

**Russell Street School
Palmerston North**

Confirmed

**Education Review Report:
Arotake Paehiranga**

Education Review Report: Arotake Paehiranga Russell Street 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, especially self review for sustaining and continuing improvements.

Arotake Paehiranga is an evaluation of a school that was found, in its previous ERO review, to have the capability to effectively use self review to sustain its high performance to improve outcomes for students.

Findings

1 Context

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

Russell Street School is a Years 1 to 6 contributing primary school situated in the northern suburbs of Palmerston North. At the time of this review there were 350 students attending and 53 identified as Māori.

The strong commitment to the vision "inspiring creativity and excellence within and outside the four walls of the classroom" permeates all aspects of school life.

Since the June 2009 ERO report, many of the school buildings have been extensively remodelled. The further development of information and communication technologies has effectively enhanced teaching and learning. A focus on e-Learning and the creation of digital classrooms have provided a range of opportunities to build students' skills for the twenty-first century. Inquiry learning and the introduction of modern learning environments have facilitated changes in student learning and teachers' practice. Students benefit from a range of sporting, cultural and leadership opportunities.

Russell Street School has a positive reporting history with ERO and has taken significant steps to implement the recommendations of the previous ERO report.

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 data to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement.

Appropriate assessment tools, observations and anecdotal evidence provide rich information for teachers and leaders to show progress over time for individuals, groups and year groups. They use this information to make reliable judgements about students' achievement and progress. Moderation occurs within the school and with other schools.

School leaders efficiently gather student achievement data that provides a strong basis for effective strategic decision making and the setting of appropriate school priorities.

Most students, including Māori students, achieve at or above in relation to the National Standard in reading, writing and mathematics. The majority make good progress and many demonstrate accelerated progress.

Students who are identified as at risk of underachievement are well supported. Programmes are targeted to needs and regularly monitored to measure progress and achievement over time. Early intervention and use of effective strategies by teachers results in increased success for those who need additional support in their first years of schooling. Smaller class sizes, significant resourcing and reading recovery have been instrumental in accelerating student progress.

Students on the special needs register are making good progress within their expected range. Gifted and talented students are well challenged by specific programmes and initiatives guided by a specialist teacher. Students who demonstrate a better-than-expected rate of progress include not only targeted students, but also students who have met or exceeded the National Standards.

Sharing information with parents is a well-considered process and successfully encourages their involvement in learning partnerships with the school. Teachers use a range of strategies to report student progress over time and achievement in relation to National Standards. Information for parents about their children's strengths, key competencies and next steps for learning is clear. Student voice is valued and student-led conferences with parents at home have been recently introduced.

3 Curriculum

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

The curriculum is highly effective in promoting student learning. It clearly enacts the school's vision and values, and strongly reflects the principles and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. There is a deliberate focus on literacy and mathematics. Students are enabled to be confident, capable life-long learners.

Inquiry learning integrates other learning areas with programmes incorporating music, art, science and physical education. Subject specialist teachers use their strengths and passions to enhance the curriculum. Classrooms are well organised, positive and stimulating learning environments.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations for students' academic, social and emotional learning. Teaching is guided by a clear and robust framework. Positive relationships between teachers and students and with families provide a solid foundation for learning.

Effective processes support children to make a smooth transition from early childhood education to school. The Jump Start programme for four year olds focuses on literacy, numeracy and children's wellbeing. Prior learning is successfully shared and built upon. The early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki*, is integrated within *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Achievement information indicates that children in the first three years make very good progress, and many show accelerated progress.

Learning is personalised and responds to individual strengths and needs. Teachers use a range of high quality practices. Teachers effectively link prior and future learning. Students have a clear understanding of the purpose of their learning. Their voice is valued and regularly sought by teachers. Authentic contexts ensure meaningful and relevant content.

Students effectively own and take responsibility for their learning. They are competent, confident learners who are able to regularly self assess, articulate their learning and understand their next steps for improvement. High levels of engagement are evident across all classrooms.

There is a clear focus on developing students as leaders and a variety of opportunities is available for students to take on leadership roles

Innovative use of information and communication technologies successfully promotes learning. Students have opportunities to choose to learn in digital classrooms and use their own digital devices. Teachers successfully integrate the use of devices to improve learning and creativity.

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

Māori students are well supported to succeed as Māori through a wide range of effective initiatives that value their language, culture and identity. The increased focus on strengthening engagement and improving achievement has proven successful. The school environment reflects a New Zealand context.

Kapa haka is well supported by whānau and the community. It has good participation levels and is a resourcing priority. Students are able to lead their peers in a cultural setting.

Regular consultation and communication between the school and families strengthens relationships with whānau to improve student outcomes. The whānau group provides further opportunities for parents and families to share information and voice their aspirations.

Teachers and leaders are committed to bicultural practice. They have considered and used *Ka Hikitia* and *Tātaiako - Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners* in planning and teaching. School leaders are looking to extend and embed an understanding and appreciation of what constitutes success for Māori as Māori.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is very well placed to sustain its performance. Values, tone, culture, community engagement and relationships provide a strong foundation for ongoing improvement.

The strong, knowledgeable leadership team is motivated to achieve the school's vision. They demonstrate innovative and creative practice grounded in modern education theory. Teacher strengths are identified and developed through a distributed leadership model.

There is an embedded culture of rigorous critical reflection. Self review is highly effective, well established and understood. It contributes significantly to sustaining, developing and improving the school's performance and outcomes for all students.

Clear direction is set through the charter and strategic plan. Trustees have high expectations for student achievement and progress. They successfully involve the community in determining the school's vision and strongly focus on improvement.

Teachers are well supported to develop and improve their practice. The appraisal process is robust. Professional development has a positive impact on teaching and learning. There is a strong focus on empowering teachers to self identify their strengths and aspects to improve.

There is an open and trusting collegial culture. Teachers collaboratively share and improve practice. Teachers' digital blogs and journals show good use of student achievement data as staff reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching.

ERO is confident that trustees and leaders will continue to use self review effectively for sustaining and developing performance, and improving outcomes for all students, in particular, priority learners.

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.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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



Joyce Gebbie
National Manager Review Services
Central Region (Acting)

20 February 2014

About the School

Location	Palmerston North	
Ministry of Education profile number	2441	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	350	
Gender composition	Male 53%, Female 47%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	15%
	NZ European/Pākehā	73%
	Pacific	1%
	Other ethnic groups	11%
Review team on site	November 2013	
Date of this report	20 February 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	June 2009
	Education Review	August 2006
	Education Review	June 2003