

Somerset Crescent School Education Review

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1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report: Somerset Crescent School

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

Somerset Crescent School is a primary school for students in Years 1 to 6, located in Palmerston North. The roll comprises 49% Māori and 34% Pacific students who fully participate in all aspects of school life. Teachers know, respect and value students' cultural identity and some communicate with students in their home languages. This appreciation and celebration of diversity is the essence and context of the school.

Learning environments are stimulating and reflect the school's 'children first' policy. Classrooms have all been renovated with students in mind. Rooms are bright, light and comfortable and well stocked with high quality resources. Refurbishment of the administration block has further enhanced the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere of the school.

Teachers, the board of trustees and parents have high expectations for students' academic achievement and physical, cultural, emotional and social development. Teachers are proactive in developing student self esteem and regard this as the platform for student success. Staff work enthusiastically and energetically to engage students and make learning fun. Teachers are dedicated learners, reflecting on their own practice and working collaboratively towards improvement. They demonstrate a clear understanding of effective teaching approaches and determine, through self review, how these are best used to promote desirable outcomes for students. Teachers identified, and ERO agreed, that they continue to review their practice to further improve teaching and learning.

The principal and senior leaders provide high quality professional guidance for staff. Using a sound self-review process, managers identify trends in student achievement that do not meet school expectations. Appropriate interventions are implemented, monitored and reported to the board. Professional learning is ongoing and planned to match school-identified needs and new educational initiatives.

Trustees have a clear vision to improve student achievement and to provide a climate for success. They inquire into the effectiveness of support programmes and progress for students. The board supports management to make a difference for students.

Leaders and teachers are receptive, welcoming and communicate with parents to ensure that they are well informed about their child's learning and development. However, when ERO, the

board and senior leaders engaged in discussion, all agreed that they should continue to investigate ways to further encourage whānau and families to share their aspirations for their children and contribute to the life of the school.

Future Action

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

2 Somerset Crescent School's Curriculum

How effectively does the curriculum of Somerset Crescent School promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

School context and self review

Since the ERO review in 2007 there have been major changes at the school. In 2009 a new principal was appointed, followed by a new deputy principal later that year.

Significant work has occurred under the new leadership. Professional development has been undertaken to assist teachers to develop the school's curriculum and align it with The New Zealand Curriculum. The school charter and strategic plan have been revised to guide future direction. These focus very much on the learner and how best to raise student achievement, including specifically that of Māori and Pacific students.

Building teacher capability is a major focus, well supported by high quality external guidance in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and te reo Māori, as well as for literacy and numeracy. Staff are working towards an understanding of the reporting process for National Standards.

The school roll is increasing and trustees, senior leaders and teachers are proud of their school and its place in a positive multi-cultural community.

Curriculum leaders gather, collate and analyse student achievement information to share with each other and the board to improve teaching and learning. This includes separated data for Māori and Pacific students. Although overall achievement is not high, (50% of students are at and above national expectations for reading, writing and mathematics) students improve and show progress during their time at school.

Areas of strength

Students are highly engaged and motivated learners, who:

- talk about their own learning and next steps with teachers and peers;
- can often articulate what they are learning and why;
- are beginning to lead their learning and accept challenges to attempt new and more advanced tasks;
- have opportunities to participate and demonstrate skill in the arts and cultural activities;
- learn from teachers' verbal feedback about their effort, achievement and next steps with particular tasks;

- engage in learning that is especially planned to improve their progress and extend their capability;
- access high quality resources that stimulate their learning;
- use information and communication technologies (ICT) as a learning tool to explore and communicate their ideas; and
- experience a strong culture of Ako and tuakana teina.

Students are knowledgeable about their learning, engage positively with teachers and peers and are confident in their ability to improve their achievement.

Teachers have high expectations for students' academic achievement and social, physical, cultural and emotional development. They know their students well, celebrate their success and plan to meet their diverse learning needs. Teachers are dedicated learners, reflecting on their own practice and working collaboratively towards improvement. They demonstrate a clear understanding of effective teaching approaches and determine, through self review, how these are best used to promote desirable outcomes for students. Strategies include:

- providing students with learning activities and contexts that are relevant, authentic and interesting;
- establishing a pace of learning that is appropriate to students' needs;
- using deliberate acts of teaching, targeted to individuals;
- carefully sequencing student learning to build on their prior knowledge;
- using thought-provoking questions, ensuring that students see themselves as experts in different ways, modelling and encouraging students to contribute;
- closely monitoring students' progress and responding to observed learning behaviour;
- providing appropriate learning intentions and success criteria for students. At times these are co-constructed with students;
- assisting students to analyse and understand their own learning;
- managing classrooms through focusing on learning rather than behaviour;
- making connections across curriculum areas so that students apply their learning in different contexts; and
- building positive relationships with students, within an emotionally supportive climate.

