced through regular and open communication. Warm and affirming relationships between teachers and students contribute to calm and settled environments for learning.

A rich curriculum effectively engages students in authentic contexts for learning. Strong features of the school's localised curriculum are environmental awareness and rural school traditions. A planned approach to learning about local iwi history and places of significance affirms Māori students in their culture and enables a strong sense of belonging. Opportunities for students to develop leadership skills support effective tuakana/teina relationships. School values are well embedded and contribute to positive learning and behaviour across the school.

Collaborative leadership ensures a well-managed and supportive culture for learning. Harmonious relationships between leaders, staff, trustees and parents contribute to a caring school whānau. Greater links to local iwi and marae have been re-established. Leadership promotes and participates in professional learning to build teacher knowledge and capability. A strong focus on improving learning and achievement for individual students is enhanced through clear guidelines and expectations for teaching and curriculum delivery.

The board is working closely with the principal to improve outcomes for students. Consultation with the community gathers views and informs school decision making. Trustees are well informed about student achievement data and make appropriate resourcing decisions to support equitable opportunities for students to learn.

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

Further development is needed in strengthening the analysis and use of student achievement information to:

- identify trends and patterns over time and respond more effectively through targeted action
- inquire more deeply into what is making a difference for accelerated outcomes.

There is also a need to further empower students to lead their own learning by:

- continuing to develop students' knowledge of their own learning and next steps
- developing a consistent approach to formative assessment practices.

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 Children Act 2014.

4 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Horahora School (Cambridge)'s performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed.

[ERO's Framework: Overall School Performance is available on ERO's website.](#)

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- leadership for learning that is focused on improving outcomes for all students
- a culture for learning that supports the individual needs of students
- a curriculum that contributes to high levels of student engagement.

Next steps

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

- internal evaluation and targeted action to raise achievement especially for boys in literacy
- student agency to grow fully independent learners.

Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, leadership should:

- strengthen the documentation of appraisal including observations of teaching practice and feedback and feed forward to teachers.



Phillip Cowie
Director Review and Improvement Services Central
Central Region
9 July 2019

About the school

Location	Cambridge
Ministry of Education profile number	1744
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)
School roll	30
Gender composition	Female 18 Male 12
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 28 Other 2
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	No
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	May 2019
Date of this report	9 July 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review December 2016 Education Review November 2013 Education Review February 2011