

**Vogeltown School
New Plymouth**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Vogeltown 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?

Vogeltown School caters for students in Years 1 to 6 on two sites in suburban New Plymouth. The senior school accommodates Years 3 to 6 classes, the administration block, library, hall and swimming pool. The junior school is situated across the street.

Since the June 2011 ERO report the roll has grown, with a small increase in the percentage of students identifying as Māori. While the percentage of other ethnicities has decreased, 10% of the roll comes from Asian, Pacific and other cultures. The school reports that increasing numbers of students are entering at all year levels.

Both sites have large outdoor spaces and age-appropriate playground facilities which are used to promote student wellbeing, learning and imaginative play. Staff and students interact regularly for professional matters and whole-school activities.

School values and beliefs, including high expectations, respect, responsibility, and caring for each other underpin the Vogeltown School Way (VS Way). Mixed-age whānau groupings are used to promote student leadership, inclusion and mutual respect. Parents and other community members support learning programmes, sporting activities and cultural events.

2 Learning

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

School leaders and teachers analyse a wide range of reliable student achievement data to drive schoolwide improvement. The information is used effectively to:

- identify and monitor the progress of students needing support and extension
- develop action plans and evaluate the impact of targeted strategies and resourcing
- support reviews and set school priorities
- inform parents and trustees of progress and achievement.

The principal leads the assessment and monitoring of all and targeted students. As a result of thorough, professional processes across the school, students' learning and progress is well known to leaders and teachers. Priority learners are targeted and monitored to accelerate their progress. Leaders report on progress of groups as a result of targeted intervention programmes to the board. Deeper evaluation of effectiveness of strategies and resourcing to accelerate overall progress of priority learners in writing is a next step.

Overall student achievement levels in relation to the National Standards are above national percentages in reading, writing and mathematics. Māori students achieve on a par with their New Zealand European school peers in reading and mathematics and above this group for writing. However, fewer Māori students perform in the above National Standards level in each area. Further exploration of ways to extend achievement levels in this group is needed.

The performance of Asian and Pacific students is very good. The small numbers in these groups impacts on the validity of in-school comparisons.

Critical reflection and analysis promote ongoing school improvement. Based on reviews of students' results and surveys, leaders have determined that mathematics programme development is a priority. Teachers monitor and record students' progress, engagement and attitudes to new approaches to mathematics.

Parents and whānau and are actively involved in their children's learning and progress. Reporting conferences are held twice a year. Students have opportunities to share their progress and goals.

A well-considered and coordinated approach is used to respond to students with special needs.

3 Curriculum

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

The school has developed clear expectations and guidelines for implementing the curriculum with appropriate integration of local contexts. Teaching programmes are flexible and responsive to student interests and abilities and are likely to foster success for learners at all levels.

Schoolwide expectations for learning and behaviour support and encourage high levels of student engagement in mixed-age classes. Teaching and learning are well managed with appropriate differentiation and strategies to match learners' ages and needs.

Meaningful integration of literacy and mathematics across the curriculum engages students and supports them to learn. Teachers are trialling new strategies for teaching mathematics, with emphasis on practical and authentic applications. Teachers report these initiatives have increased levels of engagement and understanding of concepts and facts for many students.

Effective syndicate planning and communication provide consistency and coherence to classroom learning. Teachers reflect on the quality of programmes and make adjustments to suit students' interests. Individualised and group planning are deliberate, responsive and promote improved rates of achievement. Productive relationships and communications between syndicates, teacher aides and external specialists effectively support students with language, learning and behaviour needs.

Classroom environments and extension programmes promote high levels of exploration and creativity, in line with the school's core beliefs. School-based problem-solving projects challenge students' thinking and creativity skills. Learning is shared and celebrated through appealing displays of students' work samples, high quality presentations and resources.

Well-considered strategies and external specialists are used to ensure transitions into and through the school are effectively managed. Proactive communications and sharing of student information supports Year 6 students' transition to intermediate schools.

Teachers are developing their skills and confidence to promote and integrate te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into classroom programmes. Teaching topics are making increasing use of bicultural contexts and perspectives.

Teachers should continue to develop:

- their inquiry into the impact of teaching on accelerating student achievement
- students' learning of new skills including goal setting, self assessment and next learning steps.

Senior leaders should consider and implement ways to actively engage parents of targeted students in collaborative strategies that accelerate their progress. Further development of student reports to include ways parents can support their child's learning should assist this collaboration.

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

The school effectively promotes educational success for its Maori students. Teachers are building their capability and understanding to make Māori culture more visible in the school environment, learning and routines. Current initiatives to promote tikanga Māori and te reo Māori include:

- powhiri for welcoming new students at the beginning of year
- saying school karakia daily
- carvings installed to embody Māori tipuna
- ongoing provision of noho marae.

Trustees and leaders have made valuing biculturalism and further integration of tikanga Māori into the teaching programmes and school activities a strategic priority. Trustees and leaders should implement action plans to further develop working relationships with whānau. This should foster a stronger education partnership for defining, promoting and monitoring success for Māori as Māori.

The principal and lead teachers are committed to using *Tātaiako; cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners* as a tool to increase awareness, capability and accountability. ERO's evaluation supports the ongoing implementation of this competencies framework.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school implements sound systems and processes to sustain and improve its performance. A representative and responsive board of trustees set high expectations and is well informed through training and regular reports from the principal. Trustees are improvement focused.

Teachers and leaders use self review effectively to improve the quality of education. They are actively involved in ongoing reflection and review of programmes and practices to promote student learning and wellbeing. They increasingly use inquiry and research to help inform important planning and resourcing decisions.

The principal's professional leadership and involvement in supporting effective practice is valued by staff. Strong collaborative relationships across the leadership and teaching teams promote a shared understanding of priorities and values.

A positive school culture and shared beliefs promote students' learning and wellbeing. Students experience a sense of belonging and demonstrate pride and respect for the *VS Way*.

Professional learning and development initiatives and performance appraisal processes are appropriately focused on teaching practices and strategies to improve outcomes for students. The principal works closely and regularly with syndicate leaders and teachers to monitor and promote improved achievement and success for all learners.

High levels of community engagement and support of school practices foster learning partnerships. Parent and student input and feedback are sought and responded to, especially through learning conferences, parent and student breakfasts and surveys. A strong sense of community commitment and contributions to the ongoing successes of the school is evident.

Next steps to support ongoing school improvement are for trustees and leaders to;

- more clearly link annual targets and goals to longer term strategic priorities
- strengthen inquiry and self review by developing measures of success that are more outcomes focused.

These measures should assist trustees and leaders to more accurately monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school. This should enable it to build on its current good performance and continue to address needs related to the changing school population and community expectations.

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

A broad curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for all learners to achieve success. Responsive teaching programmes encourage high levels of learner engagement, progress and achievement. A collaborative leadership team promotes teacher reflection and inquiry. Trustees and leaders have high expectations for schoolwide improvement. Further development of evaluative review and inquiry is a next step.

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



Joyce Gebbie
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

20 October 2014

About the School

Location	New Plymouth	
Ministry of Education profile number	2258	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	302	
Gender composition	Female 53%, Male 47%	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā Other ethnic groups	23% 67% 10%
Review team on site	July 2014	
Date of this report	20 October 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	June 2011 November 2007 October 2004