

# Murrays Bay 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	Murrays Bay, North Shore City
Ministry of Education profile number	1387
School type	Contributing (Year 1-6)
Decile rating	10
Teaching staff:	23.54
Roll generated entitlement	2.86
Other	31
Number of teachers	
School roll	510
Number of international students	28
Gender composition	Girls 53%, Boys 47%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 50%, Māori 4%, other European 16%, Korean 14%, Chinese 11%, Pacific 3%, other ethnicities 2%
Review team on site	August 2007
Date of this report	16 October 2007
Previous ERO reports	Education Review, October 2004 Discretionary Review, January 2001 Accountability Review, January 2000 Effectiveness Review, 1996 Assurance Audit, March 1993 Assurance Audit, July 1990

## The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Murrays Bay School is a decile 10, Year 1-6 school located in the East Coast Bays on Auckland's North Shore. The school is celebrating its 50th jubilee this year. Since the last ERO review in 2004, staffing at the school has been stable apart from recent changes to the senior management team.

Students are friendly and outgoing. They exhibit positive relationships with each other and with staff. Personal relationships demonstrate students' sense of belonging in the school and their respect for diversity. Their understanding and appreciation of Māori language and culture is fostered through the delivery of te reo and tikanga Māori in classroom programmes. Students display a readiness for learning and, in mathematics and reading, the majority achieve above national expectations. Students enjoy a wide range of leadership, cultural, sporting and academic opportunities.

A strong sense of collegiality is evident in the staff. Teachers have been receptive to recent professional development on physical activity. The implementation of new teaching strategies has improved the quality of physical education lessons and student engagement in physical activity. The model used for this professional development could be extended into other areas identified for development across the school.

Staff are led by an experienced principal who is supported by a new senior management structure of three deputy principals, two of whom are recent appointments. This team makes use of external providers for leadership professional development. In 2006 the school was designated, in conjunction with Murrays Bay Intermediate School, as Dual International Safe Schools of the World Health Organisation Safe Community Network. In 2007 the school, along with a local cluster of schools, was accepted for a Ministry of Education funded school development contract, Extending High Standards Across Schools (EHSAS). The senior management team views the EHSAS contract as a catalyst for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The board consists of relatively new trustees who bring a variety of strengths and skills to their position. They have sought training to clarify and develop a shared understanding of their governance role. The board has consulted widely within the community in developing the strategic plan and is focused on a strategic direction. Trustees seek relevant information from senior managers, especially in relation to student achievement.

This report evaluates the quality of teaching and learning with a focus on health and physical education. It comments on the achievement of Māori students and the ways in which the school meets the needs of international, as well as gifted and talented, students. The board's compliance with legislation relating to the health, safety and welfare of staff and students, including the school's preparedness for a potential influenza pandemic, is also evaluated. This

report recommends that senior managers and teachers seek external assistance to develop a shared understanding of good practice in the use of formative assessment strategies in order to further strengthen and sustain good practices for teaching and learning.

### Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

## 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.

Student achievement information in mathematics taken from Progress and Achievement Tests (PATs) in 2005, 2006 and 2007 shows that the majority of students are achieving well above national norms. Senior managers can track a steady increase in the percentage of students achieving at levels that are higher than those expected for their age.

Senior managers annually collate school-wide achievement data in reading. Achievement data using the STAR test (Supplementary Test of Achievement in Reading) show that in 2006 most students in Years 3-6 achieved very well and, as a group, performed much better than students nationally. Senior managers do not currently analyse this information to evaluate progress over time and do not collate and analyse achievement data in other areas of literacy, such as writing and oral language. Senior staff are considering ways of comparing their student achievement information with that of similar decile 10, urban schools.

### School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Murrays Bay 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 Murrays Bay School.

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

- the quality of teaching and learning, with a focus on health and physical education.

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

The quality of teaching and learning with a focus on health and physical education

### Background

In response to an identified need to foster student involvement and increase participation in physical activity, teachers undertook a two-year school-wide professional development programme involving external facilitators. The result has been a notable improvement in the quality of physical education lessons and a more positive participation of students in physical activity throughout the school.

In 2006, senior managers and staff consulted the community about the delivery of the health curriculum. Parents were given the opportunity to respond to information shared by staff in relation to current health programmes, and possible areas for development were explored.

The school has recently been accepted, along with a cluster of local schools, for a Ministry of Education funded school development contract, 'Extending High Standards Across Schools' (EHSAS). Senior managers intend to use this contract to address identified areas for development across the school.

### Student progress and achievement

Staff involved in the well established lunchtime sport programme achieve the school's goal of providing support for children to maximise and develop their physical skill levels in a variety of activities and sports. The student participation level of eighty percent in 'Have a go days' held in 2007 for Year 4, 5 and 6 students was a five percent improvement on the school target level.

