



## ERO External Evaluation

### Pakuranga Heights School, Pakuranga, 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

Pakuranga Heights School is a contributing (Years 1 to 6) Auckland primary school. The roll of 503 students has steadily increased since the 2014 ERO review. Māori students comprise 19 percent of the roll, and 18 percent have Pacific heritage.

The school has undergone significant staff and leadership changes over recent years. Two new deputy principals have been appointed, and other teachers have been promoted to leadership roles. A significant number of teachers are new to the school.

The school's stated vision is "Reaching new heights together". This vision is underpinned by the school's four main values of honesty, kindness, responsibility and respect. It also promotes children as self-managers, investigators, communicators, challenge takers, team players and thinkers.

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

- achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and other learning areas
- progress and achievement for students with additional learning needs, including gifted and talented, and those with diverse needs
- student wellbeing
- progress of students who are new speakers of English.

The school's stated priorities for improving valued student outcomes and success include:

- strengthening organisational capacity, and ensuring accountability, effectiveness and continuing service to children and their community
- having a responsive, inclusive curriculum that raises the achievement of all learners and ensures success for every student
- ensuring that connections between the school's diverse cultures, community and natural environment are sustained
- being highly responsive to the wellbeing and safety of all students and staff
- strengthening professional collaboration as a framework for improving outcomes for students.

The 2014 ERO report noted the positive impact of the school's implementation of its priorities. Over the past five years the school has continued to address key next steps for ongoing development.

The school is part of the Pakuranga West 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 making good progress in achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for students. The majority of students achieve at or above expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is strengthening its teaching of reading.

Achievement for Māori and Pacific learners has remained relatively stable over time, with more than two-thirds of students consistently achieving at or above expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leaders and teachers use well developed assessment methods to track, monitor and analyse student data. They regularly discuss student learning information, to develop approaches that further lift the achievement of all students.

School leaders and teachers support learners to participate actively in their learning and they celebrate student success with the school and its community.

School data show that many students achieve well in relation to the school's valued outcomes, including:

- enjoying a sense of belonging and connection to the school and community
- feeling included, cared for, and secure
- understanding and applying the school's values, and growing positive dispositions for learning.

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

The school is actively implementing strategies to support the acceleration of learning for Māori and other students who need this. School leaders prioritise raising achievement overall and they initiate schoolwide learning programmes to address any emerging disparities in achievement.

There have been marked improvements in achievement for Māori in writing, and for Pacific in mathematics. Leaders and teachers are developing further culturally responsive strategies to enhance support for these students' learning.

Leaders and teachers work collaboratively to provide individualised support for students who need this. Data show that the school's extensive learning intervention programmes support those students with additional learning needs.

## **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?**

The school's significant strengths help students achieve the school's valued outcomes. Students are supported to be focused and engaged inquirers, with a positive sense of wellbeing and well-developed social skills.

Staff and students benefit from effective professional leadership. School leaders work as a collaborative team. They use well-developed processes to cohesively manage the school's operations and lead the school's future direction. Students' wellbeing and holistic success are at the centre of leaders' and teachers' planning. Informed, evidence-based and strategic decision making has contributed to positive outcomes for students.

Leaders purposefully build teachers' professional capability. The board of trustees has high expectations of leaders, teachers, students and parents. Staff engage in ongoing professional learning that aligns with the board's strategic goals. Leadership across the school is developed strategically. Appraisal processes support personal development as well as 'growth leadership' through coaching and mentoring.

Students learn in supportive and collaborative environments. Staff feel valued and respected by leaders and whānau. Diversity is celebrated. A positive culture is resulting in high performing staff who support each other to enhance learning outcomes for children.

Leaders and teachers have developed learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau. Together, teachers and parents support students to engage in learning opportunities at home. Teachers provide clear communication to parents in a variety of ways. They offer parents opportunities to learn about how to support their children's learning. Parents and whānau participate in cultural celebrations and special occasions that are incorporated into school life to make learning more relevant and authentic for students.

Effective stewardship promotes the school vision and valued outcomes for learners. Trustees bring a range of strengths to their role. They participate in relevant board training, and contribute to evidence-based decision making. The board places importance on staff and student wellbeing. Trustees have established good community engagement, and strongly value ongoing positive parent/whānau relationships. They are relentless in their focus on providing the best environments and resources for their students and teachers, including digital technologies. The board clearly demonstrates its commitment to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Effective evaluation is highly valued for ongoing improvement. The school uses a responsive framework to guide internal evaluation, which includes a variety of perspectives. External evaluation is used successfully to inform and enhance internal evaluation decisions.

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

Leaders and teachers have identified the need to extend bicultural and culturally responsive practices. They also plan to build on current effective teaching practices that support students' choices in, understanding of, and decision making about their own learning.

Leaders note the potential of enriching curriculum inquiry and problem-solving approaches by ensuring that the principles and aims of specific curriculum areas are promoted in planning and assessment.

### **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.

### **4 ERO's Overall Judgement**

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

**Strong**

### **5 Going forward**

Key strengths of the school

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

- internal evaluation that promotes ongoing improvement
- professional capacity and 'growth leadership' that are underpinned by high expectations and strategic decision making
- reciprocal community relationships that constructively support students' learning, progress and achievement.

## Next steps

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

- extending curriculum integration to more fully encompass all learning areas in the school's inquiry process
- widening student agency, empowering students to develop confidence and competence to lead their own learning
- embedding and enhancing the school's strategic Māori education plan, and culturally responsive approaches.



Steve Tanner  
Director Review and Improvement Services Northern  
Northern Region  
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## About the school

Location	Pakuranga, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	1416
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)
School roll	503
Gender composition	Boys 53% Girls 47%
Ethnic composition	Māori 19% NZ European/Pākehā 28% Indian 11% Middle Eastern 7% African/Origins 6% Samoan 6% Tongan 5% Sri Lankan 4% other ethnic groups 14%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	May 2019
Date of this report	7 June 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review June 2014 Education Review August 2009 Education Review October 2006