

ERO External Evaluation

Vauxhall School, Devonport, Auckland

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

Vauxhall School in Devonport has provided education for local children for 100 years. The roll of around 300 children from Years 1 to 6 includes small numbers of Māori children, and other children from varied cultural backgrounds.

'Onward - moving forward together' is the school's vision for its children, families, community and staff. Central to the vision is the widespread promotion of the values of respect, responsibility, resilience and whanaungatanga. The long-established school philosophy of teaching and learning focuses on child-centred practices within innovative/flexible learning environments.

The school's strategic goals aim to sustain and enhance the sense of community. They instil the school values, support children to achieve, and aim to develop the school's collaborative and innovative teaching and learning environment.

Student achievement expectations align to the reading, writing and mathematics achievement challenges established by the Devonport Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning (CoL). Continual development of the school's bicultural curriculum and use of te reo and tikanga Māori is a clear school target for all learners.

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

- progress and achievement in relation to reading, writing and mathematics and all other learning areas in *The New Zealand Curriculum*
- progress and achievement for children with additional learning needs
- progress towards the school's strategic goals and targets, including the impact of teachers' professional learning on student outcomes
- successes and achievements in other areas of the school's curriculum, including in the local and wider communities
- health and wellbeing information pertaining to students and staff.

Vauxhall School has a history of very positive ERO reports. The 2014 ERO report suggested that the school continue to improve its internal evaluation practices. Since this time, staff have engaged in

significant professional learning to enhance leadership, teaching and learning, and internal evaluation practices.

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 continues to achieve equitable and excellent outcomes for students.

Patterns of very good achievement are consistent over time. Almost all children achieve at or above expected levels in reading and mathematics, and most achieve at and above expectations in writing. Overall, boys achieve less well than girls in writing, a pattern that follows a national trend.

To achieve greater equity in boys' writing, leaders and teachers promote focused and targeted initiatives. These include schoolwide professional learning for teachers, using deliberate strategies to engage reluctant writers. Additionally, improving writing is an achievement challenge for the Devonport Kāhui Ako.

The school implements varied, individualised interventions and strategies for children to meet their learning and wellbeing potential. This approach includes generous board resourcing for an extra teacher and learning assistants in each learning area. As a result, children have very good opportunities for individualised and small group teacher time.

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

The school accelerates learning for Māori and all other children very well. Māori and Pacific children achieve similarly to other children in the school.

Māori and other children whose learning needs to be accelerated, are individually tracked and monitored. Teachers discuss and share information about these children at weekly meetings. As a result of these very good processes, the school's data show that these children make accelerated progress over time.

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?

School processes and practices are highly effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning.

The school's value system is central to the school's caring and inclusive culture. Children are highly respected as capable and competent learners. Learning in action opportunities allow children to promote social justice and have influence within the community. Children have ample opportunities for problem solving, critical thinking and creativity. They are well supported to take learning risks and to be resilient.

Teachers and leaders design and implement a highly relevant, local and contextualised curriculum that is well-considered and research-based. Their skilful practices, and commitment to innovation and change, has supported the easy transition to the comprehensive play-based learning

programmes in the junior part of the school. Aspects of the play-based learning philosophy continue to be part of the integrated learning programmes within the senior school.

The school's child-focused and strengths-based practices include staff working in partnership with families to enhance children's learning and wellbeing. Staff and children show significant value for learning te reo Māori and living tikanga Māori throughout the school. Transitions in, through and beyond the school are individualised and well managed.

The school promotes shared responsibility for supporting children with diverse learning needs. Staff provide a wraparound approach for children, including involvement of external agencies and families. These very good practices encourage children's success and promote sustainability.

Highly collaborative and effective leaders engage the teaching team in consensus-based decision making. Leadership approaches allow staff to be courageous and resilient in fore fronting innovation. They embrace professional learning that is well aligned to the school's strategic direction.

Internal evaluation is rigorous at all levels of the school. As a result, internal evaluation supports ongoing transformation, improvement and growth of teaching and learning practices and outcomes for children.

Trustees have a very good understanding of their stewardship role. They bring high levels of skill and expertise to the board, and are strategic and community-focused in their approach. The board is very well informed about all aspects of the school's operation, scrutinising information carefully to promote equity and excellence.

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

The school has worthwhile plans to extend and enhance the play-based learning philosophy and practices, and to continue promoting the school's bicultural curriculum.

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 *Vulnerable Children Act 2014*.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016* (the Code) established under *section 238F of the Education Act 1989*. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. At the time of this 2018 ERO review, there was one international student attending the school, and no exchange students.

The school has very good systems in place to ensure that students are well integrated into classroom programmes and the wider life of the school, and that their wellbeing and pastoral needs are met.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- highly effective, collaborative and courageous leadership
- school wide commitment to a child-centred, strengths-based and value-focused curriculum, designed to provide equitable and excellent learning and wellbeing opportunities
- highly skilled and professional teaching team who create authentic learning connections with the community
- capable stewardship that is focused on improvement, and assured through robust internal evaluation processes that children and families are very well served by the school.

Next steps

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

- extending current good practices to enhance the play-based learning and bicultural aspects of the school's curriculum.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



Steve Tanner
Director Review and Improvement Services
Te Tai Raki - Northern Region

25 January 2019

About the school

Location	Devonport, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	1541
School type	Contributing Primary Years 1 - 6
School roll	292
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%
Ethnic composition	Māori 3% Pākehā 78% other ethnic groups 19%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	November 2018
Date of this report	25 January 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review, June 2014 Education Review January 2010 Education Review December 2006