### Areas of good performance

Professional development. Improvements in the teaching of physical education were promoted through the use of a supportive, clearly defined professional development model. Practical and participatory whole staff sessions helped to develop a shared understanding of good practice in teaching physical education. Teachers with skills and expertise in teaching physical education modelled and shared strategies that provide better outcomes for students. Senior managers agree that this professional development model could be extended into other areas identified for development across the school.

Physical education. Physical education lessons are well organised and well paced. Teachers establish emotionally and physically safe environments in which students' physical and thinking skills are able to develop. Teachers make good use of skilled questioning to encourage students to problem solve and make decisions to improve the quality of the activity or game in which they are involved. Students across the school clearly enjoy their physical education lessons. Children are motivated to participate in class, lunchtime and after school activities.

Social skills development. Social skills are developed through physical education lessons and the health programme. Health related programmes, such as 'Roots of Empathy' and 'DARE'

promote and develop positive social skills that foster empathy, tolerance and a positive self-image. These programmes encourage students to have positive relationships and interactions with each other and teachers.

**Student leadership.** Staff provide many opportunities for students to take leadership roles in physical activity and sport. Students are involved in umpiring lunchtime games, running the sports shed during break times, and leading and assisting with fitness and lunchtime activities. Selected older students are assigned as playground leaders to support younger students in lunchtime activities, thus benefiting both groups of students involved.

**Catering for diversity.** All Year 1 students are involved in the Perceptual Motor Programme (PMP) that assists in developing students' fine and gross motor skills. Identified older students also benefit from the programme with the support of the sports assistant. The sports assistant, who is funded by the board, also helps to extend students who have been identified as having sporting skills.

**Readiness for learning.** School organisation and expectations ensure that all students are prepared to start learning at the beginning of the day. Students clearly know when to be in classes in anticipation of the start of lessons. They transition quickly from one activity to the next throughout the day. These routines provide good opportunities for students to learn.

**General classroom teaching practice.** Examples of good teaching practice across the curriculum are evident in most classes. Good practices include an appropriate pace to lessons, positive relationships between teachers and their students, and the sharing of learning intentions. In some classes, teachers make the criteria for achievement explicit, enabling students to assess their own work and giving them a better understanding of how to improve their own learning.

## Areas for improvement

**Developing student involvement.** Most teachers have been involved in whole school professional development in the use of formative assessment strategies. It is now timely for teachers to review the extent to which they have adapted their teaching styles to allow children to have more involvement in the process of their own learning. Teaching strategies such as making the purpose of lessons and criteria for success clear to children, peer and self review, and teachers regularly providing specific oral and written comments on students' work can assist students to know their next steps in improving their own learning and increase their motivation to achieve. It is important that further professional development in this area is conducted so that key strategies are embedded and sustained in teaching practice throughout the school.

**Use of assessment information.** Staff should reflect on their use of both formative and

summative assessment information to inform planning and teaching, including strategies for differentiating and personalising learning. The recent implementation of a new assessment tool by senior managers should provide better information for Year 4, 5 and 6 teachers in identifying areas for improvement within their class. Senior managers also intend to provide students with individualised assessment information enabling them to set more meaningful personal goals.

Allocation and use of time. Senior managers acknowledge the need to review the allocation of time for literacy and numeracy lessons within classroom weekly timetables. In addition, senior managers could review the amount of time in which teachers are actively engaged with teaching students during those lessons. Adequate allocation of time for core subjects helps to ensure that teachers have enough time to implement key strategies and that they regularly engage with all students, especially those in targeted group sessions.



## 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 Murrays Bay 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.

### The Achievement of Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of Māori students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement. Eighteen students at Murrays Bay School identify as Māori.

#### Areas of progress

Te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. At the time of the last ERO review, senior managers undertook a number of consultation hui with parents of Māori students. Since then, the board has strengthened its commitment to teaching Māori language and culture. The 2007 strategic plan targets the teaching of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. To assist in achieving this target, the school employs a part-time specialist teacher to take lessons in Māori language and culture throughout the school.

Specialist lessons. Students and classroom teachers report that they enjoy participating in Māori language and culture lessons provided by the specialist teacher. All students learn about New Zealand's bi-cultural heritage. Māori students have opportunities to share their special knowledge and skills with other students. These lessons also provide teachers with a model for integrating the teaching and learning of Māori culture and language effectively into their classroom programmes.

Fostering the leadership of Māori students. Māori students are represented in leadership roles across the school including kapahaka, sports, and the student government. In 2006, the kapahaka group participated in Auckland-wide championships designed to showcase Māori culture and language in primary schools. Leadership opportunities for Māori students and the

inclusion of te reo me ōna tikanga Maori in classroom programmes has affirmed and validated Māori students' sense of identity and belonging in the school.

