



**James Street School
Whakatane**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

James 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 for sustaining and continuing improvements. The report answers four key questions about the school.

Findings

1 Context

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

James Street School is a contributing Years 1 to 6 school set in suburban Whakatane. The roll of 229 students includes 182 who identify as Māori. The school is located in expansive and well-resourced buildings and grounds, which are well used by students, and accessible to the wider school community and whānau.

Since the last ERO review in 2012 school leadership has remained consistent and there have been minimal changes to the teaching team and board of trustees. Student learning has benefitted from a sustained programme of teachers' professional development about teaching and learning in literacy and mathematics. The school has also had involvement with the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Programme which has formed the basis for the school-wide Growing Great Learners initiative. This initiative is purposefully planned, evidence driven and supports students' learning and well-being, in the context of social relationships that benefit children's emotional, spiritual, physical and academic wellbeing and health. Ongoing review of the Growing Great Learners Programme and responsive systems for student pastoral care are enabling the school to realise its stated vision of developing a school culture where 'quality and effective teaching and learning is taking place in a positive, consistent and inclusive environment'.

The school has made a successful start to introducing students to e-learning, which involves them making highly effective use of computer technologies to enhance their learning. There are plans to develop this initiative across all classrooms.

The school has maintained a strong focus on accelerating achievement for students achieving below expected levels. An extensive range of data is used to make decisions about special programmes and interventions designed to improve rates of student progress. Teachers, school leaders and support staff cater for students with high and complex learning and developmental needs in inclusive and supportive learning environments. A significant feature of the school is the culture of high expectations, where all students are valued as competent and successful learners.

The school has made very good progress in addressing the areas for development identified in the last ERO report and has a positive reporting history with ERO.

2 Learning

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

The school makes very good and efficient use of achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement. Teachers and school leaders take considerable time to get to know students in their care and consequently know them very well.

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 students' achievement in relation to National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. School-wide data shows that in 2013 and 2014, while a majority of students achieved at and above the relevant National Standard, the proportion remains below national averages.

School data shows that a significant number of students achieving below expected levels made accelerated progress in 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics.

Teachers use achievement information in their classroom to:

- establish flexible groupings for instruction in reading, writing and mathematics
- identify students who require support and plan specific, targeted programmes to address these students' needs
- reflect on their professional practice and plan focused and deliberate teaching strategies to address ongoing student requirements
- plan learning programmes collaboratively to ensure the best possible outcomes for students.

The school has identified that improving students' knowledge of their achievement and learning progressions is a useful next step in helping students to become self motivated independent learners.

Leaders make effective use of achievement information in the following ways.

- They identify school-wide levels of progress and achievement by carefully collating and analysing data gathered through a planned schedule of assessments.
- The Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) identifies all students who are achieving below expected levels and, in conjunction with the classroom teacher, ensures an appropriate support programme is provided. Each of these students has an individual education plan with relevant goals to accelerate their progress. These goals are closely monitored by the SENCO and classroom teacher to ensure a meaningful intervention and classroom programme is provided.
- Information about student achievement is regularly reported to parents through a wide range of formal and informal methods. This enables parents to be well informed about their child's achievement, levels of progress, and how they can continue to support their child at home. The school is continuing to explore ways to further engage parents in this learning partnership.

Trustees make effective use of assessment information in the following ways.

- Trustees receive comprehensive information on a regular basis. This enables them to be well informed about overall levels of student achievement and progress.
- Achievement information is thoroughly analysed and used by the board to make appropriate decisions about school resourcing, including the employment of additional support staff and allocating funding to support staff professional learning and development.

- Achievement information is also used by trustees to set and monitor appropriate annual targets to raise student achievement with a particular focus on accelerating the progress of students achieving below expected levels.

3 Curriculum

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

The James Street School Curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning. School values of respect, pride, perseverance and achievement are clearly reflected in the school's guiding documentation, teachers' practice and student behaviour. The curriculum clearly shows how it is giving effect to *The New Zealand Curriculum*, including an appropriate focus on literacy and mathematics learning, broad coverage of other subject areas, and the key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

An important and positive aspect of the James Street School Curriculum is the over-arching focus on inclusion, particularly for students with identified learning and developmental needs. A special feature of the school is the special needs class, which caters for a large number of students with high and very high learning and developmental needs. Students in this class benefit from the high level of inclusion in the playground, school activities and opportunities to learn alongside other students in the school.

A planned programme of trips, camps and excursions outside the school is well supported by families, and provides students with rich and contextually relevant learning opportunities.

Students learn in safe and settled environments. In classrooms observed by ERO the following aspects of effective practice were evident:

- very high levels of on task student engagement in purposeful learning
- teachers deliberately engaging students in learning conversations that link to prior learning and challenge student thinking
- a focus on the development of students' oral language capability
- positive, trusting and respectful interactions between teachers and students
- ongoing affirmation of students' ability, acknowledgement of students' successes and regular feedback and feed forward to students
- print rich learning environment that support students' literacy learning
- high quality resources to support teaching and learning programmes.

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

The school is highly effective in promoting educational success for Māori as Māori. The majority of students at the school are of Māori descent. The school's curriculum is enriched with many Māori perspectives and strongly affirming of students' language, culture and identity.

The culture within the school is underpinned by the values of manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and ako. Tuakana-teina relationships where older students support their younger peers is highly evident across the school both in classrooms and in the playground.

Te Reo and tikanga Māori is purposefully planned for as a valued part of the school curriculum. Teachers have had professional development about tikanga and te reo Māori and use the language in a natural way throughout the day. Teachers view Māori students as capable learners and have high expectations for their achievement and success. Students demonstrate a strong sense of

belonging and pride in their school, and have many opportunities to undertake meaningful leadership roles.

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 for the following reasons.

- The principal and senior leadership team are providing high quality leadership and well-informed direction for the school. They have successfully established a strong sense of professional connectedness amongst leaders and teachers. Together they have embedded a culture of professional reflection and research focused on promoting students' learning and wellbeing.
- Trustees bring complementary skills and commitment to their governance roles. They have undertaken appropriate training and are well informed about student achievement and school operations.
- Trustees work closely with the principal to consult with the school community and ensure that the school charter and curriculum includes community aspirations, and is focused on school improvement.
- Teaching is highly effective in engaging students, improving achievement and promoting students' wellbeing.
- Trustees undertake effective self review to systematically critique and improve all aspects of board and school operations.
- The school is highly inclusive of all students and families, including students with high and complex needs.

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

James Street School provides highly inclusive learning environments for students and families. The board of trustees, principal and senior leadership team are providing high quality leadership and well-informed direction for the school. Students benefit from relationships with teachers focused on achievement with their learning and attention to their wellbeing.

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



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

21 October 2015

About the School

Location	Whakatane	
Ministry of Education profile number	1755	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	228	
Gender composition	Boys 54% Girls 46%	
Ethnic composition	Māori Pākehā Asian	79% 17% 4%
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	21 October 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	October 2012 March 2007 January 2004