



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Murrays Bay School
Murrays Bay, Auckland

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

Murrays Bay School

1 Context

Murrays Bay School, on Auckland's North Shore, provides education for children from Years 1 to 6. Since the 2013 ERO review, the board has successfully managed significant change. The current principal was appointed in November 2015. The recently elected board is a combination of new and experienced trustees who are increasing their knowledge of their stewardship roles and responsibilities. The school is now in a more stable position with a clearer strategic direction and improved systems to internally evaluate their actions.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are to unlock the uniqueness and potential in every student through an innovative and engaging curriculum, and to prepare them for their future. The school works with the community using a collaborative and consultative approach to create a vision for learning in which diversity is accepted and valued. The unique position of Māori within New Zealand society is also recognised in the school's environment and curriculum.

The school's achievement information shows that there is sustained high achievement of over 88% in National Standards for reading and maths. Leaders and teachers continue to target writing as a charter goal and achievement information shows that 79% of the children achieve at the National Standard. Over the past three years the school's data show a decreasing disparity between Māori and Pacific achievement and other groups in reading and writing but a widening disparity in mathematics.

The school's moderation processes continue to improve and robust systems are followed. These include using a range of assessment tools, and team discussions and school-wide discussions to ensure overall teacher judgements are valid and reliable. Teachers have also moderated assessment samples with local schools.

Murrays Bay School is a member of the Mid-Bays Community of Learning (CoL). This community has developed relevant targets based on the CoL schools' achievement information, and raising achievement in writing is a particular priority.

Since the 2013 ERO evaluation the school has continued to embed its assessment for learning practices. Targeted professional development has supported teachers to reflect on their teaching practice. Key actions that the school has taken to improve outcomes for children include:

- developing teaching approaches that enable children to have greater ownership of their learning
- reviewing teacher appraisal processes with a focus on improving teachers' cultural competence to meet the needs of Māori learners and other diverse learners
- strengthening school processes that enable teachers to critique and adapt their practice to meet the needs of children whose progress needs accelerating

- targeting and documenting shared understanding of the school's teaching expectations so children have greater independence and ownership and are better able to talk about their learning and what they need to do to be successful.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school responds well to children whose learning needs acceleration.

Robust systems are followed to identify, monitor and respond to those children at risk of not achieving. School leaders collate and analyse a wide range of assessment data. They scrutinise these data, actively looking for children who need support or acceleration. These priority learners, including Māori children, are well known to leaders and teachers.

Teachers plan appropriately for priority learners. They use a good range of classroom-based and standardised assessments to identify individual children's learning needs to focus their teaching on. Assessment activities are inclusive and fit for purpose, providing meaningful evidence to assess children's achievement and progress and to develop next steps.

Leaders and teachers critically evaluate the effectiveness of teaching programmes and initiatives implemented to accelerate children's learning progress and their well-being and confidence. Teachers closely monitor the impact of targeted teaching on progress to ensure that priority learners are receiving the appropriate support. This ongoing evaluation of children's progress helps to ensure that teachers provide programmes that deliberately support children in their next steps in learning.

Achievement information is collected, tracked and analysed from the time a child enters the school, with the purpose of making the most of their opportunities to be successful learners. Māori children have longitudinal individual files holding analysed data and other relevant information to show their individual achievement and progress. This same system is in place for Pacific learners and children who are not progressing as expected. Senior leaders have a particular role in monitoring priority learners' progress and wellbeing.

Teachers are well supported to develop teaching practices that accelerate children's learning. They collaboratively engage in professional discussions and share the responsibility for children's progress. Leaders of learning play a key role in supporting teachers to accelerate children's progress. They lead team discussions about the progress of target groups of children. This collaborative practice is building a collective responsibility for each child's progress.

The board is committed to resourcing programmes that promote equity and excellence for learners. Leaders organise school staffing so that children requiring additional support can better access the curriculum. Capable teacher aides work with teachers to provide in-class and appropriate withdrawal support for individuals and small groups. Inclusive and responsive approaches are guiding programmes for children with special educational needs. Children whose first language is not English receive additional English language support in a variety of ways.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?

