

ERO External Evaluation

Mackenzie College, Fairlie

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

Mackenzie College is a rural, coeducational school for students in Years 7 to 13, located in Fairlie. The school has a roll of 184 students. Students come from a large geographic area, including Sherwood, Tekapo, Fairlie and Albury.

The school vision states that it aims to provide a positive learning environment where 'all students are encouraged to strive for excellence and to acquire the skills and values which will enable them to become responsible citizens of New Zealand.' The school encourages students to develop and demonstrate the values of:

- respect for themselves, others and their environment
- commitment to their work goals and the community
- personal excellence in all that they do.

At the time of this review the school's strategic priorities were focused on raising student achievement across all areas of the curriculum, developing student leadership, reviewing the curriculum to enhance relevance and engagement, and providing facilities and technology to support 21st century learning.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board, schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- achievement and progress in all learning areas at all levels
- Year 7 and 8 student achievement in National Standards (NS) for reading, writing and mathematics, and Years 11 to 13 student achievement in national qualifications
- students' participation and engagement in the cultural, sporting and community life of the school
- students' transitions to work and further learning
- aspects of wellbeing and engagement.

Since the 2014 ERO review, a new principal and assistant principal have been appointed. A number of staff changes in middle leadership and teaching roles has also occurred. Teachers have participated in a Ministry of Education professional learning initiative focused on raising achievement in literacy for the past three years. The school has reviewed the transition of primary school students into the college. 'Home room' teachers have been established to improve the continuity of their learning in literacy and numeracy and provide additional pastoral support for these learners.

The school is part of the Mackenzie Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning (CoL).

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?

This school effectively supports its students to achieve excellent and equitable outcomes across the breadth of the New Zealand curriculum. This includes successfully supporting students to: become lifelong learners; participate and contribute confidently in a range of contexts; become socially and emotionally competent and be resilient and optimistic about the future.

The large majority of Years 7 and 8 students achieve at or above the NS in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall and over time there is disparity between girls' and boys' achievement in reading and writing. Recent data indicates this is decreasing. Almost two-thirds of Years 7 and 8 students are achieving at expected levels across all learning areas. School information shows that Māori students have achieved equitable outcomes against the standards in recent years.

Most Years 9 and 10 students make expected rates of progress in English and a majority make expected progress in mathematics. A high proportion of Years 8 to 10 students successfully complete the school's Te Ara and Junior Diplomas. These diplomas recognise students that consistently demonstrate the school's values and have high levels of participation in the sporting, cultural and community life of the school.

School-leaver information shows that, in two of the last three years, a very high proportion of students have achieved NCEA Levels 1 and 2. The school successfully engages and retains a high proportion of students to age 17. Leavers are well supported to investigate and make successful transitions to employment and further education. About half of leavers, and the majority of those who stay to Year 13, gain NCEA Level 3 and University Entrance (UE). Girls are more likely than boys to gain NCEA Level 3 and UE and the school has a range of plans for improving the achievement of boys in these qualifications. Māori students achieve equitably in national qualifications.

Students with additional needs make appropriate progress and are well supported to achieve success in personalised goals, adapted programmes and NCEA courses.

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

This school is effective in accelerating the progress of a number of students not yet achieving at expected levels.

Efforts to raise boys' achievement, in Years 7 and 8, in writing have shown some success, however boys' achievement in both writing and reading remain focus areas.

The school was successful in accelerating the progress of the majority of Years 9 and 10 students in English and of Year 10 students in mathematics in 2016.

A high proportion of those senior students who received academic mentoring and/or special assessment conditions were successful in achieving national qualifications.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence?

Personalised learning supported by adaptive teacher practice is very effectively promoting positive outcomes for all students.

Leaders actively foster and enable personalised learning and adaptive teaching by:

- having clear and explicit expectations that teaching practice will respond to the needs of students
- ensuring teacher appraisal processes are well focussed on effective teaching practice and positive outcomes for students
- leading and modelling a culture of critical reflection on what works to support student success
- providing relevant professional development and management support to develop teachers' capability
- having useful processes for monitoring and evaluating the impact of teaching programmes and practices
- ensuring school structures are flexible enough to respond to students' interests and needs.

Teachers use student achievement information very well to get to know students' strengths, interests and learning needs. They use this information effectively to plan and adapt their teaching programmes and practices to enhance students' engagement and success in learning. Teachers are highly skilled at using a range of teaching and assessment strategies to ensure students with diverse abilities can fully participate in learning.

Leaders and teachers continue to review and adjust the school's curriculum to better respond to students' interests, needs and pathways to work and further learning. They make excellent use of the local environment, community and teacher strengths to provide varied, authentic and interest-based learning experiences. All students have the opportunity to learn te reo Māori in Years 7 to 10 and to experience aspects of Māori culture in regular school activities.

Students at risk of poor learning or wellbeing outcomes are very well supported as a result of effective school-wide systems and practices. A wide range of learning information is very well used to identify those students needing additional learning or pastoral support. Leaders and teachers in collaboration with students' families, work together well to plan and deliver appropriate support and tailored programmes for students. Where appropriate, staff work one-to-one with students to mentor students in strategies to improve their learning and/or wellbeing. There are effective systems for monitoring all students' progress and achievement over time.

Trustees, leaders and teachers build positive, caring and strengths-based relationships with students and their families, and with each other. These support teachers and students to develop confidence, collaborate effectively and try new approaches to teaching and learning. New students' transitions into the college are carefully managed. This includes individual profiling of incoming students' strengths, interests and needs.

Evaluation and inquiry processes are very well used to sustain improvement and innovation. Curriculum review makes good use of information about the achievement and progress of learners and students' perspectives to identify areas for improvement. Collaborative and individual teacher inquiries are well aligned with school priorities and goals for raising student achievement. The school is very responsive to external evaluation and has made significant progress in addressing the areas for development identified in its last ERO evaluation (2014). The school has received a very positive external evaluation of its assessment and moderation practices for national qualifications.

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

Trustees and leaders need to ensure that relevant student achievement targets are specific about the number of students needing to make accelerated progress to achieve at expected levels. This will mean that trustees, leaders and teachers can more effectively evaluate the impact of targeted teaching and learning support on outcomes for these students.

The following areas have been identified by the school's internal-evaluation processes and confirmed in the course of this review.

- further developing and clarifying the measurement of students' rates of progress in Years 7 to 10
- ensuring school-wide teaching and assessment practices strengthen learner agency
- clarifying and documenting the school's expectations for culturally responsive practice.

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.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016* established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

No international students were enrolled at the time of the ERO review.

Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, the board of trustees should:

- ensure it maintains its programme of ongoing policy review.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- flexible, personalised learning pathways and highly adaptive teaching that respond well to students' interests, abilities and aspirations
- very good systems and practices for identifying and responding to the needs of students at risk of poor learning or wellbeing outcomes
- effective internal evaluation that leads to ongoing school improvement.

Next steps

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

- target setting (refer to 2.2)
- completing the review of existing processes to monitor and report learners' progress in Years 7 to 10 to ensure the board receive relevant information to determine all students make sufficient progress
- further developing the consistency of effective teaching practices for building students' ability to lead and reflect on their own learning
- developing and implementing guidelines and expectations for culturally responsive practice.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

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

25 January 2018

About the school

Location	Fairlie
Ministry of Education profile number	353
School type	Composite
School roll	182
Gender composition	Female 56% Male 44%
Ethnic composition	Māori 10% Pākeha 82% Other 8%
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	October 2017
Date of this report	25 January 2018
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review 2014 Education Review 2010 Supplementary Review 2009