

Maungaraki School Education Review

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

About The School

Location	Maungaraki, Lower Hutt
Ministry of Education profile number	2968
School type	Full Primary (Years 1-8)
Decile rating[1]	10
Teaching staff: Roll generated entitlement Number of teachers	13.3 14
School roll	269
Gender composition	Boys 51% Girls 49%
Ethnic composition	New Zealand European/Pākehā 60%, Māori 10%, Other European 9%, Asian 8%, Indian 7%, Pacific 3%, Other ethnic groups 3%
Review team on site	September 2009
Date of this report	16 December 2009
Previous ERO reports	Education Review September 2006 Education Review December 2003 Accountability Review July 2000

The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Maungaraki School is a full primary school located on the western hills of the Hutt Valley. At the time of this review in September 2009 it had a roll of 269 students, of whom 10% are Māori.

The principal and board have consulted widely to develop the school values which are incorporated in the collaboratively designed visual representation depicting the 'Maungaraki Way'. These are clearly articulated by the board, staff and students.

Community partnerships are fostered through consultation, communication, participation and celebration. Mutual respect is evident among students, staff and parents. The musical production and community assemblies are opportunities for students to share their work and talents with parents and families.

The practice of self review for improvement is developing. There is a planned approach for improving school operations and outcomes for students.

The principal and deputy principal provide effective leadership. They are establishing appropriate roles and responsibilities for the senior management team in the development and implementation of sound literacy teaching practices.

Staff are actively focused on improving teaching and learning. Their ongoing involvement in professional development, using the expertise of the literacy leader and an external facilitator, is strengthening teacher knowledge of effective teaching and assessment practices. Examples include well-paced lessons with appropriate use of a range of teaching strategies. Teachers interact with students in a caring and respectful manner, and positively encourage and affirm their efforts. Generally, the quality of teaching in reading is sound and students are actively engaged in relevant learning activities.

Teachers use literacy assessment data to group students and inform planning to meet the demands of a wide range of abilities in multi-level classes. Students with special needs and abilities are provided with appropriate programmes for support.

The classrooms at Maungaraki School have been upgraded resulting in attractive learning environments. The grounds, buildings and plant are well maintained.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can govern the school in the interest of the

students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

The Focus Of The Review

Student Achievement Overall

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

Results of reading running records taken in term 3, 2009 show that 44% of students read at a level above their chronological age, 36% at their age and 20% below the expected level. This is an improvement from term 1 when 70% of students were reading at or above the expected level.

Reading comprehension Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) results from March 2009 show that students in years 4 and 5 achieve similarly to national expectations, those in years 6 and 7 slightly below and year 8 above. March 2009 reading vocabulary PAT results identify that in years 4 to 7 the school had a lower percentage than nationally in the above average band. However, 33% of year 8 students were in the above average band. Individual students requiring additional support were identified from the PAT results and assistance has been provided.

Analysis of end of year observation survey data from 2008 for students at 6 years shows that 56% of students were achieving at or above the school's benchmark. Other results show many or most students achieving at or above the expected level in letter identification (78%), concepts about print (83%), word test (94%), word vocabulary (75%) and hearing and recording sounds (86%).

School-wide analysis of writing in term 1, 2009 based on the national exemplars shows that 7% of students achieve above the level expected for their age, 37% at the level and 56% below the expected level.

The March 2009 results of PATs in mathematics show that the achievement of students in years 4, 5 and 6 is similar to the national reference group for the test. The mean stanine for students in year 7 was lower than the national mean, but higher for those in year 8. Numeracy results for the end of year 2008 show that most students in years 1, 4 and 7 achieved above Numeracy Project assessment expectations, year 8 students at expectations and students in years 2, 3, 5 and 6 below expected levels.

The school is assessing physical fitness levels in 2009. Targets are different for each year level and term 3 data show that for students in years 3 to 8 there has been a significant improvement since February.

Data are not collated or analysed in other curriculum areas.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Maungaraki School was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and selfreview information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Maungaraki School.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus area for the review:

- the quality of teaching and learning in reading.

ERO's findings in this area are set out below.

