

ERO External Evaluation

Kimi Ora School, Lower Hutt

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

Kimi Ora School provides an holistic education for students with a diverse range of additional learning needs aged 5 to 21 years. At the time of the review, there were 71 students on the growing roll, with 10% of students identifying as Māori and 8% as of Pacific heritage.

All students have high, or very high needs, and are funded through the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme. Students from the greater Wellington area attend the base school in Naenae, or one of three satellite hubs hosted by two local schools and a trust. In all, there are 11 classes: five at Naenae, three at Evans Bay Intermediate School, two at Pomare School and one at Manaaki Ability Trust in Lower Hutt. Manaaki caters for students aged from 16 to 21, and has a strong focus on transition into the community. The hubs at Pomare School and Manaaki Trust were opened in term one of 2018. A team of specialists and therapists provide support for students, whānau, aiga and staff.

The school's vision is that 'Kimi Ora will be a centre of excellence increasing students' independence, communication and participation through innovation in implementing education and therapy programmes'.

The school's strategic focus on growing support for schools and for the community is provided across the greater Wellington area through its Specialist Teacher Outreach and Moderate Needs Physical Services.

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

- progress and achievement in literacy and numeracy
- progress and achievement in relation to students' individual goals.

Since the July 2015 ERO report, there have been some changes to the leadership team and board membership.

The school belongs to the Naenae 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 high expectations of all students. Most students make appropriate progress in relation to their individual goals. Reported 2017 end-of-year school data shows that in relation to the expanded *New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC), nearly all students achieve well in literacy and a large majority, including Pacific students, achieve well in mathematics. Achievement for Māori students is above their peers in these curriculum areas. Over time, high levels of achievement in literacy have been maintained.

Students not achieving at expectation are well known by leaders and staff. Strategies are in place to support these students to achieve success.

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

Data from 2017 indicates that a number of students accelerated their progress in relation to their goals. A significant number of students, including Māori and Pacific, accelerated their progress in literacy. There is evidence of acceleration in mathematics, especially by Māori students.

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?

Trustees, leaders, specialists and staff have an unrelenting focus on supporting the progress and achievement of all students. Their highly collaborative approach guides teaching and learning through each child's individual education plan (IEP). The IEP goals are responsive, realistic and build on each student's current learning interests and needs. A wide range of planning holistically supports learner success. Useful systems and processes are in place to track and monitor student progress and achievement against their goals.

Strategic, well-considered professional learning and development (PLD) builds staff capability. This supports them to implement specialised learning programmes that effectively respond to each student's learning interests and needs.

A range of appropriate, flexible and effective communication strategies strengthens reciprocal learning-centred partnerships with whānau. At IEP meetings, staff and families identify strengths, interests and next steps to review and formulate well-constructed goals.

Through its outreach services, the school actively promotes strategies to support students with additional needs in schools throughout the Wellington area. Expert support is provided to school leaders, special education needs coordinators, staff and whānau. These purposeful links to external expertise provide increased opportunities for students to learn alongside their peers in local schools.

There is a strategic focus on integrating te reo me ngā tikanga Māori through the curriculum across all levels of the school. This has been supported by PLD and whānau Māori. The concepts of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, ako, kaitoutoko, tohunga mahi toi and tangata underpin the school's culturally responsive practices.

The school's curriculum successfully promotes students' interests, engagement and learning through thoughtfully selected learning opportunities that stimulate curiosity and exploration. Relevant, meaningful and authentic contexts are used to prepare students for life outside and beyond school. Well-designed, inclusive learning environments support children's independence. Leadership opportunities are offered to students in a range of contexts. Respectful, productive and nurturing interactions and relationships are highly evident.

Individualised plans guide effective transitions from home to school. Staff knowledge of students' subtle cues support ongoing and daily transitions. A comprehensive approach, with well-considered levels of support, builds learners' independence and ability to participate and contribute meaningfully in their local community.

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

To sustain improvement, the school's key next step is to build on their regular practice of reflection and review. Implementing a strategic process of internal evaluation that strengthens and aligns these processes, should improve knowledge of learner outcomes and support the school to know what is working and what is needed to sustain ongoing improvement.

To promote professional growth, further development of the implementation of the appraisal process is needed to increase consistency. Developing clear expectations of goal setting based on student outcomes, building cultural competence and teaching as inquiry should strengthen this process.

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 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- a collective, unrelenting focus on all students' progress and achievement, that supports and enables learner success
- holistic learning partnerships with parents, whānau and the wider community, that actively support student learning and wellbeing
- a well-considered curriculum that promotes student engagement, learning and successful transitions through meaningful and authentic contexts.

Next steps

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

- strengthening internal evaluation practices, so that trustees, leadership and teachers analyse student achievement information and evaluate the impact of teaching programmes on student outcomes
- building teacher capacity through consistent inquiry and appraisal processes and practices.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



Alan Wynyard
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central (Acting)
Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

1 August 2018

About the school

Location	Lower Hutt								
Ministry of Education profile number	514								
School type	Special School								
School roll	71								
Gender composition	Male 41, Female 30								
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pākehā</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>17</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	7	Pacific	6	Pākehā	41	Other ethnic groups	17
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Special features	<p>Base school at Naenae, satellite sites at Evans Bay Intermediate School, Pomare School and Manaaki Ability Trust.</p> <p>Specialist Teachers Outreach Service and Moderate Needs Service for the greater Wellington area.</p>								
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes								
Provision of Māori medium education	No								
Review team on site	June 2018								
Date of this report	1 August 2018								
Most recent ERO report(s)	<p>Education Review, July 2015</p> <p>Education Review, July 2012</p> <p>Education Review, June 2006</p>								