



**Owairoa School  
Howick, Auckland**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Owairoa 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?**

Owairoa School is located in the eastern suburb of Howick, Auckland. It is a large primary school catering for students from Years 1 to 6. A culturally diverse mix of students attends the school. The roll is growing, particularly at junior level, and this will continue to present challenges for the board of trustees.

The school's culture is one where children and teachers work and learn together cooperatively. Inclusion of families is a key value actively promoted by all who participate in and contribute to the school's success. The school acts as a community hub and parents report high levels of confidence in its philosophy and learning culture.

The curriculum values of respect, integrity, excellence and self-esteem are effectively promoted and are an evident part of children's learning. The school's curriculum is also enriched through a focus on eco-sustainability. School grounds are well maintained, attractively planted and encourage student pride in the school. The calm and inclusive school tone promotes children's wellbeing.

ERO's 2011 report identified some educational issues that have been capably addressed during the last three years.

### 2 Learning

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

Owairoa School leaders and teachers use school achievement information very well to track and analyse the learning progress of students. Senior leaders evaluate data from class teachers, to identify learning patterns and trends over time. This process ensures that individuals and groups of students receive learning support where needed. Inquiry by teachers into this data also helps staff to share effective teaching strategies.

Most students achieve well and perform at levels at or above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Students are aware of their own progress and can talk about their learning journey in conferences with parents and teachers. During conference time parents receive student

reports and use the opportunity to inquire about their child's learning. The school uses an appropriate format for reporting student progress and achievement against National Standards to parents.

Students with special learning needs are promptly identified. Accelerating the progress of learners who need additional support is a priority focus for the board of trustees. Success in this area is driven by specialist support teachers who use personalised approaches to promote children's progress. They communicate with class teachers of identified children, so that their learning is strengthened within the main class programmes.

The majority of five year olds entering Owairoa School have experienced early childhood education. This helps them to transition well to school and enhances the early learning experiences the school offers to Year 1 children, particularly the Super Start programme. Other transition points for children, during and at the end of their primary school years, are well managed and supportive.

### **3 Curriculum**

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

Owairoa School's curriculum is well aligned to *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC). It is a values based curriculum that promotes student respect for one another and strong connections with the local community.

Teaching teams are provided with high quality curriculum leadership to support and enhance their delivery of the school's learning programmes. Teachers' practice is underpinned by a school-wide expectation that formative learning is a key aspect of classroom practice. These formative strategies equip children to take more responsibility for their learning.

Within the curriculum there is emphasis on the importance of key competencies such as thinking, participating and contributing. The school's values promote social connectedness as a positive basis for learning. A focus on co-operative and collaborative learning also promotes children's well being.

Literacy and numeracy are appropriately prioritised in the curriculum as foundation learning areas. Other subject areas in the NZC document are positioned within the school's inquiry programme that investigates various topics and themes and allows children to have some ownership of their learning.

The school's planned e-learning vision is at the implementation stage and is designed to further enhance the quality of the school's future learning processes.

An extensive range of co-curricular activities, sports and cultural programmes, environmental experiences and education outside the classroom engage many children within the school.

School leaders and ERO have agreed that the curriculum could be further developed through:

- extending opportunities for children to have more choice and voice in the inquiry learning programme
- promoting high expectations for different learning approaches alongside the high expectations set for student achievement.

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

Owairoa School effectively promotes educational success for Māori students as Māori. The principal models the use of te reo and seeks advice for school kawa for formal occasions. Whānau views and perspectives are sought by both the board of trustees and school leaders.

A school kaumatua is helping the Owairoa school community in relation to its journey with Māori language, culture and identity. The presence of language and culture in the school affirms Māori children and helps to develop an understanding of New Zealand's bicultural heritage for all children.

School leaders are currently pursuing their commitment to further develop te reo Māori me ona tikanga. They also wish to develop their partnerships with local iwi more fully.

Māori students make good academic progress at Owairoa School and achieve well overall. They are achieving at a slightly lower rate than other students collectively, in relation to National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, data also indicates that Māori students are performing at higher levels than other Māori students in the Auckland region and nationally.

Tuakana-teina and kaitiakitanga are examples of embedded Māori concepts that enrich school processes and are enjoyed by all children in the school.

Establishing a Māori Education Plan within the school's wider strategic plan would help to bring a sustainable focus to these positive developments.

## **4 Sustainable Performance**

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

The school is very well placed to sustain ongoing development and capability. There is a culture of continuous improvement at all levels of the school.

The board of trustees is experienced and supportive of school leadership. Trustees bring varied community and business expertise to the governance role. Board resourcing decisions are based on student learning needs.

There is long-term and experienced leadership at all levels of the school and new leadership is grown and encouraged from within. The principal and other school leaders are an effective group of professionals who continue to be active contributors to local clusters and networks that promote initiatives for educational improvement.

During the course of the ERO review, the following considerations for future development were agreed to by the board and school leaders:

- a more documented approach to the self review of strategic and annual plans by both the board of trustees and senior leadership team
- rationalising policies and procedures to better reflect the current status of the school.

## Provision for international students

The 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 Owairoa School had 16 international students. These students are well integrated into school life and benefit from high levels of connection with the school community. The school provides very high quality English language programmes for children who are learning English as a second language. Students also benefit from the high quality pastoral care systems in place. The board receives regular information about the progress and achievement of international students.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self review processes for international students were thorough.

## 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

Owairoa School provides an environment where children engage in learning through trusting and respectful relationships with each other and teachers. Students achieve well against the National Standards, and their progress, achievement and wellbeing are central to school decision-making. The school's strong connection to its community enriches school processes and systems.

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

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Dale Bailey". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Dale" and last name "Bailey" clearly distinguishable.

Dale Bailey  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

27 February 2015

## About the School

Location	Howick, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1413	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	747	
Number of international students	16	
Gender composition	Boys 51% Girls 49%	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā Chinese Indian African Filipino Middle Eastern Samoan other European other Pacific other Asian	7% 54% 9% 6% 2% 2% 2% 2% 12% 2% 2%
Review team on site	October 2014	
Date of this report	27 February 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	December 2011 September 2008 August 2005