Students learn in affirming and constructive environments where teachers are enthusiastic and energetic, valuing individuals' contributions. Those with special learning needs are

effectively provided for and in some classes so are those with special abilities.

Leaders and teachers provide positive behaviour programmes such as peer mediation, restorative justice and skills in conflict resolution. Issues of poor behaviour or other concerns are identified, and trends analysed. Strategies are being developed to address these.

Māori and Pacific students participate fully in all aspects of school life. Teachers ensure that they are actively involved in learning programmes and school activities. Teachers identify individual students needing assistance or extension. Students are highly engaged in learning. The aims and principles of Ka Hikitia and The Pacific Education Plan underpin practice.

Teachers are proactive in developing and promoting student self esteem and regard this as a platform for student success. Hau Pihī and Pasifika Pride are successful programmes designed to celebrate students' cultural identity.

Students are successfully supported and encouraged to develop and demonstrate leadership. They organise and run assemblies and take on responsibilities as mentors and role models for other students.

The principal and senior leaders demonstrate effective distributed leadership. They provide generous support and inspiration to staff. A planned approach to building senior leadership capability supports a cycle of ongoing improvement and self review. Teachers are empowered to develop and use their skills through delegated responsibilities. Ongoing and robust self review underpins school direction and informs decision making. Self-review processes are well understood and effectively used by senior managers to identify trends in student achievement that do not meet school expectations. Appropriate interventions are implemented, monitored and reported to the board.

Trustees have a clear vision and plan to improve student achievement and to provide a climate for success. Literacy and numeracy achievement targets identify that all students should achieve at or above national expectations. However, this has still to be reached. Trustees inquire into the success of support programmes and progress for students. The board supports a wide range of teacher-focused professional development opportunities to improve outcomes for students.

Areas for development and review

ERO, the board and senior leaders engaged in discussion and agreed that:

- teachers should continue to develop and review their practice to further improve teaching, learning and student achievement; and

- management and teachers should continue to investigate ways to further involve whānau and families, to encourage their contributions and acknowledge their aspirations for their children.

3 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Somerset Crescent School completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

- board administration;
- curriculum;
- management of health, safety and welfare;
- personnel management;
- financial management; and
- asset management.

During the review, ERO looked at the school's documentation, including policies, procedures and records. ERO sampled recent use of procedures and ERO also checked elements of the following five areas that have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment);
- physical safety of students;
- teacher registration;
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions; and
- attendance.

4 Future Action

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

Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

28 October 2010

About The School

Location	Palmerston North
Ministry of Education profile number	2363
School type	Contributing Primary (Years1 - 6)
Decile <u>[1]</u>	1
School roll	212
Gender composition	Male 56% Female 44%
Ethnic composition	Māori 49% Pacific 34% New Zealand/Pākehā 16% Asian 1%
Review team on site	September 2010
Date of this report	28 October 2010
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review June 2007 Education Review March 2004 Accountability Review October 2000

[1] School deciles range from one to ten. Decile one schools draw their students from low socioeconomic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides.

Community Page

28 October 2010

To the Parents and Community of Somerset Crescent School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Somerset Crescent School.

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they are well informed about their child's learning and development. However, when ERO, the board and senior leaders engaged in discussion, all agreed that they should continue to investigate ways to further encourage whānau and families to share their aspirations for their children and contribute to the life of the school.

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Review Coverage

This report provides an evaluation of how effectively the school's curriculum promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement. ERO's evaluation takes account of the school's previous reporting history and is based on:

- what is known about student achievement information, including the achievement of Māori and Pacific students;
- decisions made to improve student achievement using assessment and selfreview information; and
- teaching strategies and programmes implemented to give effect to the school's curriculum.

ERO also gathers information during the review to contribute to its national reports. The national reports are published on ERO's website.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, www.ero.govt.nz.

Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

General Information about Reviews

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting integrates the following:

- school curriculum;
- national evaluation topics –contribute to the development of education policies and their effective implementation; and
- the Board Assurance Statement, including student and staff health and safety.

ERO's review is responsive to the school's context. When ERO reviews a school, it takes into account the characteristics of the community from which it draws its students, its aspirations for its young people, and other relevant local factors.

ERO also builds on the school's own self-review information. ERO is interested in how a school monitors the progress of its students and aspects of school life and culture, and how it uses this information to improve student learning.

This helps ERO to answer the major evaluation question for reviews:

How effectively does this school's curriculum promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

Areas for Development and Review

ERO reports include areas for development and review to support on-going improvement by identifying priorities. Often the school will have identified these matters through its own self review and already plans further development in those areas.