

Westport South School Education Review

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

1 Context

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

Westport South School provides a welcoming, highly inclusive and positive school culture.

The school staff know students and their families well. Supportive and caring relationships exist between staff, students and the community, with a focus on family. Students and staff are proud of their school and its attractive and well-maintained grounds.

Since the July 2011 ERO review there have been few changes of staff and the roll has continued to grow. The board and teachers have addressed some of the recommendations in the 2011 ERO report. For example, they have increased the use of te reo and tikanga Māori and have reviewed the technology curriculum.

2 Learning

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

Teachers make very good use of achievement information to support student learning and provide targeted learning programmes.

School achievement information shows that in 2013 most students were achieving at or above the National Standards. The majority of students achieve better in reading than in mathematics or writing. Teachers collect a wide range of student achievement information to develop suitable programmes that will meet the interests, needs and abilities of all students.

A strength of the school is the provision for students with special needs. These students are quickly identified and well supported. Teachers develop appropriate programmes to meet individual needs. Students' progress is closely monitored and reported to parents in a variety of ways. A significant number of teachers, with board assistance, have undertaken specific training to help students who are at risk of not achieving in reading.

Teachers make good use of external advisors to develop targeted programmes that support positive learning outcomes for students with learning needs and abilities. Additional assistance and resources are provided within all classrooms to support learning and behaviour for individuals and groups of students.

ERO observed students engaged in their learning. Students spoken with by ERO said they enjoy their learning and appreciate the help that they receive from teachers and teacher aides. They knew the purpose of their learning, how well they were achieving and what they needed to do to improve. Parents receive regular and useful information about how well their children are progressing and achieving through written reports and student-led conferences.

Teachers and senior leaders have close liaison with the local secondary school and early childhood centres. They work together to support students' positive transitions into and beyond the school.

To further improve the school's student achievement targets, school leaders need to ensure they specifically identify priority learners based on the wide range of achievement information collected within the school.

3 Curriculum

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

Overall the school's curriculum is promoting and supporting students' learning. The teachers have identified they will be reviewing and further developing the integrated theme approach. This will include other curriculum areas, such as science.

The school's values are clearly visible and well known by students. Senior leaders and teachers regularly reinforce these values with students to ensure that they are well understood and support the positive school culture.

Students are provided with a good range of learning experiences within and beyond the classroom. The school curriculum effectively reflects the local context and makes good use of the wider West Coast environment. External expertise is used well to extend and enrich students' learning.

Students' ideas are valued. For example, the recently formed student council provides all students with authentic opportunities to contribute to decision making at the school. Senior students take on leadership roles and are supportive of younger students.

Senior leaders have identified, and ERO agrees, that the next step is to review and develop the ways students know about their learning and how they will be assessed in all strands of mathematics and other learning areas.

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

The school has made significant progress in the ways it promotes Māori language and culture and supports Maori students to succeed as Māori.

Strong professional leadership is contributing to the greater emphasis being given to Māori language and culture across the school with greater involvement of the local Māori community.

The very large and successful kapa haka group helps to foster older students supporting younger students across the school.

A number of students told ERO that they are proud of the ways Māori culture is valued and represented within the school.

Teachers are well supported with resources to use in the teaching of te reo and tikanga Māori.

They have participated in a number of professional development sessions to extend their knowledge and understanding of te ao Māori. It is now timely for senior leaders to review how well teachers are actively incorporating te reo and tikanga Māori within their class programmes.

Most Māori students achieve very well in comparison to other students at the school. School achievement information shows that these students are achieving at or above National Standards in literacy and mathematics.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is continuing to grow its capacity for ongoing improvement.

The principal and senior leaders provide strong professional leadership. They set clear expectations for students and teachers. They make very good use of teachers' skills and strengths and encourage them to take appropriate leadership roles. The principal and senior leaders successfully foster and model a culture of collaboration across the school.

A number of well-considered initiatives have been introduced to help improve outcomes for students. These include a new process for appraising teachers and a focus on behaviours that effectively support learning and teaching.

Trustees have a wide range of experience and have undertaken some training to help with their roles on the board, particularly with planning. They are highly supportive of the school and have a strong focus on raising student achievement. For example, the board provides additional staffing and resources and funds targeted training for teachers to support learning and teaching programmes.

The board and senior leaders proactively seek feedback from parents and whānau and keep them well informed. They actively make links with the local community to help reinforce students' learning.

The next steps for school leaders and teachers are to:

- establish a systematic self-review process, which will enable them to effectively identify what is working well and next steps for improvement
- develop manageable annual priorities that can be effectively evaluated and are clearly linked to appropriate strategic goals.

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

Westport South School has a welcoming, family-focused culture. Student achievement information is very well used at an individual level, to support learner engagement, progress and achievement. The school's curriculum provides students with a wide range of appropriate learning experiences. Māori culture is valued and well integrated throughout the school. The principal and board provide effective leadership and governance.

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

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National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

18 November 2014

School Statistics

Location	Westport	
Ministry of Education profile number	3236	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	319	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	84%
	Māori	10%
	Pacific	3%
	Asian	1%
	Other Ethnicities	2%
Review team on site	October 2014	
Date of this report	18 November 2014	
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review	July 2011
	Education Review	January 2008
	Education Review	December 2004