

ERO External Evaluation

KingsGate School, Pukekohe West, 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

KingsGate School is a small interdenominational Christian school established in 1996. It became state-integrated in 2008 and is administered by the New Zealand Christian Proprietors and the Kingsway Trust. The school provides education for a culturally diverse group of students from Years 1 to 8. Students come from the wider Franklin district and beyond. Approximately 10 percent of the students are Māori and 22 percent are from Pacific families. Some children speak languages other than English at home.

The school roll has continued to grow. Since the 2015 ERO review an additional classroom has been established. The proprietors have purchased a new site for the school and a new school is being designed to cater for primary and secondary students.

In 2016 there was a change of school leadership. An interim principal managed the school for a year until the current experienced principal was appointed. The deputy principal was appointed from within the teaching staff and there have been other staff changes in the last two years. The board of trustees elected in 2019 includes experienced and new trustees.

The school's curriculum and ways of operating are guided by its Christian character. The school's vision is to be the 'school of choice for Christian families in the Franklin District'. The school's valued outcomes for students incorporate shared Christian values (SERVE: strength, empathy, respect, vision, endurance). The school's mission is to be a "Christian community of learning that nurtures young people towards their full potential as servant leaders of the Kingdom of God".

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

- achievement in writing, reading and mathematics
- student attendance.

The school is a member of the South East Christian Kāhui Ako.

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 is making good progress towards achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for students. The majority of students achieve at or above expectations in writing and mathematics. In reading, most achieve at or above expectations. School leaders have identified that the teaching of writing needs to be strengthened and that there needs to be an emphasis on lifting the achievement of boys in this curriculum area. They have set annual achievement goals for boys and for Pacific students in writing and for Māori and Pacific students in mathematics.

Achievement outcomes for Māori and Pacific learners are not equitable when compared with outcomes for other students. However, the school's 2018 achievement information indicates significant improvement in achievement for these groups of students over the year.

The school has improved its processes for collating and reporting student achievement information. The board is making better use of achievement reports when allocating resources to support learning. Appropriate achievement targets have been set for different groups of students.

Leaders and teachers have improved their practices for monitoring and analysing student achievement information. They are establishing processes for moderating their assessment judgements and determining what constitutes accelerated progress. They regularly discuss student achievement information to develop approaches that will lift the achievement of all students.

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

School leaders identify Māori, Pacific and other students whose learning needs to be accelerated. Strategies are being established to accelerate the learning of target students. These include approaches that have a strong focus on oral language. Leaders and staff monitor the progress and achievement of these students. There is evidence that some, but not all of these students are making accelerated progress.

Learning support programmes are coordinated by the deputy principal who works alongside teachers and teacher aides to support students who need to make accelerated progress.

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?

Effective leadership and stewardship are key features of the school that are helping to achieve greater equity and excellence for students.

The principal and deputy principal work collaboratively to provide effective leadership and to support teachers' professional growth. They have reflected on the success of current school operations and have identified areas that require strengthening. They are providing clear strategic direction for the future development of the school.

Senior leaders are involving teachers in leadership roles and recognising their individual strengths and interests. They are also encouraging and enabling students to take on leadership roles. This supports students' sense of belonging and ownership within the school.

Senior leaders are establishing an increasingly collaborative school culture. They are developing professional dialogue, a shared understanding of effective teaching practices, and a sense of collective responsibility for students' progress and achievement. The school's appraisal system has been reviewed. A new system meets the requirements of an effective process to build teacher capacity.

School leaders are committed to strengthening the inclusion of aspects of Māori culture within the curriculum and to supporting Māori students to succeed as Māori.

The board understands its stewardship role. Experienced trustees are providing appropriate induction and guidance for newer board members. Trustees value the improved student achievement information that they now receive from senior managers. They are taking an increased role in scrutinising student achievement reports.

A policy framework provides guidance for school operations. Some policies are under review to ensure that current regulations and requirements are met.

Trustees are committed to supporting the future direction and vision of the school. To achieve the school's vision, trustees have made significant progress towards providing new, larger premises. Staff have been exploring how they can develop teaching practices that will be consistent with the planned modern learning environment.

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

Leaders and teachers should continue to strengthen teaching and learning by increasing opportunities and guidance for students to take greater control of their learning. Staff could revisit previous professional development that focused on the use of formative assessment practices to identify relevant teaching strategies.

It is timely for leaders and staff to review their local curriculum. Their aim should be to ensure that it is more culturally responsive, and provides clear guidelines for teachers about teaching approaches, curriculum content and assessment strategies.

Student learning would benefit from the school developing and sustaining more educationally powerful connections and relationships with parents/whānau. This is especially true of Māori and Pacific families. Surveys of Māori parents and tamariki were undertaken at the end of 2018. These surveys provide useful information for future strategic planning to support equity and excellence.

Teachers and leaders are now in a better position to use appraisal processes to support teachers to inquire into their teaching practice. This will enable them to determine how effective their teaching is in raising the achievement of target students.

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 Children’s Act 2014.

4 ERO’s Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO’s overall evaluation judgement of KingsGate School’s performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Developing

[ERO’s Framework: Overall School Performance is available on ERO’s website.](#)

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- reflective and collaborative school leadership that is focused on improvement
- stewardship provided by trustees who understand their role and are providing clear strategic direction for school development.

Next steps

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

- strengthening the quality and consistency in teaching and learning
- continuing to strengthen learning partnerships with whānau
- continuing to develop evaluation practices to guide and monitor strategic planning and school development.

Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, the board of trustees should ensure that policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that all regulations are covered by the school policy framework.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Tanner'.

Steve Tanner
Director Review and Improvement Services Northern
Northern Region
19 August 2019

About the school

Location	Pukekohe West, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	603	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1-8) State Integrated	
School roll	108	
Gender composition	Girls 54% Boys 46%	
Ethnic composition	Māori 10% NZ European/Pākehā 56% Tongan 9% other Pacific 12% other ethnic groups 13%	
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes	
Provision of Māori medium education	No	
Review team on site	July 2019	
Date of this report	19 August 2019	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	December 2015
	Education Review	November 2012