

Plimmerton School Education Review

- 1 Context
- 2 Learning
- 3 Curriculum
- 4 Sustainable Performance

About the School

Location	Plimmerton, Porirua City	
Ministry of Education profile number	2960	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	506	
Number of international students	0	
Gender composition	Female 51%, Male 49%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	12%
	NZ European/Pākehā	85%
	Other ethnic groups	3%
Special Features	Attached technology centre	
Review team on site	April 2014	
Date of this report	27 May 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	May 2011
	Education Review	November 2007
	Education Review	November 2004

The Purpose of an ERO Report

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.

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1 Context

What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?

Plimmerton School is a large primary school on the coast just north of Porirua City. Most of the 506 Years 1 to 8 students enrolled at the time of this review were from New Zealand European backgrounds. Some of the 12% who identified as Māori are affiliated with the local Hongoeka Marae, with which the school has had a long association.

Staff turnover is low. The principal, one deputy principal and many members of staff are long-serving. The school's reporting history with ERO indicates continuing high community expectations and positive performance.

Since the May 2011 ERO report, steps have been taken to strengthen school culture, curriculum provision, assessment practices and student selfmanagement. School leadership is distributed across a larger team. Members have been participating in coaching for building capability across the school.

The community is closely involved with school life. The parent-teacher association is a highly active group that raises substantial funds to contribute to specific local curriculum activities.

The school mission is 'to provide a learning environment that will prepare students for life'. Facilities supporting curriculum delivery include a hall, an indoor pool, large playing field and technology centre. The local beach is used for extending confidence in water activities.

2 Learning

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

Assessment information is regularly gathered to make National Standards judgements and moderated to test their reliability. Data is collated schoolwide to monitor performance, identify learning areas that need development and students requiring additional challenge or support. The board and community are fully informed about performance trends and how well students are achieving.

Students achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics. Information reported for 2013 shows that most students achieved at and above in relation to the National Standards, with high proportions judged to be above in these three areas.

Progress is evident over time. National Standards data gathered since 2011 indicates that the good performance in reading has been sustained and improved in writing and mathematics. Cumulative data for Years 4 to 8 students, in reading and mathematics, shows the performance profile is trending upwards.

Programmes and interventions for students with specific needs are well coordinated and an inclusive approach is evident. Monitoring information shows that students make gains as a result of resources invested.

The 2014 targets, for accelerating the progress of small groups across the school, specify the individual students in classrooms and syndicates.

Next steps for refining how leaders and teachers work with progress and achievement information are to:

- monitor and analyse to determine the difference made for each individual and groups of students over time
- use information to identify more specifically what contributes to success and extend successful practices to other curriculum areas.

Parents are regularly and well informed about the progress and achievement of their children. They have termly opportunities to discuss their child's learning and progress in relation to the National Standards, their child's agreed goals and any other significant matters. The mid and end-of-year discussions are accompanied with written reports that contain good quality comments and suggestions.

3 Curriculum

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

The curriculum offers a diverse and interesting range of opportunities for learning. Provision is planned for balanced coverage over eight years. Topic contexts make use of local history, the environment and students' personal experiences. Students make choices within their classroom and other activities. Some students achieve recognition in a range of regional events and international academic competitions.

Classrooms are settled teaching and learning environments. Relationships are positive. Students interact respectfully. Student needs and abilities are considered in programme planning. Most engage readily in tasks and work well, either independently or as group members. They enjoy sharing the results of their efforts.

Students are encouraged to be reflective learners. More student involvement in co-construction of their learning is likely to support ownership. Consistency in teaching processes is targeted through syndicate leaders' expectations and monitoring.

Over several years, leaders and teachers have promoted the key learning competencies. In 2014, the focus is on developing resilience.

- To know more specifically how well curriculum impacts on students' learning and prepares them for their next education experiences, students' perspectives should be gathered and evaluated.

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

Most Māori students perform at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, proportionally more Māori students were above against the National Standard for writing. Analysis shows these are mostly girls. A goal has been set to continue to raise achievement by increasing the proportion of Māori boys achieving above expectations for all three Standards.

Māori students see acknowledgement of their language, culture and identity through school kawa, language and cultural programmes. A kapa haka group supports the practice of pōwhiri for welcoming new staff, students and families to the school. Māori students have their mana affirmed through leading these activities and through supporting others in basic or extension te reo Māori classes.

Links with the Hongoeka Marae have continued to develop through staff and trustees. A member is co-opted to represent local iwi on the board. Annual noho marae are held for

learning purposes, sharing of achievement information and input into curriculum.

Trustees employ a tutor for guiding staff and students in te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. Continued development is planned for growing teachers' confidence and skills in strengthening provision of a culturally responsive curriculum.

- To assist monitoring this development it would be useful to refer to the indicators provided in the Registered Teacher Criteria and Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to sustain and continue improvement. Governance is informed and effective. The board brings diverse skills and knowledge to the role. Responsibilities are understood and a business-like approach is evident though responsively planned and resourced priorities. Trustees enjoy mutually respectful working relationships with the principal, staff and community.

School culture is focused on high expectations for student learning, self management, success and wellbeing. Aspirations and expectations are communicated clearly through the shared vision, values and goals, planned actions and well-defined expectations for curriculum.

School development is informed through a systematically managed process of information gathering, reflection and next steps or review.

The school runs smoothly and efficiently. It is well structured for managing curriculum and daytoday business. Operation is effectively led by the principal and other leaders. They are an enthusiastic and committed team who are learning together.

Next steps for their work are to:

- use school systems and processes for monitoring quality and identifying opportunities for individual and whole-school development
- agree on what will count as evidence of quality
- inform these processes with knowledge of best education practice.

Communication with the community is regular, full and takes many forms. Partnerships in learning are encouraged and participation is high.

Provision for international students

The school is signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. No international students were enrolled at the time of the ERO review.

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.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

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