

## ERO External Evaluation

### St Pius X School, New Plymouth

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 those students who need it. 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

St Pius X School is a state integrated school of special Catholic character in New Plymouth. It caters for students in Years 1 to 6. The roll has increased steadily since the 2014 ERO evaluation to 159 students, of whom 14% identify as Māori.

The school's vision is: knowing, caring, doing - mōhiotanga, mahinga, manaakitanga. The special character values for school life are: community, compassion, truth, service - hapori, aroha, pono, ratanga.

The school states that learners will be engaged in continuous improvement in all areas of the curriculum and will exhibit resilience, respect, responsibility, creativity and curiosity that supports them to be caring, successful lifelong learners.

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

- progress, accelerated progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- achievement in religious education.

Since the previous ERO evaluation, teachers have been involved in professional learning and development in school priority areas of mathematics and writing. Plans are in place for additional learning spaces to cater for roll growth.

## Evaluation Findings

### 1 Equity and excellence – valued outcomes for students

#### 1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school effectively promotes equitable and excellent outcomes for most students.

End of 2016 and 2017 data indicates that almost all students achieve at or above expectations in reading, with most achieving at or above in writing and mathematics. Māori student achievement and improvement is similar to that of their peers within the school. Pacific students are well known by leaders and teachers and are progressing well.

Overall achievement has improved in reading and been sustained in mathematics since the previous ERO evaluation. The professional learning and development focus on writing is in response to the small decline in the percentage of students achieving at or above expectation.

#### 1.2 How effectively does this school respond to those Māori and other students whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

Through well-established processes and strategies, the school responds effectively to those Māori and other students whose learning needs acceleration.

Student achievement information from 2016 shows that the number of children below expected levels in reading reduced over the year. Most Māori students below at the start of the year, were at expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end.

In 2017, the school identified and targeted those students who are achieving below expected levels. Data shows that all of these students made progress, with nearly half making accelerated progress.

### 2 School conditions for equity and excellence

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

The principal and senior leaders work collaboratively to realise a clear vision for equity and excellence. They lead change effectively to support the strategic direction. There is clear alignment from the charter, strategic and annual goals to teaching and learning. The environment reflects and celebrates the school's special character, priorities and focus of children's learning.

Trustees, leaders and teachers take a cohesive approach to addressing underachievement. A range of programmes, interventions and targeted resourcing support acceleration and cater for students with identified learning needs. Systems for tracking and monitoring children's progress, especially of those in need of extra support, are well established.

Students have sufficient and equitable opportunities to learn and succeed in the broad curriculum. Deliberate teaching responds to well-identified learning needs. Leaders and teachers have reviewed aspects of the curriculum to better reflect current practice and guide future priorities for teaching and learning. Collaboration promotes consistency of assessment judgements about children's learning.

Collaborative and responsive approaches successfully support children with additional learning and wellbeing needs. High inclusiveness is evident. These students are well integrated into school activities and engaged in appropriate learning programmes.

Māori learners' opportunities to achieve and succeed as Māori are extended through well-considered initiatives and practices. Genuine valuing of te ao Māori supports cultural responsiveness. Building children's knowledge and understanding of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori is a deliberate focus. Positive outcomes for Māori students are nurtured through partnerships underpinned by manaakitanga and whanaungatanga. Consultation with whānau Māori is further informing responses to Māori learners and influencing future direction.

There is a strong focus on wellbeing and very high expectations for students' engagement in learning. They know the purpose of learning well. Their voice is valued in decision making for learning and improvement. Students have a sense of belonging, are confident and positive. Caring, respectful relationships are highly evident.

Students benefit from close connections between the school and parents and whānau, who are valued partners in children's learning. Parents are well informed about learning and achievement and how they might contribute to children's progress. Leaders and trustees consider parent and whānau perspectives in decision making.

Clear processes and expectations guide staff capability building. Internal evaluation promotes improvement of school practice and operation. Leaders and teachers reflect on the effectiveness of their practice and interventions, identify what is successful and plan ways to transfer learning. Appraisal is responsive to teachers' development needs and supports them to improve their practice. Teachers' expertise, strengths and interests are used in relevant leadership opportunities.

Knowledgeable trustees scrutinise the work of the school in achieving valued student outcomes. The board is well informed about student achievement and the progress of priority learners. Trustees are strategic in their resourcing to support the building of leaders' and teachers' capability.

## **2.2     What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence?**

The school has identified next steps to continue to develop the localised curriculum and embed teachers' learning from writing and mathematics PLD.

Trustees, leaders and teachers should continue to use internal evaluation, including using existing information about acceleration of progress, to determine what works and what is needed to sustain ongoing improvement for achievement of equity and excellence.

### **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.

### **4 Going forward**

#### **Key strengths of the school**

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

- assessment and identification processes that enable teachers to systematically respond to needs, promote wellbeing and support learning success
- purposeful leadership and governance that sets clear direction for children's learning and promotes equity and excellence
- a culture of collaboration between leaders and staff that underpins a cohesive direction and high expectations for teaching and learning.

#### **Next steps**

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

- continuing internal evaluation to identify the impact of curriculum developments, effective practices and areas for further refinement in pursuit of equity and excellence.

### **ERO's next external evaluation process and timing**

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Davey".

Patricia Davey  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central (Acting)  
Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

21 December 2017

## About the school

Location	New Plymouth										
Ministry of Education profile number	2242										
School type	Contributing Primary (Years 1 to 6)										
School roll	159										
Gender composition	Female 54%, Male 46%										
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pākehā</td> <td>72%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	14%	Pākehā	72%	Pacific	2%	Asian	5%	Other ethnic groups	7%
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Provision of Māori medium education	No										
Review team on site	November 2017										
Date of this report	21 December 2017										
Most recent ERO report(s)	<p>Education Review, November 2014</p> <p>Education Review, August 2011</p> <p>Education Review, June 2008</p>										