The Quality of Teaching and Learning in Reading

Background

Staff are involved in an externally facilitated reading professional development programme that began earlier this year. The school is interested to ascertain the impact of training on teaching and learning. ERO agreed that the evaluation of reading would be a useful focus of this review.

During the review, ERO observed literacy lessons in all classrooms, read relevant documentation and talked with teachers, students and trustees.

Areas of good performance

The principal and board have consulted widely to develop the new charter, set goals to the end of 2012 in the strategic plan and prepared for the implementation of The New Zealand Curriculum. School values are incorporated in the collaboratively designed visual representation depicting the 'Maungaraki way'. These are clearly articulated by the board, staff and students.

Trustees are clearly focused on student achievement. They have developed a timetable for curriculum review reports, presented by teachers, and guidelines for their content. The

principal presents regular, well-analysed student achievement data to the board. This is used to inform board decision making about programme and resource provision.

Some effective self review is undertaken. A framework has been developed which includes provision for the systematic review of board policies. An informal and responsive process is effective in keeping management procedures up to date.

The principal and deputy principal are providing effective leadership for the teaching of reading. For example they:

- have worked with staff to develop clear expectations for achievement in reading based on the learning progressions;
- effectively analyse nationally-referenced reading assessment data school wide to inform planning for individuals and groups of students;
- set suitable school-wide achievement targets for reading; and
- have led the development of the English implementation plan, shared literacy teaching beliefs and reading protocols.

An external facilitator assists with professional support. In-school professional development is well organised and provides good guidance for teacher practice.

There is a strong emphasis on developing the teaching of reading. The appraisal process for each teacher is linked to school-wide literacy goals and targets. The deputy principal and external adviser have observed reading lessons and given feedback based on agreed criteria.

The quality of teaching is generally sound. Examples of good practice include teachers using:

- assessment data well to inform day-to-day planning to meet students' needs;
- learning intentions to enhance focus on the purpose of the lesson;
- independent, shared and guided reading to provide a balanced programme linked to school expectations;
- effective questioning to promote reflection and critical thinking;
- students' prior experiences to reinforce new vocabulary; and

- clear instructions and expectations to establish routines and transitions.

Good relationships between teachers and students are evident. Student contributions are valued. Interactions are generally positive and purposeful. Many students are highly engaged in their reading experiences.

Most classroom environments provide effective support for the teaching and learning of reading. Examples include: displays of student's recent work; well-developed class libraries; use of information and communication technologies (ICT); and prompts to support students' developing understanding of English.

Appropriate provision is made for students who are identified, through well-analysed achievement data, as needing additional assistance or extension in reading. The special educational needs coordinator oversees the school's approach that includes suitable use of a register to record and monitor students' progress. Teacher aides provide specific support and, along with interventions such as rainbow reading and differentiated grouping, effectively target student needs.

The school makes available a suitable range of opportunities for parents to be informed about their children's achievement and progress. Goals for students' learning, including specific and carefully considered literacy goals are set and reviewed at termly threeway conferences between students, teachers and parents. Annual written reports indicate students' achievement levels and next learning steps. Community assemblies enable students to share aspects of their literacy success.

Areas for improvement

While there are clear guidelines for curriculum review, protocols for review carried out by the board are not clearly documented. This is compromising the governance and management relationships between elected board members and staff which should reflect the agreed school values.

Curriculum reviews has yet to include in-depth evaluation of the impact of teaching and learning on student achievement. The programme for reporting curriculum reviews in 2009 has provided opportunity for presentation of information to the board about each learning area as the school prepares to implement The New Zealand Curriculum. The 2009 literacy review, that is focused on teaching, learning and professional development and is being carried out over a longer period of time, provides a model that is likely to better inform school improvement in the future.

There is variability in the quality of planning for the teaching of reading. Plans do not always

include information about how the different needs of students will be catered for, what independent activities and resources will be provided or how ICT will be used. Some independent activities are not reading related or engaging for students. Specific learning intentions and links to the curriculum are not always clear.

