

Victoria Avenue School
Remuera, Auckland

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 Victoria Avenue 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?

Student learning and well-being are central to the vision of the Victoria Avenue School board of trustees. Students are confident learners and benefit from the school's well resourced learning environment. They enjoy challenging and enriched learning programmes that are designed to reflect the values and principles of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Students' learning needs are identified and met in positive and affirming ways.

Teachers provide an inclusive, family-focused and personalised education for all children. Students and their families are well known to teachers and support staff. The school benefits from strong community support. The principal's appointment in 2009 has enabled the community's high expectations to be further raised.

The school has a history of positive ERO reports. High quality leadership characterises school management and impacts positively on student learning and staff morale. The principal is well regarded by the community, staff and students of the school. The school's positive tone results from the board's clear direction and from consistent management practices.

2 Learning

How well are students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Students make good progress and achieve very well overall. Analysed information reported to the board shows that the majority of students are achieving above national expectations. Assessment data is used effectively to identify improvement targets for individual children, as well as for cohorts and groups of students. The achievement of specific groups of students, including Māori and Pacific, and those with English as a second language, is monitored and reported separately.

Teachers are working well with the National Standards. They use a variety of assessment and observational strategies to form judgements about student achievement in relation to National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' overall judgements about student achievement levels in relation to the National Standards are moderated within the school and are reported clearly to parents.

Teachers use achievement information purposefully. They group children for learning and monitor their progress carefully. Lessons are interesting and well paced, and students participate and contribute confidently. Teachers share learning intentions with students and encourage them to set individual learning goals. Consequently, students are motivated learners and are well engaged in the process of learning.

The board resources learning programmes generously. Additional support is provided for students who are achieving below expectations, students with special learning needs, and those needing learning extension. These programmes are well managed and the interventions are evaluated to ensure that students' learning needs are being met effectively.

Students work cooperatively and develop confidence as learners. School entry procedures and transitions between classes are well managed. Respectful relationships between students and teachers contribute to the positive climate for learning. Older students take responsibility and show leadership skills and, where they can, are willing learning buddies for students who have additional learning needs.

Teachers' learning is strengthened through well considered professional development, which is strategically aligned to school goals. Teachers contribute to teamwork within class syndicates. Senior managers agree that next steps in strengthening student engagement in learning could include increased clarity about student goal setting. Closer alignment between goal setting and personal progress and achievement information would enable students to develop greater ownership of their learning and to take a more active role in reporting their progress to parents.

Teachers could extend the use of the reflective teaching practices that are evident in a number of classrooms. These good practices include the use of teacher modelling, self-directed learning methods, and evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching practices.

How well does the school promote Māori student success and success as Māori?

The board has a clear commitment to promoting biculturalism and supporting Māori students to experience learning success. Senior managers engage regularly with Māori parents and whānau and seek feedback about ways of improving the school-wide programme of te reo and tikanga Māori. The expertise of a Māori elder supports teachers to deliver the programme, and the results of this well-planned approach are evident throughout the school. In the arts, physical education, science and social studies, teachers include Māori contexts in learning and performance, and celebrate the role of tangata whenua in New Zealand.

Māori students, who comprise six percent of the school roll, achieve well overall. School data shows that Māori students make good progress and reach achievement levels similar to those of their peers. Teachers know the Māori students in their classes and are aware of the targets the school has for further improving outcomes for Māori students.

Ka Hikitia: Managing for Success, the Ministry of Education's Māori Education Strategy, has been recently used to review the school's charter goals. Ongoing evaluation will further promote the *Ka Hikitia* goal of 'Māori enjoying success as Māori'.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum is well managed. Learning programmes promote and support students' progress in learning very well.

The learning programme throughout the school has a strong focus on literacy and mathematics and on inquiry-based learning. In many classrooms these aspects are integrated, providing students with meaningful, connected learning contexts. Teachers' emphasis on literacy is lifting the quality and variety of student's written and oral language learning experiences.

The school's curriculum clearly reflects the priorities and values of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Leadership has been strengthened across the curriculum and specialist teachers enhance learning in the arts, physical education and information and communication technologies. Students gain social competencies through their participation in restorative practices, peer mediation and school leadership roles.

Students' learning is supported by organised and purposeful classroom environments. Teachers make good use of classroom and school facilities to highlight curriculum values and principles and to reflect school-wide learning goals. Thinking skills are a current focus of professional learning and development that supports the curriculum focus on inquiry and prior learning.

Senior leaders are considering how the development of a successful learner profile could further enhance the school's curriculum. Involving staff and parents in determining the characteristics of a confident, life-long, 21st century learner could be a useful step in this development.

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. School leadership and management are highly effective.

The board has a clear strategic overview that guides planning and reporting. School operations are closely aligned with the board's strategic priorities. School leaders collaborate and share responsibilities for supporting teachers in the classroom.

Processes of continual reflection support ongoing improvement. Self review at all levels of school operation includes close examination of patterns and trends in school data and feedback from parents and staff. Ongoing improvements resulting from self review are well considered and are based on reliable evidence, educational research and identified best practice in teaching and learning.

A key factor in school leadership is the principal's ability to build staff capability and confidence. Clear expectations of staff underpin effective performance management systems. The professional tone of the school and the efficient operations of the board reflect the principal's skill in leading trustees and staff.

ERO is confident that the board and principal can sustain new initiatives, progress curriculum developments, and continue to make good decisions to improve school performance.

Provision for international students

Victoria Avenue School is a signatory to the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989.

At the time of this review there were ten international students attending the school. All the current international students are Korean. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough. International students are well integrated into school life. They have access to an experienced director who is one of the school's senior managers. School programmes and care-giver arrangements are efficiently organised and evaluated.

The school board receives regular information, and self-review reports required by the Ministry of Education are completed annually.

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:

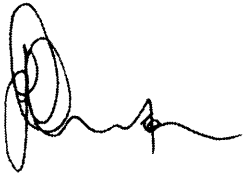
- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- financial management
- asset management.

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
- 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.



Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

18 November 2011

About the School

Location	Remuera, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1544	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
Decile ¹	10	
School roll	517	
Gender composition	Girls 52%, Boys 48%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	67%
	Māori	6%
	Chinese	12%
	Korean	3%
	Pacific	2%
	Indian	2%
	other European	4%
	other	4%
Review team on site	September 2011	
Date of this report	18 November 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2008
	Education Review	October 2005
	Education Review	April 2002

¹ School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides.