

Murrays Bay School Education Review

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1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Confirmed Education Review Report: Murrays Bay School

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

Murrays Bay School continues to provide students with effective opportunities to learn and achieve within a supportive teaching and learning environment. School leaders have made progress in the areas for improvement identified in ERO's 2007 review. These include an ongoing focus on developing formative assessment processes; developing teachers' skills in analysing assessment information; focusing on the use of academic learning time to better engage students; and the reporting of Māori student achievement. School leaders have plans for continued development in each of these areas.

Students experience a positive, settled and well resourced learning environment. They interact positively and confidently with adults and their peers and enjoy many opportunities for leadership. Students are attentive in classrooms, keen to meet teachers' expectations and have positive attitudes to their work and learning. They are confident to participate in an increasingly interactive learning environment. They have access to information and communications technologies (ICT), which are becoming a more integral part of the school's learning programmes.

School leaders use collated assessment information to monitor the progress of students. This information indicates that most students at the school achieve above national performance means in reading and numeracy. School leaders monitor and compare the achievement of year level groups over time and also compare the school's results with achievement results in a local cluster of schools. At the time of this review, the school's written language progressions of learning were being reviewed and developed to provide more valid criteria for assessing achievement in writing.

Teachers' professional learning and development has been focused on involving students more in the processes of learning. Teachers have multiple forums for reflective dialogue at staff and team meetings, and within coaching and mentoring partnerships. Senior staff coaching and working alongside other teachers has helped to improve teachers' professional skills and has resulted in improved student engagement.

The senior leadership team works well together within clearly defined complementary roles. Senior staff work collegially and foster a climate of professional trust amongst staff. Over recent years, a more distributive approach to leadership has helped to sustain professional learning initiatives and curriculum developments.

A new board has been elected since the 2007 ERO review and new trustees have had training to familiarise themselves with governance expectations. Trustees support the vision and direction of the school. The board funds professional learning and curriculum review programmes generously. Trustees would find it useful to review the effectiveness of board operations using the self-review indicators outlined in the board's governance manual.

This review notes senior leaders' continuing commitment to self review and professional development that is helping to support student learning and achievement. School leaders aim to continue promoting a student-centred learning environment with opportunities for students to be more active in understanding their learning processes and in taking responsibility for developing their own learning.

Future Action

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

2 Murrays Bay School's Curriculum

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

School context and self review

Trustees and school leaders continue to focus on improving student learning through regular, self-review processes that include professional discussion, consultation, and student, staff, parent and community surveys. School leaders value opportunities for professional dialogue with leaders of neighbouring schools. Information from these processes, which include the analysis of student achievement data, continues to be used to make improvements to current practices, to identify areas for professional development, and to set appropriate school targets.

Senior leaders and teachers regularly collate and report student achievement information in reading and numeracy. This information indicates that students, as a group, continue to achieve above national performance means. Student achievement data are used to monitor learning and to identify groups of students and individuals who need greater support or who could benefit from extension work. In 2011, school leaders plan to report on written language achievement after the review of the writing framework for planning and assessment has been completed.

In 2010, achievement targets have been aimed at raising the achievement of lower achievers in reading and numeracy. All teachers are monitoring a group of these students in their classes. More specific planning and evaluation of the effectiveness of strategies to accelerate achievement is likely to benefit students.

The reporting of Māori student achievement was identified as an area for improvement in the 2007 ERO report. In 2010, senior leaders have begun to examine the achievement of Māori students as a group, and to report to the board on the achievement of Māori students in reading and numeracy, showing the progress of Māori students over time. The 2010 whānau hui was well attended and school leaders gained knowledge of parents' educational aspirations for their children. In response to whānau requests, the kapa haka group has been re-introduced. It would be helpful for trustees to review practice within the school against the recommendations of Ka Hikitia, the Ministry of Education's strategy document for promoting success for Māori.

Teachers use reliable assessment tools to help them identify student progress. They use the information to group students and to identify students who need additional learning support and extension. At the time of this review, curriculum leaders were developing English and

mathematics education plans to align with the National Standards. These plans should assist teachers to form valid overall judgements about students' progress towards meeting the standards.

