

Wairakei School Education Review

- 1 Context
- 2 Learning
- 3 Curriculum
- 4 Sustainable Performance
- School Statistics

1 Context

What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?

Wairakei Primary School is located in Wairakei Village near Taupo. The school caters for 267 students in Years 1 to 6, of whom 57 identify as Māori. The roll is growing and currently 11 classrooms are operating. Students are drawn from the local village and a wide geographical area around the school.

Since the last ERO review in 2012, a new deputy principal has been employed. Nine of the teaching staff are new to the school and the principal continues to provide high quality leadership for teachers and the school community. The board chairperson has been in her role for one year. The majority of trustees were new at the board election in 2013 and since then have received extensive training about school governance.

Teachers have been involved in a wide range of professional development, with a focus on supporting the school's strategic direction to improve teacher practice and raise student achievement.

The school's shared values of pride, opportunity, whānau, excellence and respect are well known to students, teachers and families. They are evident in the settled and respectful tone that prevails across the school.

2 Learning

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

The school makes highly effective use of student achievement information at governance, school leadership and classroom levels.

The board is well informed about levels of student achievement and progress. Trustees receive detailed analysed achievement information from the principal that they use to:

- ensure decisions about school resourcing are clearly aligned to strategic priorities, including annual achievement goals and targets
- monitor the effectiveness of special interventions for students requiring support with their learning
- evaluate the effectiveness of school leadership and teaching programmes across the school
- inform regular and robust conversations among school leaders and trustees about school direction and areas for development.

School leaders make highly effective use of student achievement information. Leaders have established an effective approach to critical inquiry, based on careful consideration of a wide range of appropriate student achievement information. Leaders use this data to:

- establish priorities for teachers' professional learning with clear links to school strategic direction
- set and monitor appropriate goals for raising student achievement, both across the school and for specific groups of students
- report to trustees and the school community about overall levels of student achievement and progress towards school-wide achievement targets.

Teachers gather information using a range of appropriate nationally referenced assessments. They use this information, along with data gathered from their observations of student learning, to make judgements about each student's achievement in relation to National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. School-wide data shows that since the last ERO review in 2012 the percentage of students achieving at or above the expected standard has improved. This data also shows that student achievement levels are above the average for schools within the Taupo area and for all schools nationally. It also indicates that girls in the school achieve better than boys.

The process of 'teaching as inquiry' is well established in the school. This process enables teachers to systematically reflect on their practice with the objective of planning specific targeted teaching strategies that address students' ongoing learning needs.

Teachers make highly effective use of student achievement information to:

- group students for instruction in reading, writing and mathematics
- identify students for inclusion in target groups on which to base investigations into the effectiveness of their practice
- track and monitor the progress of all students with a particular focus on some students whose progress needs to be accelerated
- report detailed information to parents about individual student progress and achievement.

Students also make good use of achievement information to set goals to improve their learning and, increasingly, to make decisions about their next learning steps.

The school has been highly effective in accelerating progress for students achieving below expected levels. ERO and the school agree that it is now appropriate to more specifically target the small group of students achieving well below expected levels.

3 Curriculum

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

The Wairakei Primary School curriculum very effectively promotes and supports student learning. Curriculum delivery clearly shows how the school is giving effect to The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC), including a focus on literacy and mathematics, and the key competencies of the NZC. Developments in the school curriculum reflect current innovative best practice in meeting students' learning needs. Curriculum design and implementation is characterised by high levels of professional collaboration within the teaching team and school leaders.

Teachers demonstrate high levels of professional knowledge and are enthusiastic about improving their effectiveness. Curriculum delivery is enhanced through high expectation for teachers' performance and participation in ongoing professional learning. There are thorough and effective processes in place to manage teacher performance. These processes include an ongoing emphasis on continual reflection, feedback from colleagues and school leaders, and close consideration of student achievement information.

In all classrooms observed by ERO there were very high levels of student engagement with learning. Students are well informed about their levels of achievement, progress and next learning steps through the display and use of documented learning progressions in reading, writing and mathematics.

Relationships within classrooms are respectful, affirming and focused on student learning and wellbeing. High levels of teacher knowledge about learning progressions, and ongoing sharing of knowledge about student progress, enable teachers to target individuals' next learning steps and monitor their progress.

A school-wide initiative to promote innovative teaching practice is well established in the senior classes and there are plans to further develop this model throughout the school. This model includes the use of highly effective teaching strategies that enable students to:

- be well informed about their levels of progress and achievement
- have ownership of their daily programme
- identify next steps in their learning
- have opportunities to self assess and peer teach.

The school and ERO agree that student learning is likely to benefit from a continuation of professional learning and development that is appropriate to the school's strategic direction in

developing innovative teaching and learning practices.

ERO and the school also acknowledge that a useful next step is to continue with the current approach to curriculum development so that it clearly shows how teachers are systematically building on students' knowledge and skills as they move through the school in all curriculum areas.

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

Aspects of the school that effectively promote success for Māori, as Māori are:

- involvement with the Tūwharetoa (Iwi) Cultural Knowledge project
- regular pōwhiri are held at the school to welcome all new students, teachers and visitors to the school
- many students enjoy participation in the school kapa haka group which competes in local festivals
- in classrooms, relationships between teachers and Māori students are characterised by high expectations and inclusion
- classroom environments and interactions between teachers and students include incidental use of te reo Māori, and aspects of tikanga Māori are integrated in meaningful contexts
- the school curriculum includes legends and tikanga that are significant to local Māori.

School student achievement information shows that overall levels of Māori achievement are consistent with schools of a similar type, but below that of non-Māori students in the school. ERO and the school agree that a useful next step is to continue to develop a partnership in learning with Māori parents and whānau.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance because:

- there is a highly inclusive school environment
- leadership provided by the principal and leadership team is very effective
- an established culture of reflective practice and well-informed conversations is contributing to continual school improvement
- strategies to involve students in their learning are being developed in a planned and effective way
- a culture of collaboration and high expectations is evident within relationships across the school
- governance is highly effective with a continual focus on improving student outcomes
- trustees and school leaders have a well developed understanding about spontaneous, planned and strategic self review.

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

Wairakei Primary School is providing high quality education for students in an inclusive and respectful school environment. The roll is growing and well-developed systems are in place to make decisions about school improvement. School leadership and governance are highly effective and the school is well engaged with its community.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.

Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

23 October 2015

School Statistics

Location	Taupo	
Ministry of Education profile number	2066	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	267	
Gender composition	Boys 51%	
	Girls 49%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	75%
	Māori	21%
	Other European	2%
	Other	2%
Review team on site	September 2015	
Date of this report	23 October 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	October 2012
	Education Review	December 2009
	Education Review	March 2007