

ERO External Evaluation

St Joseph's School (Timaru), Timaru

Summary

The school has 200 students, and the roll is increasingly culturally diverse. A small number of children identify as Māori or Pacific. The Catholic character is strongly evident.

Since the 2013 ERO review, the school has continued to have high levels of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics against the National Standards. Leaders and teachers have been involved in Ministry of Education (MOE) initiatives to further improve teaching and learning in written language and mathematics.

The principal is the Lead Principal for the South Canterbury Catholic School's Kāhui Ako |Community of Learning.

How well is the school achieving equitable outcomes for all children?

School leaders and teachers effectively respond to those Māori and other children who need extra support to succeed in their learning. Conditions in the school effectively support children to achieve well. There are very good systems and practices to identify and address in-school disparities.

School leaders are improvement focused, and continuing to adapt and refine teaching and learning practices. They and trustees prioritise lifting the achievement of children who are at risk with their learning.

This review identified several areas where practices need to be improved. These related to setting and reporting on targets to lift achievement, improving internal evaluation and some curriculum guidelines.

At the time of this review, most children achieve very well against the National Standards.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

Equity and excellence

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

The school effectively responds to those Māori and other children who need extra support to succeed in their learning.

Overall, children achieve very well against the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In each area, a large group achieved above expected levels, especially in reading.

The school has successfully addressed in-school disparities in achievement. In 2016, almost all Year 2 children below in reading, and half of the children in a mathematics group, made accelerated progress and most reached the National Standards. At the end of 2016, the school had some disparity in achievement between groups.

Other school priorities are its Catholic character and for children to develop dispositions necessary to be successful life-long learners. The school constantly reviews and can show that its Catholic character is well embedded. It is yet to formally evaluate how well its other priorities are realised.

Teachers use a wide range of assessment information to make well-informed decisions about children's progress and achievement. Senior leaders ensure sound moderation practices within the school.

School conditions supporting equity and excellence

School conditions effectively support children to achieve well and effectively identify and address in-school disparities.

What school processes are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence?

Children benefit from a broad and responsive curriculum, underpinned by the Catholic charism and Mercy values. This includes authentic contexts for learning, valuing of Māori perspectives and other cultures. There is a strong focus on developing the skills and mindset necessary for life-long learning. Children have a good understanding of their progress, achievement and next learning steps.

Senior leaders and teachers closely track each child's progress and achievement. Children at risk with their learning are quickly identified. Their ongoing progress is closely monitored. Leaders and teachers work closely with parents to inform them as to how they can best support their children's learning.

School leaders provide strong pedagogical leadership and have well-considered ideas and initiatives to prepare children to be lifelong learners and well-rounded citizens. There is a good alignment between the school's vision, annual plans and other school systems and practices. Teachers regularly inquire into and adapt their teaching to better meet the needs of at risk learners.

Trustees show strong commitment to their stewardship role, and prioritise children's learning and wellbeing. They and school leaders frequently seek and respond to parents' and children's ideas and perspectives relevant to school decisions.

Sustainable development for equity and excellence

School leaders continue to improve school conditions to support equitable outcomes for all children. Some school systems need strengthening to achieve this.

What further developments are needed in school processes to achieve equity and excellence?

Some school processes need to be improved. Whilst school leaders have high expectations for teaching and learning and a clear vision as to what kind of learner they want, these expectations would be better sustained by being clearly documented in the school's curriculum. Internal evaluation of these and other areas needs strengthening.

The quality of targets to lift achievement and frequency of reporting to the board about these need improving. Reports to the board need to be more evaluative.

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
- 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 Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Going forward

How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?

Children are achieving well. The school demonstrates strong progress toward achieving equity in educational outcomes, supported by effective, sustainable processes and practices.

Agreed next steps are to:

- improve the quality and frequency of reporting to the board about progress towards the National Standards and targets to lift achievement
- continue to deepen understanding of effective internal evaluation
- ensure best practice about teaching expectations, and desired approaches to learning, are clearly stated in the school's curriculum document.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.



Dr Lesley Patterson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern (Te Waipounamu)

8 September 2017

About the school

Location	Timaru
Ministry of Education profile number	3533
School type	Full primary
School roll	200
Gender composition	Boys: 47% Girls: 53%
Ethnic composition	Māori: 6% Pākehā: 76% Pacific: 7% Asian: 4% Indian: 3% Other: 4%
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	June 2017
Date of this report	8 September 2017
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review May 2013 Education Review October 2009 Education Review September 2006