

ERO External Evaluation

Fergusson Intermediate (Trentham), Upper Hutt

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

Fergusson Intermediate (Trentham) in Upper Hutt currently caters for 490 students in Years 7 and 8. Of these, 18% are Māori and 5% are of Pacific heritage.

There have been recent changes in staffing, leadership and board of trustees' membership. In 2018, there was a significant roll increase.

The established vision "High Expectations for All – Rise to the Challenge", guides the school's direction. The values of Respect, Integrity, Self-management and Engagement (RISE) underpin school practices and were developed as part of the Positive Behaviour for Learning project. The school continues to provide a Meeting Challenges programme to support individual wellbeing needs of children, led by a school counsellor.

Staff actively participate in a number of professional activities within the Upper Hutt schools cluster.

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

- student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- outcomes for students with special and additional learning needs.

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?

Most students continue to achieve at expectation in reading, and the majority meet expectations for writing and mathematics. There is evidence of improved progress in achievement for some learners.

The school recognises that overall, Māori and Pacific achievement in reading, writing and mathematics requires improvement to reflect that of their peers. Significant disparity for these learners persists. Boys' achievement in writing continues to be below that of girls. The school has yet to effectively promote equitable outcomes for these groups.

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

School processes and practices are not yet effective in consistently accelerating learning for those Maori and other students who are at risk in their learning.

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?

Trustees, leaders and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to inclusive practices and promoting a sense of belonging that supports students' wellbeing and learning. Positive interactions and relationships are underpinned by shared understandings developed through RISE values. These values provide a strong foundation for building a culture of relational trust.

Students with additional or complex needs are well supported to participate in school life and engage meaningfully in learning. Good information from a range of sources inform decision-making about provision for their learning and wellbeing.

There is a clear focus on building a collective understanding of learners and their families. Teachers know students well and share information to promote their wellbeing and engagement in learning. Students' perspectives are valued and considered when making decisions. Access to the curriculum is enabled through appropriate, well-planned support. Students value the range of opportunities for learning across the school day.

Trustees demonstrate good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have a clear focus on outcomes for students and realising their vision and values. The board has good processes for effective operation.

Professional community networks provide opportunities for teacher and leadership growth and for sharing of practice and information. These support collective understandings and approaches to teaching and learning and assist students and their families to make transitions between schools.

The new leadership team is focused on providing a strong platform for students' achievement, wellbeing and engagement in learning. Priorities for improvement are clearly and collaboratively identified and there is a well-considered approach to development and change. A strong focus on building systems for enacting priorities through effective communication is evident. Deliberate actions build leadership capacity within the school. Leaders demonstrate a good knowledge of teachers' strengths and areas for development.

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

A review of curriculum is planned. This should provide clearer direction for teachers and help to:

- establish expectations for effective teaching to promote consistent practice across the school
- strengthen aspects of cultural responsiveness and connections to the local context
- ensure the curriculum supports student agency and is responsive to students' interests, strengths and needs.

A deliberate focus on addressing disparity in achievement for Māori and Pacific is required. This should be informed by a strategic approach to development in consultation with families. It should also be supported by:

- a clear focus on acceleration through improved target-setting and aligned processes
- better monitoring of students' learning and progress
- analysis and review of outcomes of deliberate teacher actions and targeted programmes.

A revised appraisal process is in place. Ensuring robust implementation should promote school priorities, and better support teachers to inquire into and develop their practice.

Current use of indicators of effectiveness in board reports supports the review of strategic goals. A next step is to build schoolwide capacity in internal evaluation and use of data to better identify effectiveness of actions in promoting positive outcomes for 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 Vulnerable Children Act 2014

Appraisal audit

The endorsement process for renewing and issuing of practising teacher certificates was not sufficiently robust to meet Education Council requirements.

Actions for compliance

ERO identified non-compliance in relation to policy review and appraisal.

In order to address this, the board of trustees must:

1. maintain an ongoing programme of self review of policies and procedures
[NAG 2b]
2. ensure the appraisal process for teachers is robustly implemented.
[NAG 3; s 77a State Sector Act 1988; NZ Gazette and relevant Collective Employment Agreement]

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- a collaborative leadership team with a shared vision that is strategically leading change
- inclusive practices that support student participation and a sense of belonging
- improvement-focused trustees who demonstrate understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Next steps

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

- improving equity of achievement for groups of learners at risk
- continued development of a curriculum to better respond to students' interests, culture, language and identities
- use of data for evaluation to improve outcomes for learners.
- targeted planning to accelerate learning
[ERO will monitor and discuss progress with the school]
- internal evaluation processes and practices
[The school has requested ERO to provide an internal evaluation workshop for trustees and senior leaders.]

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



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

7 May 2018

About the school

Location	Upper Hutt										
Ministry of Education profile number	2841										
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)										
School roll	490										
Gender composition	Male 51% Female 49%										
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pākehā</td> <td>69%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	18%	Pākehā	69%	Pacific	5%	Asian	6%	Other ethnic groups	2%
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Provision of Māori medium education	No										
Review team on site	February 2018										
Date of this report	7 May 2018										
Most recent ERO report(s)	<table> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>November 2014</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>November 2011</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>February 2008</td> </tr> </table>	Education Review	November 2014	Education Review	November 2011	Education Review	February 2008				
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