

ERO External Evaluation

Rotokauri School, Hamilton

Summary

Rotokauri School caters for children in Years 1 to 8. The current roll of 205 includes 47 Māori children.

In 2016 a new board of trustees was elected and the principal was appointed at the time of this review (March 2017).

The 2014 ERO report identified the need for the school to improve planning for school development. In response the recently appointed board has taken steps to strengthen internal evaluation, systems and practices.

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

Rotokauri School is not responding effectively to Maori and other children in the school whose learning and achievement need acceleration.

There are some effective processes that contribute to equity and excellence.

Further development of systems and processes for internal evaluation, and to improve teaching and learning, is needed to achieve equity and excellence. The use of achievement information, building teacher capability and performance management are currently not well implemented.

Since the last review the proportion of children achieving National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics has fluctuated from year to year. The school's achievement information for 2016 indicates that most children including Māori are at and above expected levels. However, the proportion of Maori students achieving the expected National Standards is below that for other student groups in the school.

The school has capacity and capability to accelerate learning for all children. However, disparity in achievement for Māori children remains.

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- need to develop and implement approaches that effectively meet the needs of each child
- need to improve the school conditions that support the acceleration of children's learning and achievement.
- need to build teacher capability to accelerate children's learning and achievement.

The school agrees to:

- develop more targeted planning to accelerate learning for children
- monitor targeted planning, improved teaching, and children's progress
- discuss the school's progress with ERO.

The school has requested that ERO provide them with an internal evaluation workshop.

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 is not responding effectively to Maori and other children in the school whose learning and achievement need acceleration.

Data gathered and reported by the school, shows that approximately three quarters of all children were achieving National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of Maori children achieving these standards is below other children in the school. Although boys and girls achieve at similar levels in reading and writing, boys achieve slightly better in mathematics. This pattern of achievement has been consistent during recent years and the school needs to address this situation to achieve equity and excellence for all children.

The school's achievement information in its current form does not show rates of progress (expected and/or accelerated) for groups of identified learners. Leaders are unable to gauge the effectiveness of initiatives, programmes and teaching practice for these at risk children.

Teachers use assessment information gathered during teaching, to make judgements about each child's achievement in relation to National Standards. In order to develop dependability of teachers' overall judgements there is a need for specific and ongoing professional learning about moderation in reading, writing and mathematics.

School conditions supporting equity and excellence

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

There are some effective processes that contribute to equity and excellence.

The new board of trustees places priority on open and transparent communication with parents. There are strong processes in place for the school to engage in reciprocal relationships with parents and families. Parents feel welcome and well involved in the life of the school. There is an inclusive and strategic approach to developing the Māori dimension of the school's curriculum.

There are sound classroom assessment practices in place. Well-managed processes identify individual children whose progress needs acceleration. Teachers make good use of assessment information to plan and teach specifically to meet the identified needs of at risk learners in reading, writing and mathematics. The special education needs coordinator keeps detailed information about levels of achievement and progress for at risk learners. This information is shared with parents and used to plan appropriate interventions including targeted in-school support and the use of external expertise.

Trustees are highly reflective in their stewardship roles. They have recognised the value in constructively critiquing school-wide systems and processes. This recent approach is contributing to better understanding about important conditions needed to achieve equity and excellence.

Sustainable development for equity and excellence

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

Further development of systems and processes for internal evaluation, and to improve teaching and learning is needed to achieve equity and excellence. The use of achievement information, building teacher capability and performance management are currently not well implemented.

The school's recently reviewed curriculum is in the early stages of implementation. A shared understanding about expected teaching practice is developing and the curriculum is not yet consistently implemented by all teachers. Tools have been introduced to guide teachers' knowledge of student learning progressions in reading, writing and mathematics. Consistent use of these progressions across the school is necessary to establish the extent to which student learning is being accelerated.

Leaders and trustees need to develop a more strategic, planned approach to building teacher capability across the school. Priority needs to be given to the integration of the 'learning to learn' principle of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) and the principles of *Ka Hikitia* and *Tātaiako*. Cultural responsiveness is not yet consistently integral to classroom practice.

Performance management systems do not closely focus on building teacher capability to accelerate children's learning and achievement. There needs to be closer alignment of teachers' appraisal goals with school-wide professional development priorities, and teachers' inquiries into their professional practice. It is unclear how performance management processes are contributing to accelerating progress for children whose learning is at risk.

The management and use of achievement information needs to be strengthened:

- achievement targets for at risk groups of learners i.e. boys/Māori need to be specific and measurable
- leaders need to use school-wide achievement information to identify trends and patterns for groups of learners, and rates of progress for children who are under achieving
- leaders and teachers should make consistent use of assessment information to inform ongoing inquiries into teacher effectiveness
- trustees should receive reported data that enables them to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and systems to raise the achievement of children at risk.

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?

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Lynda Pura-Watson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Waikato / Bay of Plenty

29 May 2017

About the school

Location	Hamilton
Ministry of Education profile number	1930
School type	Full primary (Years 1-8)
School roll	205
Gender composition	Boys 55% Girls 45%
Ethnic composition	Māori 23% Pākehā 66% Other 11%
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	March 2017
Date of this report	29 May 2017
Most recent ERO report(s)	May 2014 August 2009 October 2006