

Owhango School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Owhango	
Ministry of Education profile number	2417	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	52	
Gender composition	Female 29, Male 23	
Ethnic composition	Māori	8
	NZ European/Pākehā	44
Review team on site	March 2014	
Date of this report	22 May 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	March 2010
	Education Review	May 2006
	Education Review	May 2003

The Purpose of an ERO Report

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.

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1 Context

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

Owhango School is a Year 1 to 8 full primary school, set in a rural community south of Taumarunui. Trustees, school staff, families and whānau have positive relationships. A collective responsibility for students' wellbeing and holistic development is evident. A culture of care underpins teacher and student relationships. The school's mission statement 'working together to achieve our very best' and PAR (participate, achieve, respect) are an integral part of children's educational experience. These provide a positive platform for learning.

2 Learning

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

School leaders and teachers use achievement information for a range of useful purposes. Trustees receive student achievement data in reading, writing and mathematics that assists in setting targets and goals for further improvement.

Teachers are using assessment tools more effectively to make overall teacher judgements about students' progress toward the National Standards in writing, reading and mathematics. The majority of learners, including Māori, make good progress. Students identified as requiring additional support to achieve academic and social success are well catered for through focused in-class teaching and specialist interventions. Their attendance, learning behaviours, developing strategies and progress are closely monitored.

Teachers analyse data well to plan for the needs of students in the classroom. Staff regularly reflect on their practice through collaborative professional conversations with colleagues. Increasingly, teachers are using assessment better to modify lessons and to identify and use effective teaching strategies that respond to students' next steps for learning. As a consequence, students know what they are learning and the strategies they need to progress.

3 Curriculum

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

The vision and values of Owhango School's curriculum are an integral part of students' educational experience. Strong links between the school's curriculum and the principles and key competencies in The New Zealand Curriculum are evident. Appropriate timetabling for literacy and mathematics reflects national priorities. An integrated approach, through topics and experiences of high interest to students, supports their learning about science, social sciences, the arts and aspects of te ao Māori.

Ongoing review of learning programmes continues. School leaders and teachers regularly reflect on what they think is working well. The current professional development and learning programme for teachers, 'The Incredible Years' and 'Positive Behaviours for Learning (PB4L),' are becoming an integral part of the curriculum. Teachers and students have a range of useful strategies, attitudes and skills that encourage attendance, engagement, successful partnerships for learning and wellbeing.

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

The school has a solid foundation of successful practice that impacts positively on the progress, achievement and engagement of all students. There is a plan to improve educational outcomes for Māori. This includes a programme for te reo Māori learning. However the plan is not sufficiently developed to bring about the changes desired by the school and whānau. It is now timely to more deliberately focus on promoting success for Māori, as Māori. School leaders and teachers should:

- with whānau, develop and express relevant cultural competencies desired for Māori learners; take account of hapū, iwi and the nation's aspirations; develop clear measurable outcomes and show how success will be reviewed
- use self-review processes to determine successful practices that support Māori learners' culture, language and identity and use this information to make relevant changes to the school's curriculum expectations.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

Staff and trustees work cooperatively to continually improve the quality of schooling and support all students' wellbeing. New board members are developing understandings of their role as governors. Leaders and staff know the value of looking at what is going well and where improvements may be needed. Review informs school development decisions and identifies the professional learning needs of leaders and teachers.

Teaching staff are highly reflective practitioners who work collaboratively and share responsibility for learners in this school. All are involved in ongoing professional learning and development.

Planned development for 2014 is for leaders and teachers to inquire more deeply into achievement data to raise student achievement. ERO affirms this developing practice and suggests the approach be extended to inquire into the value added from professional development and interventions in raising achievement. This should strengthen evaluation practice.

Leaders and teachers recognise that the school's appraisal practice could be improved. An external appraiser has been contracted to assist. ERO affirms this planned development. Consideration should be given to improving senior leaders' and teachers' appraisal to demonstrate:

- evidence-based professional learning and leadership that supports Māori and all learners, their families, whānau, hapū and iwi
- exploring Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners and how this might be incorporated into teacher appraisal to further support the achievement of the school's goals.

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 three years.

Joyce Gebbie
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