The use of formative assessment is also variable. While ERO observed examples of teachers giving students appropriate feedback related to the purpose of the lesson, students are not always clear about the criteria for high quality work. Self and peer assessment is at an early stage of development. Strengthening formative assessment, including increased teacher and student co-construction of success criteria, is likely to increase students' involvement in, and responsibility for, their learning.

Teachers have identified the need to review the purpose and use of portfolios in the reporting process. ERO agrees.

Areas Of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Maungaraki School ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

Success for Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the extent to which the school was familiar with the Māori Education Strategy - Ka Hikitia: Managing for Success and progress made since the 2006 review in promoting success at school for Māori students. Māori students comprise 10% of the school roll.

The school reports it has taken Ka Hikitia into account when revising planning documents for this year.

Areas of progress

- Assessment information is used well to identify and report the achievement of Māori students to the board of trustees. Analyses of achievement information in reading and writing in 2008 demonstrate similar trends and patterns of achievement for Māori and nonMāori. These are addressed at syndicate level through appropriate programmes for learning needs and those requiring extension.
- There is an ongoing commitment to reflecting te reo me ngā tikanga Māori perspectives in strategic planning. A planned approach for teaching and learning includes:
 - a professional development plan for staff to gain proficiency and confidence;
 - an implementation plan for junior and senior syndicates to teach level 1 and 2 te reo Māori;

- - selecting an appropriate model that will meet the school's needs;
- - creating a school-wide inquiry plan or process to include guidelines;
- - integrating tikanga perspectives into the curriculum and the development of an implementation plan; and
- - reviewing resources to inform what further support is needed.
- The board and parents support this planned approach to sustain the teaching and learning of te reo Māori in the school.

Area for further improvement

The integrated use of te reo Māori in general classroom teaching is not consistently evident. The principal and staff are aware of the need to continue to develop a framework to implement te reo me ngā tikanga Māori school wide.

Preparing to Give Effect to The New Zealand Curriculum

Schools are currently working towards implementing The New Zealand Curriculum by February 2010. During this review ERO investigated the progress Maungaraki School is making towards giving full effect to the curriculum as part of its planning, organisation and teaching practice.

ERO found that school leaders and teachers at Maungaraki School are making good progress towards giving effect to The New Zealand Curriculum in their planning, organisation and teaching.

Next Steps

Senior managers have identified that next year they will explore models of curriculum development and review processes that will meet the needs of the school.

Including Students with High Needs

During this review ERO investigated the extent to which the board and school leaders of Maungaraki School provide an inclusive education for students with high needs. This included collecting evidence about the school's policies, processes and practices to support the enrolment and induction of students with high needs and to support their participation and achievement at school. The information collected during this review will contribute to information that will be reported in a national education evaluation report.

Prior to a review, a board of trustees and principal attest in the Board Assurance Statement that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal requirements including those detailed in Ministry of Education circulars and other documents.

The board of Maungaraki School was asked to attest to whether it had 'ensured that teachers of students with disabilities, and other contact staff, have a sound understanding of the learning needs of students with disabilities and, where necessary, have put in place support systems centred on each individual with disabilities.' The board was also asked to attest that 'policies and procedures that relate to students who have special education needs are implemented without discrimination'.

ERO's findings confirm these attestations.

Board Assurance On Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Maungaraki 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 legislative obligations related to:

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

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they 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.

Compliance

ERO's investigations did not identify any areas of concern.

Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees have developed the following recommendations, that:

6.1 The principal and leadership team will continue to build teachers' capability in planning, assessment and evaluation to develop:

- consistent formative assessment practices to provide effective written feedback and explicit next steps to students;
- teacher and student co-construction of success criteria to enable students to effectively judge their achievement; and
- student ownership of the learning process through self and peer assessment.

6.2 The board will further develop in-depth school self-review processes that will guide and sustain continuous improvement. This will include formalising a detailed process to review of curriculum areas.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can govern the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

Kathleen Atkins

National Manager Review Services

Central Region

16 December 2009

16 December 2009

To the Parents and Community of Maungaraki School

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

Community Page

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Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

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 is based on three review strands.

- School Specific Priorities - the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- Areas of National Interest - information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- Compliance with Legal Requirements - assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

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Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

[1] Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.