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St Albans School
St Albans, Christchurch

Confirmed

Education Review Report:
Arotake Paerewa

Kumēa te paetawhiti kia tata
Whakamaua te paerewa kia tīna
Tukuna te paehiranga kia topa!

Education Review Report: Arotake Paerewa St Albans 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 for sustaining and continuing improvements.

Findings

1 Context

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

The school provides students with a positive learning environment. The board, school leaders and staff actively promote the school values. Students have a strong sense of belonging at the school. They are well supported in their learning and encouraged to do their best to achieve excellence.

The school has a well-established Māori bilingual unit, *Te Tikanga Rua Reo*. Programmes and practices in the unit and across the school actively promote the learning of te reo and tikanga Māori. School leaders are giving suitable emphasis to making sure this unit, and its staff and students, are a well-integrated part of the school.

Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. The way leaders and teachers acknowledge, respond to and celebrate students' differences promotes an inclusive school culture.

A feature of the school is its constructive relationship with its community. Good communication helps parents and teachers to work in partnership to foster students' learning and wellbeing. Parents, including the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and many community members, support the school and its students in a wide variety of ways. Community groups make good use of the school's facilities.

Since the school's 2009 ERO review, students have benefited from improvements to:

- school facilities, the environment and teaching spaces
- the quality of teaching through ongoing professional development and support
- the way teachers evaluate and make ongoing improvements to their teaching programmes.

The board, leaders and staff have responded very well to the challenges resulting from the Christchurch earthquakes. The school's roll has increased as some students have moved from other parts of Christchurch and enrolled at the school. The board and school leaders have supported and continue to actively help their students and staff during this time.

2 Learning

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

This school makes very good use of student achievement information to help make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement.

School leaders report overall patterns of student achievement to the board. The quality of information used to complete these reports has improved as teachers have developed better assessment practices.

Appropriate use is made of achievement information at all levels of the school. For example:

- teachers accurately identify students' strengths and needs and regularly monitor their ongoing progress
- team leaders identify possible targets for lifting students' achievement and what needs to be done to help students make faster progress
- senior leaders identify groups of students with similar gaps in their learning and areas where more staff training may be needed to help these students improve
- the board uses this information to work out how they can best support students and teachers to foster excellence.

Teachers complete plans that identify how they will meet the needs of students not achieving as well as expected. They monitor the success of these plans, and their impact on student progress regularly and adjust their programmes accordingly.

Reports to, and interviews with, parents and their children, provide clear information about student achievement in regard to the National Standards and provide a useful basis for discussion and future planning.

Students with special learning needs, and those who are gifted and talented, receive well-managed, targeted additional support and learning opportunities. Appropriate ongoing changes are made to support as needed.

The principal and senior leaders continue to raise the expectations of students and set targets that are aimed at making sure identified students make faster progress. The board actively supports initiatives aimed at lifting student achievement.

ERO agrees with the next steps identified by the principal and senior leaders to continue to make sure that teachers' judgements about student achievement are accurate and provide more training for staff in teaching mathematics. It would be also useful to share more widely the best practices being used by teachers to improve student achievement in written language.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum promotes and supports student learning very well.

The effectiveness of the school's curriculum in promoting and supporting students' learning is most evident in:

- students' progress and achievement in reading, where 38.4% are achieving at the National Standards and 47.2% are achieving above the National Standards
- the progress made by Māori students who are now achieving at levels closer to those of their peers
- students' positive attitudes to learning along with their growing confidence and independence.

The school's curriculum provides students with a well-balanced and wide range of interesting learning opportunities. Teaching programmes successfully reflect the community's wishes about giving priority to fostering student achievement in English, mathematics, science, sports and the arts.

Students' enjoyment and interest in learning is fostered through the ways teachers make learning meaningful, link current learning to previous experiences and help students learn how to learn. The strong focus placed on school values creates an environment where students are often prepared to take risks to extend their learning. Some of the common features of teaching programmes described by senior leaders and confirmed by ERO are:

- purposeful, well-paced and clearly focused teaching
- the significant efforts teachers are making to make sure that teaching is matched to student strengths and needs, particularly in reading and mathematics
- the priority teachers give to providing students with a varied mix of activities that take into account, and build on, their interests
- the positive relationships between adults and students, and among students, and the way students learn from, and support one another
- the increasing emphasis teachers are giving to both students and themselves celebrating and reflecting on their learning.

Students appear well motivated and often spoke enthusiastically with ERO about how much they enjoy their learning.

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

The school promotes educational success for Māori and as Māori, well. Factors that support such success include:

- the way students' cultural backgrounds are acknowledged and celebrated
- the role models provided by key Māori staff members
- the supportive relationships between Māori students and their families
- the growing variety of strategies teachers are using to promote success for Māori students.

Initiatives to make sure the bilingual unit and students are an integrated part of the school benefits Māori students both in the unit and mainstream classes.

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. The principal and other school leaders provide strong professional leadership and support. Their expectations are high and clear. They lead by example. Management practices promote teamwork and collaboration amongst staff.

Other leadership and management practices that are leading to ongoing improvements to the quality of education for students include:

- the good use made of staff strengths and the provisions made to grow and support school leaders
- some useful improvements to self review that leads to well-considered decision making.

The board governs the school very well. A strong partnership exists between the board, principal and other school leaders. They work together towards meeting the goals outlined in the charter and plans. Good use is made of the mix of skills trustees bring to their governance roles.

The board is kept well informed by the principal. Trustees are responsive to requests that focus on raising student achievement and supporting teachers to do this.

Areas for review and development

The board, principal and other school leaders have identified that a next step for them is to build on the best of current self-review practices to increase their quality. ERO agrees with this priority.

Refining some aspects of the school's annual plans would make these more useful for promoting and evaluating school improvement.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. No international students were enrolled at the time of this ERO review.

The principal has met the annual review requirements and this has been acknowledged formally by the Ministry of Education.

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.



Graham Randell
National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

8 February 2013

About the School

Location	St Albans, Christchurch	
Ministry of Education profile number	3518	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	523	
Number of international students	0	
Gender composition	Girls 50%; Boys 50%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	70%
	Māori	13%
	Samoan	1%
	Other Pacific	1%
	Asian	10%
	Other European	2%
	Other ethnicities	3%
Review team on site	December 2012	
Date of this report	8 February 2013	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	November 2009
	Supplementary Review	November 2006
	Education Review	November 2005