The school's curriculum is being developed around an integrated and inquiry-based approach that has the potential to promote greater student involvement. The aim is to have teaching and learning programmes that link curriculum areas, are responsive to learners' interests, strengths and needs, and promote application and transference of skills across learning contexts. Senior leaders acknowledge that the cultural advantage of diverse ethnicities could be better used so that students gain appreciation and greater understanding of alternative perspectives within New Zealand's multicultural society.

Areas of strength

Supporting student engagement. Strong pastoral care systems, mutual respect and inclusive interactions underpin all aspects of the school programme. Students are engaged and interested in lessons, and are motivated to contribute their opinions and ideas. They work well together in groups, collaborating to complete tasks and reflecting the school's focus on developing key competencies for social and academic learning. Students have a developing understanding of the purpose of the tasks that teachers set for them and of their learning goals. Both students and their families are becoming more knowledgeable about the next steps in students' learning.

Teaching development. Professional and reflective discussion amongst staff contributes to the growth and sustainability of curriculum initiatives and to the development of teaching practice. Professional development is based on providing staff with opportunities to reflect on their practice and to identify specific goals and strategies to achieve them. Throughout the year, teachers work collaboratively in coaching partnerships to reflect on their professional progress.

Learning support. The board and leadership team ensure that the provision of relevant and effective opportunities for student achievement is the priority for trustees and staff. Students with specific learning needs are identified and supported by focused interventions that emphasise literacy as the foundation for future learning. Students' progress in these programmes is well monitored.

Leading and managing the school. The principal provides inclusive and reflective leadership and is well supported by skilled senior leaders. Leaders encourage and support teachers to develop and implement teaching and learning programmes that engage students and cater for their diverse learning needs.

The principal values and includes staff perspectives in his ongoing reviews of school

processes. He meets with individual staff each term to gain feedback about what is working well for them at school and what could be reviewed or changed. Similar reflective discussions occur regularly with the senior leaders, learning leaders and an advisory teacher group. As a result, teachers report that they feel valued and appreciate having input into decision-making.

Areas for development and review

ERO endorses the school leaders' plans to extend current good practices by:

- developing achievement criteria in language that is readily understood by students;
- further developing teachers' skills in analysing and using assessment information to identify and address gaps in students' learning;
- developing clear progressions of learning for written language to guide teachers' planning and assessment;
- continuing to monitor the achievement of Māori and Pacific students as groups to ensure that these students are making expected progress; and
- implementing a school-wide programme of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga to develop teachers' and students' knowledge of the Māori language and culture.

Teacher feedback on student achievement. Teachers have variable effectiveness in giving students feedback on their achievement. Students would evaluate their own learning more successfully if teachers' oral and written comments highlighted students' attainment of skills and gave clear indications of their next learning steps.

Evaluation of teaching. When evaluating their teaching, teachers could examine, more particularly, the impact of their teaching on student engagement and achievement. This evaluation should demonstrate clear links between assessment and planning, and could include student input into evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Evaluation records would enable teachers to revisit their decisions and to monitor development.

Bicultural perspectives. Senior leaders acknowledge the benefit of greater inclusion of bicultural perspectives within the curriculum. This would help students to grow in their awareness of New Zealand's bicultural heritage. Students would develop more confidence in their use of te reo Māori as they acquire vocabulary within meaningful contexts in teaching and learning programmes.

3 Provision for International Students

Murrays Bay School has well organised documentation and systems in place, and a designated person who monitors the welfare and educational progress of international students. The inclusive school culture helps students to adjust to their new environment and they are well supported, both academically and socially.

Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students and the Provision of English Language Support

Murrays Bay School is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough.

4 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Murrays Bay 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 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.

5 Future Action

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

Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

27 March 2011

About The School

Location	Murrays Bay, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	1387
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)
Decile[1]	10
School roll	618
Number of international students	14
Gender composition	Boys 54% Girls 46%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 45% Māori 6% other European 21% Chinese 12% other Asian 11% Indian 2% other 3%
Review team on site	November 2010
Date of this report	27 March 2011
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review, October 2007 Education Review, October 2004 Discretionary Review, January 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

27 March 2011

To the Parents and Community of Murrays Bay School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Murrays Bay 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.

Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern 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.