

ERO External Evaluation

Meremere School, Mercer

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for students. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

School Context

Meremere School is located in the Meremere Village, south of Pukekohe and provides education for students in Years 1 to 6. The current roll of 31 includes 22 Māori students.

Since the previous ERO review in 2016 the roll has remained stable. The principal has continued in her role and there have been some changes to the teaching team. Teachers have undertaken professional learning and development in mathematics, writing, culturally responsive practice and teaching as inquiry. In 2019 the school received approval from the Ministry of Education to include Year 7 and 8 students from the beginning of 2020.

The school's vision states that the focus is for students to believe, achieve and succeed. Promoting the values of aroha, respect, honesty, responsibility and manaaki are stated priorities of the school.

Meremere School has strategic goals for 2019 that aim to ensure a high level of student achievement, a quality learning environment and a well-managed and effectively governed school.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board, schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- reading, writing and mathematics.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school is working towards achieving equity and excellence for all students.

In 2018 most students achieved national curriculum expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's data also indicates that girls achieved at higher levels than boys in mathematics and reading, and at significantly higher levels in writing.

Student achievement over the past three years has remained consistent in reading and writing, and significantly improved in mathematics.

1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

The school is effectively accelerating learning for Māori students and others who need this.

Achievement data for 2018 shows effective acceleration for at-risk learners in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes some students with additional learning needs who have not yet reached expected levels but have made more than a year's progress within a year.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

The principal has developed a culture of high relational trust at all levels of the school community. There is a planned approach to building teacher capability through appropriate professional learning and development. Recent professional development is strengthening culturally responsive practices within the school. School-wide tracking systems that closely monitor progress and achievement of individual at-risk students are well embedded. The principal and teachers ensure students with additional learning needs are well supported through a range of appropriate processes and initiatives. This includes working closely with parents and accessing effective input from external agencies when needed. The school has established useful education networks which are supporting equity and excellence for all students.

Teachers have respectful relationships with students. Interactions are positive and affirming and students benefit from the many cooperative learning opportunities provided. Teaching and learning programmes have a strong focus on foundation literacy and mathematics concepts. Students have access to digital technology in well-resourced classrooms that support progress and achievement particularly for those students at risk of not achieving. Orderly and supportive learning environments contribute to high levels of student engagement.

Students participate and learn in caring and inclusive learning environments. The school has a strong commitment to supporting student wellbeing and a sense of belonging. Teachers know their students and whānau well and work cooperatively to share this knowledge in the best interests of students. The school values and positive key behaviours are well known by teachers and students and are embedded in classroom programmes. Parents and whānau feel welcome in the school and are well informed about their child's learning and progress.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

There is a need to strengthen student ownership of learning, particularly for at-risk learners. Teachers should consider ways to support students:

- to develop their understanding and knowledge of their own learning pathways
- to develop strategies to evaluate and assess their own and others' work against clear criteria.

The school has begun to review its local curriculum. A next step is to continue to engage whānau and iwi in the process, to reflect their aims and aspirations and local contexts for learning.

The curriculum also needs to include agreed school-wide expectations for teaching and learning, particularly about planning and assessment. This is necessary to strengthen consistency of classroom practice by teachers.

3 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board 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 the following:

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

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student safety and wellbeing:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Children's Act 2014.

4 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Meremere School's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed.

ERO's Framework: [*Overall Findings and Judgement Tool derived from School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success*](#) is available on ERO's website.

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- leadership that build a collaborative and positive school culture
- partnerships for learning that support equity and excellence for all students.

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in:

- curriculum review to establish agreed expectations for teaching and learning
- practices that enable students to monitor and make decisions about their learning pathways.

Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, the board of trustees should:

- maintain school records about staff appointments that meet requirements for safety checking the work force
- ensure emergency drills are carried out as planned, documented and reported to the board.



Phillip Cowie
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Central Region

19 December 2019

About the school

Location	Mercer
Ministry of Education profile number	1373
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)
School roll	31
Gender composition	Female 18 Male 13
Ethnic composition	Māori 22 NZ European/Pākehā 6 Other 3
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	No
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	October 2019
Date of this report	19 December 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review June 2016 Education Review May 2014 Education Review May 2011