

Tokoroa North School
Tokoroa

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

Tokoroa North School

1 Context

Tokoroa North School continues to provide very good quality education for children in Years 1 to 6. The school's roll is largely Māori and Pākehā with a growing Pacific roll of mostly Cook Island children.

The school has a long serving principal and a history of positive ERO reports. The 2011 ERO report noted effective leadership, responsive governance and strong connections with whānau. These features continue to be noteworthy. Good progress has been made in the school's identified priorities for development included in the report.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are focused on 'Together We Learn for Life – Ako ngātahi ki te ora'. The school's vision and values underpin the positive, settled tone of the school. The board and staff promote a well maintained, safe and inclusive learning environment. Children enjoy a sense of belonging and connection to school. They have equitable opportunities to participate in effective learning experiences.

The board is committed to resourcing programmes that promote equity and excellence for learners. Children at risk of not achieving and those with high learning needs are very well provided for. Capable teacher aides work with teachers to provide in-class and appropriate withdrawal support for individuals and small groups. A classroom for children with high learning needs is an integral part of the school. Trustees and families provide financial support to ensure that all children have access to a range of learning experiences. APSEL (Achievement by Promoting Social and Emotional Learning), is a long-standing initiative that successfully provides responsive support for children and whānau.

By Year 6, children at Tokoroa North School achieve at or above National Standards. Māori children achieve at similar levels to their peers, especially in writing and mathematics. Data in recent years shows this is an ongoing trend for Māori children.

Since the 2011 ERO evaluation the school has introduced the Kick-Start Pre-School programme, an innovative initiative to support transitions into school for children and their families. Meaningful connections are also made with local early childhood services and other schools to facilitate children's transitions into and out of school.

Further actions that support children's academic progress have included:

- significant review and development of the school's charter and curriculum
- strengthening teacher appraisals through targeted discussions with school leaders
- developing the junior school language support programmes
- maintaining learning partnerships with parents, especially in reading, that support children's further learning at home.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to Māori children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

School leaders and teachers have developed very effective processes and practices that respond well to Māori children whose learning needs accelerating. Processes include early identification of children at risk of not achieving; implementation of action plans to target their progress; ongoing monitoring; and thoughtful consideration by teachers to identify children's next steps.

Effective teaching strategies complemented by relevant learning support programmes are contributing to children's accelerated progress. School achievement data are well analysed and used by leaders, teaching teams and individual teachers to provide programmes that support children's individual learning needs. The school's achievement information shows that by Year 6 Māori children who started at Year 1 have made more accelerated progress than other groups in the school.

How effectively does this school respond to other children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

School leaders and teachers use the same high quality processes and practices for other groups of children, as they do for Māori children. Teams develop well documented action plans that identify the names, learning needs and numbers of children who need to make accelerated progress, including gender and ethnicity groups. These action plans link with the board's strategic plan. The board has a strategic goal that all children will achieve national standards by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. Almost all Year 6 children, including Pacific children, achieve this goal.

In response to the declining readiness for school of most new entrant children, and a comprehensive internal evaluation, school leaders have restructured the junior school. They have introduced a developmental teaching approach to foster children's oral language. Teachers provide children with experiential learning and specific strategies to support their readiness for further learning. Teachers are continuing to evaluate and develop this approach.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and priorities for equity and excellence?

School policies, systems and processes align well to achieve the school's vision, values, goals and priorities. The board works collaboratively with the principal to ensure resourcing is strategically allocated to support ongoing improvement to children's learning and wellbeing. Trustees have a range of professional skills that they use to carefully scrutinise school data. They evaluate their own role as trustees and participate in school governance training opportunities.

There is a strong culture of professional learning. School leaders and teachers deliberately focus on improving teaching practice for better learning opportunities for children. Teacher appraisal processes and teachers' inquiry into the effectiveness of their practice have been strengthened. Leadership is distributed across teaching teams to build individual and collective leadership capacity. Teachers value being able to develop their own talents and trial innovative strategies that result in positive outcomes for children.

Children are enthusiastic about their learning and benefit from school conditions that foster positive attitudes to lifelong learning. The school values are well known by children and their families. These values foster respectful and productive relationships among children, and calm and settled

classrooms. Children's leadership skills are regularly promoted through tuakana/teina opportunities in the school.

School leaders promote a bicultural curriculum and this is apparent in classroom programmes. They engage with local iwi and value their knowledge and expertise. Children in kapa haka participate in noho marae, which provide opportunities for Māori children to experience success as Māori. Leaders agree it is timely to review the effectiveness of the sequential learning in the te reo Māori programme.

Children participate in a broad-based curriculum that connects well with their lives, including celebrating Pacific and other cultures. There is a strong emphasis in the curriculum on literacy, mathematics and environmental education. The board has resourced a growing information communication technologies (ICT) infrastructure to support children's access to digital learning.

Home/school learning partnerships are promoted. Parents are involved in discussions about purposeful goals for their children which inform teachers' learning plans for individual children. Parents receive a range of relevant information about their children's progress and achievement.

Relational trust at all levels of the learning community supports collaboration and risk taking, and openness to change and improvement. The school's collective capacity to reflect and use evaluation, results in inquiry and knowledge building that contributes to sustained, learner-focused improvement.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children who need their learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

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

6 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 the following:

- Board administration.
- Curriculum.
- Management of health, safety and welfare.
- Personnel management.
- 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 children (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of children
- teacher registration
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

7 Recommendation

ERO recommends that the school continues to use internal evaluation to monitor and report on its progress towards achieving equity and excellence in outcomes for all children.



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

22 April 2016

About the school

Location	Tokoroa	
Ministry of Education profile number	2038	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	432	
Gender composition	Boys 54%	Girls 46%
Ethnic composition	Māori	46%
	Pākehā	37%
	Cook Island Māori	8%
	Chinese	2%
	Samoan	2%
	African	1%
	Indian	1%
	other Asian	2%
	other Pacific	1%
Review team on site	February 2016	
Date of this report	22 April 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	September 2011
	Education Review	February 2009
	Education Review	March 2006