



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Waitākiri Primary School
Burwood, Christchurch

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

Waitākiri Primary School

1 Context

Waitākiri opened in 2014, after the merger of Burwood and Windsor schools. It operated over two sites until moving into purpose-built, flexible learning spaces in January 2016. The school caters for children in Years 1 to 6 and consists of six learning studios that each integrate two year groups.

Effective change management strategies have enabled the school and community to successfully transition into its new setting and provide children and their families with a sense of belonging. Careful consideration has been given to recognising and celebrating the traditions and history of both schools and the local area. This is reflected in the school's kaupapa.

The newly elected board has a mix of experienced and new trustees. The previous board effectively supported the positive transition to the new school.

This is the new school's first ERO report.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are to be 'REAL Heroes making REAL CHOICES - Hanga kōwhiringa tūturu.' This involves supporting children to show respect, to encourage others and achieve and grow as life-long learners. REAL CHOICES for children means becoming self-regulated learners, who progressively take responsibility for their learning.

The school's achievement information shows that most children achieve highly in reading, writing and mathematics and are at or above the National Standards. Achievement in writing, particularly for boys, is a little lower and the school has plans in place to address this. Considering the challenges involved in the merger process and relocation to a new site, achievement results have remained very positive.

The school reports that in 2015 Māori students achieved highly in mathematics and reading and at slightly lower levels in writing. Māori students made accelerated progress in reading from 2014 into 2015.

The school has robust systems in place to support teachers to make judgements about children's achievement. A range of nationally normed assessment tools, classroom practices and observations inform teachers' decision making.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to Māori children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school is highly responsive to individual Māori children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration.

Senior leaders and teachers have well-developed systems for identifying, planning for and closely monitoring Māori and other groups of children, who need additional support to progress. Planned

actions for raising achievement are culturally responsive and include the use of tuakana teina role models.

High quality professional learning and development (PLD) for all teaching staff, and a collaborative approach, are helping to accelerate children's learning. Focus groups of teachers are extending inquiry into ways to raise achievement for priority learners and those at risk of not achieving.

The school's curriculum and environment strongly reflect Māori history and culture. Meaningful connections are woven into the daily programme ensuring the mana and language of Māori are valued and promoted.

Current annual achievement targets and rates of progress would be further strengthened by specifically identifying the actual number of children targeted and how well they are progressing.

How effectively does this school respond to other children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school is highly effective in responding to other children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration. Senior leaders and teachers have a good understanding that what works well for Māori, also works well for all. Therefore, they use similar processes to improve learning outcomes for other children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration.

Senior leaders are actively involved in supporting teachers to raise achievement. They place priority on high quality teaching practices. There is a strong shared understanding about how children learn. Teachers identify specific strategies designed to address barriers to learning and promote successful outcomes. Senior leaders and teachers are inclusive and responsive to children's learning and wellbeing needs.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?

The school's clearly understood vision, values and priorities are very well reflected in the curriculum and other organisational processes and practices.

There is strong coherence between the school's priorities and expectations, and what happens for children in classrooms. The school's curriculum is carefully considered and emphasises literacy, mathematics and science.

Children learn in focused, well-paced lessons within calm, settled environments. They make effective use of a range of digital technologies to support their learning.

Senior leaders and teachers participate in and contribute to the wider educational community and have built some strong partnerships that support children's learning. A strategic approach is empowering teachers to develop their leadership.

A culture of reflection and collaboration is impacting positively on teachers' beliefs and understandings about quality teaching practice. Teachers in the first two years of their practice are provided with high quality induction and mentoring programmes. The school's appraisal process provides all teaching staff with regular, useful feedback. Teachers are inquiring deeply into identified priorities that support the school's strategic focus on raising student achievement.

Teaching teams work closely together in flexible learning spaces. This is making high-quality teaching more visible and strengthening the shared responsibility teachers have for meeting children's needs. The robust transition to school programme helps children and their families develop a feeling of connectedness and familiarity prior to starting school. Learning assistants are valued and are included in decision making about children's learning.

Teachers provide children with choices about their learning, within a carefully planned framework. The child-centred learning approach enables children to have their voice heard and valued. Children's home learning is actively promoted through relevant learning opportunities.

Parents are provided with regular information about their children's learning and school events. Bicultural partnerships are actively sought. The school values these relationships and acts on information and guidance provided. Leaders and teachers consistently seek ways to further enhance parent partnership in learning.

Senior leaders and teachers agree that further development of personalised learning approaches will increase children's ownership and understanding of their own learning.

The board has a strategic focus on children's learning and wellbeing and receives high quality information and recommendations that enable it to effectively resource the school. The board needs to develop a system for regularly evaluating its own effectiveness.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it? How well placed is the school to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

The senior leadership team has high expectations for teaching and learning. A significant strength is the way senior leaders use research effectively to inform decision making and practice. They provide very clear guidelines for teachers and instil a sense of urgency about responding to children's learning needs and wellbeing.

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

6 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

7 Recommendations

The board and senior leaders are very well placed to implement the next steps identified in this report. Trustees acknowledge that these next steps provide good future direction for the board as it continues to improve outcomes for children and will be included in their ongoing internal evaluation process.



Lesley Patterson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern

27 July 2016

About the school

Location	Burwood, Christchurch	
Ministry of Education profile number	685	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	628	
Gender composition	Female 53%; Male 47%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	80%
	Māori	14%
	Pacific	3%
	Asian	3%
Review team on site	June 2016	
Date of this report	27 July 2016	
Most recent ERO report	No previous ERO reports	