

ERO External Evaluation

St Joseph's School, Pleasant Point, South Canterbury

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 Joseph's School is a small, rural Catholic primary school (Years 1-8) with a roll of 52 children.

The school vision is faith based "Growing in Christ; challenging mind, body and spirit." The valued outcomes for children are centred on the Mary Mackillop values of gratitude, respect, make room for all, open to God and working hard to do your bit.

The school aims include:

- having high expectations for learning, behaviour and engagement
- recognising the uniqueness of each child
- the importance of providing a rich curriculum to support learning to learn
- reflecting the Māori world view of holistic learning and wellbeing.

There have been ongoing changes in school leadership. A new principal was appointed in Term 4 2016. Other changes have occurred in staffing and trustees.

The principal regularly reports to the board, school-wide information about children's' progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.

St Joseph's Pleasant Point is a member of the South Canterbury Catholic Community of Learning | Kāhui Āko.

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 is effective in achieving positive outcomes for most children. Most children achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.

Fewer boys have been achieving at or above school expectations in reading and writing over the last three years. The school has identified this and has begun to address it. Achievement goals have focussed on improving outcomes for boys in reading, writing and mathematics.

December 2017 school data shows that the school has been successful in improving boys' achievement in mathematics.

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

The school is responding effectively to children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration.

Progress and achievement is regularly tracked for individual children needing support. Programmes are purposefully provided to suit individual children's needs. Learning support is often extended to better enable children's success. Careful analysis shows many children make good progress over time.

Leaders and teachers now need to report rates of progress to the board showing acceleration and sufficiency of 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 school has many processes and practices that effectively support the achievement of equity and excellence. There is a strong focus on children's spiritual wellbeing, engagement and learning.

Children learn, achieve and progress in a responsive curriculum which reflects the school's vision and values. There is an inclusive culture that is based on positive and respectful relationships. The school has a holistic approach where the wider curriculum is valued. Children have a wide range of experiences through religious education, physical health, art, enterprise and community participation. The school has a strengthened focus on core curriculum learning programmes with enhanced opportunities for all children to learn.

Leaders and teachers are providing increasing opportunities for children to learn collaboratively in mixed ability groupings. Tuakana-teina relationships are being developed within the school's learning environment. Children with additional needs are well supported.

Teachers work collaboratively to develop a shared understanding of learning and teaching. They are well supported to participate in relevant professional learning and development that improves outcomes for children. Leaders are strongly focussed on developing clear expectations for effective teaching, children's progress and achievement. They are currently developing useful systems for monitoring and analysing student progress and achievement.

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

There is a need to build evaluation capacity at all levels to ensure meaningful and systematic evaluation of all aspects of school operations over time. This will include building the capacity of:

- trustees to scrutinise the performance of the school against their vision, values and strategic goals

- leadership to further develop systems for monitoring, analysing and reporting on student achievement and progress, undertake curriculum review and strengthen teachers' evaluation capability
- teachers to inquire into new approaches and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching in promoting positive outcomes for children
- children to reflect on and know about their learning and progress and what they need to do to improve.

Evaluation practices should be guided by clear frameworks and expectations and draw on the perspectives of families and children.

Trustees, leaders and teachers have identified that they need to develop and implement plans to further embed bi-cultural perspectives in teaching and learning programmes and practices.

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.

Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, the board of trustees should:

- plan and maintain a regular cycle of policy review
- ensure that appraisal of teachers meets the requirements of the NZ Education Council.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- a strong values-based culture that underpins all aspects of the school
- leadership that is focussed on developing clear expectations for effective teaching that continually improves student achievement and progress.

Next steps

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

- building internal evaluation capability at all levels
- further embedding culturally responsive pedagogy to reflect the bi-cultural nature of New Zealand
- developing further opportunities for children to reflect upon their learning and progress.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



Dr Lesley Patterson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern
Te Waipounamu - Southern Region

16 February 2018

About the school

Location	Pleasant Point, South Canterbury
Ministry of Education profile number	3528
School type	Integrated Primary 1-8
School roll	52
Gender composition	Boys: 25 Girls: 27
Ethnic composition	Māori 3 Pākehā 49
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	December 2017
Date of this report	16 February 2018
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review October 2014 Education Review August 2011 Education Review June 2009