

ERO External Evaluation

Oropi School, near Tauranga

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

Oropi School is in the rural outskirts of Tauranga and provides education for students in Years 1 to 8. The current roll of 318 includes 50 Māori students and a small number of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The school has 13 fee paying international students.

Since the October 2014 ERO report, there has been significant roll growth, and the principal and deputy principal have continued to lead the school. There has been an increase in staffing levels across the school mostly in response to the roll growth. In 2018, a bilingual class that provides 30% to 50% te reo Māori instruction was established and currently there are 20 students enrolled.

The school's motto is 'Be all you can be, whaia te mātauranga'. The recently developed core values of 'ako, manaakitanga, rangatiratanga, whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga and whakairo' are priorities of the school.

In 2020, the strategic intent is to accelerate progress in learning through the school curriculum. This focus should support and enable students to access and know their passions, talents and interests, to develop successfully and remain engaged in learning beyond Year 8.

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

- reading, writing, mathematics and student wellbeing.

The school is a member of the Tauranga Peninsula 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 has made good progress in achieving equity and excellence for all students, with significant increases in achievement for Māori learners since 2017 in reading, writing and mathematics.

Achievement data for 2019, shows that the large majority of students achieved expected curriculum levels in reading and writing, and most in mathematics. The data also shows that Māori and non-Māori achieved at comparable rates in reading and writing but non-Māori achieved at higher rates than their Māori peers in mathematics. Girls and boys achieved at comparable rates in mathematics. However, in reading and writing, girls achieved at higher rates than boys, significantly so in writing. Schoolwide student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has fluctuated between 2018 and 2019. However, girls have consistently achieved at higher rates than boys in reading and writing.

Information collected in a survey of students indicates that the school effectively supports student wellbeing and learner engagement.

Students with additional learning needs are making good progress against their individual learning and behaviour goals.

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 identified students who need this.

School data gathered in 2019, about additional reading programmes, indicates that the interventions effectively accelerated student achievement for some of the Māori and others that were targeted.

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 collaboratively develop and pursue the school's vision, values and goals for equity. They actively seek out the perspectives and aspirations of teachers, students, parents and whānau. They build relational trust and communicate effectively with the school community. Leaders are well supported by the board of trustees. Programmes and initiatives in the school are informed by research and leaders positively support building teacher capability. A caring learning community has developed that is inclusive of diverse learners and aimed at maintaining the school's values and rural character.

Teachers provide orderly and supportive environments that promote student learning and wellbeing. There are respectful and warm relationships among students and adults. Student learning is scaffolded through a wide range of teaching strategies, cooperative learning opportunities, active discussion and provision of quality resources. Teachers plan differentiated programmes for reading, writing and mathematics based on sound assessment information. They promote achievement of learning outcomes by deliberately aligning task design, teaching activities and home support. There are effective processes for student transition into and within the school to improve outcomes for at-risk learners.

The school's curriculum makes meaningful connections to learners' lives, prior understandings and real-world contexts. A schoolwide approach to teaching through play prioritises the needs and interests of individual students. The bilingual class models and contributes to the growth of te ao Māori across the school. This class is well integrated and valued throughout the school. Culturally responsive practices are underpinned by well-embedded school values. Parents, whānau and the community are welcomed, involved in school activities, respected and valued as partners in learning. Rich and broad learning experiences allow for students to become confident risk takers and actively involved learners.

Students with additional needs are well integrated into the life of the school. Systems for the monitoring and tracking of students are established. Teachers and support staff provide a range of effective interventions that respond to student needs, including accessing external expertise. Parents are well informed about their child's learning and progress.

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

The school understands the importance of internal evaluation. A wide range of information is gathered about school operation and reported to the board of trustees. Leaders recognise the need to focus on aligning systems and practices with assessment information.

To enhance progress and further support equity and excellence, ERO and the school have agreed on the following areas for development:

- refining assessment systems to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and initiatives that seek to achieve the school's valued outcomes
- developing achievement targets for all identified groups of at-risk learners and reporting regularly to the board about how effectively their progress is being accelerated.

The school is continuing to strengthen students' understanding of their learning pathways, particularly their progress and next learning steps.

3 Other Matters

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 ERO review there were 13 international students attending the school.

The school has highly effective practices and systems in place for the provision of education and care of its international students. There are positive opportunities promoted for these students to share their culture, integrate and involve themselves in the rich life of the school and its community, achieve academic success and make very good progress with their English language acquisition.

4 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’s Act 2014.

5 ERO’s Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO’s overall evaluation judgement of Oropi School’s performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed.

ERO’s Framework: [Overall Findings and Judgement Tool derived from School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success](#) is available on ERO’s website.

6 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- an inclusive culture that underpins all aspects of systems and practices
- a motivating curriculum that is responding to students’ strengths, needs and interests.

Next steps

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

- aligning systems and practices with assessment information to improve accelerated learning outcomes for students
- strengthening practices that enable students to monitor and make decisions about their learning pathways.



Darcy Te Hau
Acting Director Review and Improvement Services Central
Central Region
19 June 2020

About the school

[The Education Counts website provides further information about the school's student population, student engagement and student achievement.](#)