The school curriculum and other organisational practices are being reviewed and adapted to further promote equity and excellence for all learners. The school culture has significantly improved over the past year under the new principal's strategic leadership. He is responsively managing this year of change, making subtle changes to influence major shifts in practice. His approach is child-focused, and is enabling and growing leadership and innovation in teaching and learning.

Children are enthusiastic about their learning and benefit from school conditions that foster positive attitudes to lifelong learning. They have an increasing understanding of their own achievement and ability to identify their next steps in learning. Children's achievement is recognised broadly in academic, sporting, social, leadership and arts areas.

Children and their families know the school values and respectful and productive relationships are evident in the school. Children's leadership skills are regularly promoted through a range of opportunities in school. Their views are gathered and responded to. Curriculum themes and a broad range of extra-curricular activities build on children's interests and prior knowledge. The school's inquiry learning model provides opportunities for children to have greater ownership of their learning. They have good access to digital technologies to support their learning.

Leadership is distributed across teaching teams to build individual and collective leadership capacity. Leaders have clear expectations that are designed to support teaching and learning. Professional capability is fostered very well through the use of external and internal professional expertise. Senior leaders and teachers deliberately focus on improving teaching and learning for every student.

Evidence-based inquiry and evaluation is encouraging leaders and teachers to think and do things differently to foster equity and to improve outcomes for children. Teachers' inquiry into the effectiveness of their practice has been strengthened, and is more closely aligned with the school's appraisal process. The principal encourages teachers to innovate, and adapt the curriculum and teaching strategies to support children to lead their own learning.

Leaders and teachers have respectful and productive relationships. They recognise and affirm the diverse languages and cultures of parents/whānau and the community. The school identifies and draws on community resources and expertise to increase their capacity to improve student achievement and wellbeing.

Parents who spoke with ERO expressed their appreciation of the school's new direction. They value the support and approachability of staff and now feel welcome at school. Parents now have more opportunities to work together with teachers to support their children's progress. Transition processes continue to be evaluated and adapted with local early childhood services and schools to better support children and their families.

The board is committed to building leaders' and teachers professional capability. Trustees bring a range of expertise to their roles to guide their scrutiny of school data and operations. The principal is strengthening the board's strategic planning processes to focus more particularly on improving equity and excellence for children, and further fostering a culture of evaluation and professional learning.

The school's charter includes goals, targets and specific actions focused on raising Māori and other children's achievement. The charter supports the enactment of equity and excellence through the school's key improvement strategies. School policies, systems and processes align well to achieve the school's vision, values, goals and priorities.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

Leaders are reflective and improvement focused. Through in-class support and focused team meetings, teachers are supported and challenged to evaluate their practice and to use this evidence to improve outcomes for children.

The board is rebuilding relational trust with the wider school community, and improving its consultation processes. Trustees are strengthening their role in scrutinising achievement information and improving the board's internal evaluation processes. There is a strong commitment to support students to have equitable learning experiences and outcomes.

The principal has identified relevant development priorities that include:

- clarifying senior leaders' roles in leading learning and monitoring children's accelerated progress
- continuing to grow teacher understanding of best practice to support priority learners
- further developing trustees', leaders', teachers' and students' use of evaluation and inquiry
- streamlining systems for tracking and recording the progress of individual children
- professional learning for staff to guide class programmes that support children whose home language is not English.

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

6 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the *Vulnerable Children Act 2014*
- provision for international students.

7 Recommendation

The board, leaders and teachers should continue to work with the school's community to support children to become confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

19 December 2016

About the school

Location	Murrays Bay, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1387	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	708	
Gender composition	Boys 53% Girls 47%	
Ethnic composition	Maori	5%
	Pākehā	49%
	Chinese	24%
	Korean	6%
	Great Britain	3%
	Indian	2%
	Pacific	2%
	MELA	1%
	other European	5%
	other Asian	2%
	other	1%
Review team on site	November 2016	
Date of this report	19 December 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	December 2013
	Education Review	March 2011
	Education Review	October 2007