



Tainui School
Tainui, Dunedin

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Tainui 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?

Tainui School is an urban Year 1-6 school. It has a new principal and very stable staffing.

Students who spoke with ERO described their school as a safe place, where they celebrate everyone's differences. They felt that their teachers knew them well and treated them as individuals. They enjoyed exploring and playing in their school's large bush area.

ERO observed caring and affirming relationships between teachers and students and amongst students. Students with special learning needs are valued members of the school community and receive high quality support.

The school works closely with some other South Dunedin schools to provide professional learning and development (PLD) for staff and explore teaching and learning initiatives.

Since the 2010 ERO review there have been significant property developments. These include a new classroom, flexible learning areas, special needs area, and upgraded classrooms.

The school received a very positive 2010 ERO report. Good practices have been sustained and built on. This is an improvement-focused school.

2 Learning

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

School leaders and teachers use achievement information in purposeful ways to meet students' needs, strengths and interests.

In 2014, the school received very good results against the National Standards. At 86%, reading results were highest. In writing and mathematics, 80% of students achieved at or above the standard. ERO noted a significant improvement in mathematics. This was a direct result of a well-led target to raise achievement, intensive work with groups of students needing extra support and useful PLD for staff.

Senior leaders and teachers make very good use of student achievement information. They:

- have rigorous processes for identifying, targeting teaching and monitoring progress of students who are at risk of not achieving
- make well-informed assessment judgements
- work and communicate closely with all involved in supporting students.

Some teachers model best practices in the depth of their feedback to students, the way they integrate assessment into day-to-day teaching, and how they encourage students to regularly assess their own work.

The principal and senior leaders carefully analyse school-wide student achievement data. This information is used wisely to:

- identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed
- monitor the progress of students at risk of not achieving and make decisions about the effectiveness of interventions
- identify students who need extension
- determine relevant PLD
- provide comprehensive school-wide student achievement information to the board.

The board is very well informed about student achievement and makes well-considered resourcing decisions. In particular, trustees allocate generous resourcing for students who are at risk of not achieving.

Key next step

Some students could have a better understanding (especially in reading, writing and mathematics), of how well they are achieving and what they need to work on. Some could have more frequent opportunities to assess their own and their peers' work. These next steps are consistent with the senior leaders' wish for students to be more self managing in their learning.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum very effectively promotes and supports students' learning. Students benefit from a broad curriculum. The school's values are known by the students and widely evident in the way staff and students interact.

The school is part of a Positive Education initiative. Staff members place a strong focus on caring for the 'whole' child. In particular, teachers prioritise students' social and emotional wellbeing and their readiness to learn. A range of school initiatives, such as Playzone Captains and Buddies, contributes to the positive school culture.

Students who are at risk with their learning receive high quality support. Teachers and support staff work closely to best meet their needs. Support includes flexible, intensive small-group interventions. The school can show that interventions have resulted in most students catching up to their peers and/or making significant progress.

Other curriculum strengths include:

- significant development of provision for students with special abilities
- regular opportunities for all students to hear te reo Māori and learn about aspects of Māori culture, especially local legends and places
- the way teachers inform parents about their child's learning and wellbeing and work closely with them.

The teachers care about students' pastoral and learning needs. They regularly reflect on their teaching and make well-considered changes. Each year, they carry out an inquiry into an aspect of their teaching. This includes rich discussions with team members and relevant professional reading. Teachers support each other and work well as a team.

The new principal is leading a focus on students being resilient, self-managing and future-focused learners. This is the school's current priority. It will include exploring how digital technology could be better used to enrich students' learning.

Senior leaders, with teachers, have begun to review their curriculum guidelines so that these better reflect their desire to implement modern-teaching practices. The review of mathematics is underway.

Key next steps

ERO agrees with the school's decision to review its curriculum guidelines. The school should also develop some guidelines as to the purpose and nature of self review in the school. There is potential to extend and deepen aspects of the review of teaching and learning.

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

The school has genuinely explored what success as Māori means. Adults work hard to ensure that students feel pride in their culture, are successful in Pākehā and Māori worlds, and that their strengths and knowledge are valued. The school played a pivotal role in enabling students who speak Māori at home to spend a day each week learning in te reo Māori. Students are very positive about their school.

The school works closely with, and values the views and contributions, of the parents of Māori children. The Whānau Rōpu sets specific goals for the school and works closely with the school to achieve these. This resulted in the school employing a te reo and tikanga Māori specialist teacher. The Whānau Rōpu reaches out to Māori families who are less involved in the school.

The school's commitment to promote educational success for Māori students is evident in the way:

- it targets any Māori student who needs extra support with their learning
- recognises Māori concepts of giftedness
- it works closely with local iwi and values the cultural insights of its Māori trustee.

Teachers have benefited from sustained PLD to increase their confidence and knowledge of te reo Māori and te ao Māori.

4 Sustainable Performance

How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance?

The school is very well placed to sustain its good practices and to continue to improve.

Trustees are well informed about student achievement and the school's approach to learning. They carefully manage the school resources and prioritise students who need extra support with their learning. They show a strong commitment to valuing Māori culture and supporting Māori students.

The new principal has managed a period of change sensitively. She and her senior leaders provide strong and strategic professional leadership. They lead targeted PLD that meets the needs of all staff. They are well informed about current research, encourage constructive change and are improvement focused.

The school regularly seeks parents' views. These are collated and immediate and longer-term changes made in response.

Key next step

The school's strategic and annual plans need to be more focused on the stated priorities for future development.

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

Students achieve very well against the National Standards. They are enthusiastic about their teachers and school. The school has a safe, inclusive and caring culture. It is outstanding in its support for Māori students and valuing of Māori culture. The school has strong and able leaders and is well governed.

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



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern

21 May 2015

About the School

Location	Tainui, Dunedin	
Ministry of Education profile number	3841	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	266	
Gender composition	Girls: 48% Boys: 52%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	22%
	NZ European/Pākehā	65%
	Other European	7%
	Pacific	3%
	Other	3%
Review team on site	March 2015	
Date of this report	21 May 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2010
	Education Review	March 2007
	Education Review	March 2004