### Areas for further improvement

Reporting on the achievement of Māori students. Analysis of Māori student achievement information is not reported separately to the board of trustees. Improved reporting would enable the board and community to examine and reflect on the success of classroom programmes and whether Māori students are achieving to their potential.

### The Achievement of Pacific Students

Seven students identify as Pacific at Murrays Bay School. This group is too small for reliable analysis of Pacific student achievement or to support valid comparisons with the achievement of other students. Pacific students report favourably about the cultural, sporting, leadership and academic opportunities they have at Murrays Bay School.

### Providing for Gifted and Talented Students

National Administration Guideline 1(iii)(c) requires schools to identify students with gifted and talented needs and to develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to meet their needs. ERO is currently evaluating how schools nationally are providing for gifted and talented students.

### Areas of good performance

Identification of students. Staff identify gifted and talented students by using a broad definition that includes multiple intelligences, learning styles and curriculum areas. Rating surveys completed by teachers, parents and other students assist in the identification process. Teachers gain good knowledge of students' abilities through this process, which helps to ensure a shared understanding across staff. Programmes involving students identified with special abilities at Murrays Bay School are known as TALL (Talented learners).

Programme coordination. Senior managers have established a team of teachers to coordinate and promote programmes for students identified with special abilities (TALL team). The TALL team includes a deputy principal and one teacher from each year group across the school. The TALL team has developed an action plan to determine a school-wide focus and priorities for meeting the needs of gifted and talented students.

Learning opportunities. Staff provide a wide range of opportunities for students identified as gifted or talented. Students' own interests are developed through 'lunch box' seminars that cover a wide range of subjects and interests. Extension and enrichment opportunities across

the curriculum in English, science, music and drama provide positive experiences for gifted and talented students. Students also have a variety of opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

### Areas for improvement

**Class programmes.** Senior managers have identified the need to use student achievement information to further differentiate planning and classroom programmes for students with gifts and talents. The strengths and abilities of these students could be further developed through a more consistent use of inquiry learning and thinking skills within class programmes.

**Programme evaluation.** Staff are developing systems for evaluating the impact of programmes for gifted and talented students on their achievement and other outcomes. Teachers could consider using parent and student input as part of this evaluation process. Curriculum reports to the board could also include recommendations that specify strategies for talented learners. Findings from the evaluation of programmes should provide trustees and staff with greater clarity about how to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in the most appropriate and effective ways.

### Pandemic Planning

In all school reviews ERO is currently evaluating the extent to which schools have planned for a potential influenza pandemic in terms of the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education.

In ERO's view Murrays Bay School has taken steps to prepare for such a pandemic.

### Provision for International Students

#### 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students. Murrays Bay School has twenty-eight International Students all of whom are from Korea. The Code requires all students from Years 1-6 to live with a parent or a properly authorized designated caregiver. Most students live with a parent.

The school does not yet meet all the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral

## Care of International Students.

### Areas of good performance

Integrated students. International students report that they enjoy school and have made friends with New Zealand and other international students. They are well integrated in class programmes and participate in the wide range of activities available to all students.

Emotional support. In 2007 the school appointed a liaison teacher, one day a week, to make contact with international students and their families. As this teacher is able to speak to students and their parents in their first language, he has ably supported their communication with the school.

### Areas for improvement

Quarterly review. Signatories to the Code are required to review their own performance at least quarterly to ensure compliance with Code. Managers should ensure that this review is formally documented and reported to the board. Clear procedures exist for the enrolment and monitoring of international students at Murrays Bay School. Well documented quarterly reviews would assist in ensuring consistent implementation of school procedures.

Providing English language support. Class teachers identify students who need extra English language support. These students are given basic oral language support that includes vocabulary related to the current topic studies. This provision could be extended to prepare students for all current curriculum requirements and to cover all four modes of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

## Board Assurance On Compliance Areas

### Overview

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 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.

In order to improve current practice, the board of trustees should ensure that the approval of education outside the classroom (EOTC) trips is managed in a consistent manner.

### Compliance

During the course of the review ERO identified one area of non-compliance. In order to address this area the board of trustees must:

5.1 ensure that the school complies with all sections of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students identified in this report,

[Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students, Ministry of Education, 2003 sections 7.4, 10.1, 15.8, 20.1.1, 24, 30.4].



## Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees agree that senior managers and teachers should seek external assistance to develop a shared understanding of good practice in the use of formative assessment strategies in order to further strengthen and sustain good practices for teaching and learning.

## Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

Elizabeth Ellis

Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

16 October 2007

16 October 2007

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.

## 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, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

Elizabeth Ellis

Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

## 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.

## Review Coverage

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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.

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