



Tapu School
Thames Coast

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Tapu 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?

Tapu School is a full primary school located on the Firth of Thames, approximately 20 minutes north of the town of Thames. At the time of this ERO review, there were 13 students on the roll, of whom nine are identified as Māori. The school has extensive facilities, including a swimming pool and a well-presented administration block.

The school has a strong commitment to manaakitanga and whanaungatanga. Students, parents/whānau and visitors experience a climate that nurtures a sense of wellbeing and establishes positive, respectful relationships. Māori students' progress is well supported by their families.

The school received a positive ERO report in November 2012 after an early return signalled in the January 2011 report. At that time, the school was performing well and was considered well placed to sustain and continue to improve its performance.

The principal and her release teacher were present in the school at the time of the 2012 ERO review. The board of trustees has supported their ongoing professional development to benefit the school curriculum and student learning. The sole-charge principal maintains positive relationships with neighbouring schools, and develops networks with schools and teachers in the wider Thames Coast area.

2 Learning

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

ERO observed high levels of student engagement in meaningful learning contexts. Students are focused, engaged, and enjoying positive relationships with peers and teachers. The school makes very good use of achievement information to identify students' learning needs matched to their individual capability. Teachers provide individualised support for all students to develop as confident and competent life-long learners.

Trustees receive relevant information about student achievement from the principal. They use this data to make appropriate resourcing decisions and set targets to improve student achievement. Students with special needs receive individual support to make progress academically and socially.

Teachers use a range of assessment tools and detailed observations to identify next learning steps for individual students and promote their progress and achievement. They closely monitor student achievement against National Standards and school expectations. For writing, this information has been moderated through professional advice obtained by the principal.

The school has developed highly effective and detailed systems for reporting to parents and students about levels of achievement and progress. There is frequent, meaningful communication between the school and parents. The principal appreciates parents' home support, which makes a valuable contribution to their children's learning and participation in school activities and events.

The current emphasis is on improving student achievement in writing. Teachers share literacy progressions with students, and have a strong focus on enhancing students' writing skills and abilities. Students, including boys and Māori, show an interest in, and enjoyment of, writing. The school has identified, and ERO agrees, that the next priority is to strengthen students' ownership of, and responsibility for, their mathematics learning. It is expected that strategies proving successful in improving teaching and learning in writing will also be effective for mathematics.

The school's achievement data for 2014 indicates that student achievement overall, in reading, writing and mathematics is comparable to regional levels of achievement for all students.

3 Curriculum

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

The school curriculum is well-documented, provides rich experiences and equips students with skills for ongoing learning. It has been reviewed alongside the community to reflect *The New Zealand Curriculum* and the school's vision and values. There is provision to implement the key competencies, which underpin school culture.

The board of trustees has supported teachers to undertake relevant professional development. This has enabled them to refine the curriculum and their teaching strategies to respond to students varied needs in a multi-level classroom. The principal has drawn on advice from advisory personnel, and developed professional networks, to engage in professional discussion and reflection. She has made good use of the appraisal process to refine and enhance her performance as a capable leader and teacher.

Students have a wide variety of learning opportunities, including trips in the local community. They participate in sports, working in cooperation with another school. Swimming and water-safety has been a particular emphasis, in response to the location of the school adjacent to the Thames coast and a local river.

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

The school is culturally responsive to Māori students, who form the vast majority of the school roll. Māori students' identity is supported through strong links with parents, caregivers and whānau, which underpin the family-like nature of school life. Whānau feel welcome to visit the school, and demonstrate trust that their children's educational success is a school priority.

Aspects of te ao and te reo Māori are naturally incorporated in the school curriculum. ERO observed strong examples of tuakana-teina relationships that were maintained across the wide range of age groups, including when younger siblings visited.

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 because:

- the competent and highly focused, sole-charge principal is providing professional and collaborative leadership for students, staff, trustees and the school community
- trustees are well led by an experienced and knowledgeable chairperson, and are committed to school development and improving student outcomes
- the school curriculum is focused on student improvement and a team approach to teaching
- relationships between students, staff and whānau are strong and respectful
- the culture of inclusion sets high expectations for students and staff
- clear guidelines and expectations are applied to all areas of school operations.

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

Tapu School is a family oriented school that is focused on students growing as life-long learners. Students are well engaged and experience success in a wide range of academic and sporting activities. A responsive partnership with parents, whānau and the school's community supports a rich and positive learning environment.

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



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

23 September 2015

About the School

Location	Thames Coast	
Ministry of Education profile number	1980	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	13	
Gender composition	Boys 7 Girls 6	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā	9 4
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	23 September 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	November 2012 January 2011 June 2008