

Taieri College
Mosgiel

Confirmed

Education Review Report:
Arotake Paerewa

Kumēa te paetawhiti kia tata
Whakamaua te paerewa kia tīna
Tukuna te paehiranga kia topa!

Education Review Report: Arotake Paerewa Taieri College

The purpose of ERO's reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. An ERO school report answers the question "How effectively is this school's curriculum promoting student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?" Under that overarching question ERO reports on the quality of education and learning outcomes for children and for specific groups of children including Māori students, Pacific students and students with special needs. ERO also reports on the quality of the school's systems for sustaining and continuing improvements.

Findings

1 Context

What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?

Taieri College is a co-educational school for students from Years 7 to 13. Students from the Taieri Plain and surrounding areas attend the college. At Taieri College older students often interact and learn with younger students. This occurs through school events such as the wearable arts, buddy programme and in sports. There is a school focus on ensuring students with special needs learn alongside students of similar ages.

Students at the college are well supported by members of the local community, parents and businesses/organisations. This includes support for the college's outdoor education and sports programmes, special events and presentations. Students describe their school as "busy" with activities involving music, celebrations and trips. New students to the college feel welcomed and included.

Since 2008, the senior leadership team has been extended to improve pastoral care and support learning and teaching in the senior and junior school. Leaders are focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This has yet to bring about the desired changes in some areas of the school. There have been some positive outcomes from teachers' ongoing professional development involving e-learning and managing students' behaviour for learning.

The large campus is generally well maintained. It includes some new and modern learning environments and some areas that are in urgent need of upgrade for students and some staff.

2 Learning

How well does this school use achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement?

Findings

The college's end of 2011 information shows that overall:

- two thirds of Year 7 students were at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- three quarters of Year 8 students were at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 7 students made very good progress in these areas.

There is limited information available showing how well students in Years 9 and 10 are achieving and progressing overall. In some curriculum areas, teachers are usefully tracking students' knowledge and skill development to improve student achievement at Year 11.

Years 11 to 13 student achievement information shows that in:

- 2009 and 2010 greater proportions of students achieved NCEA Levels 1-3 and University Entrance than students at schools of similar profiles
- 2011 reduced proportions of students gained NCEA Levels 1 and 3 and UE compared to students at schools of similar profiles, while similar proportions of students gained NCEA Level 2
- NCEA Level 1 literacy and numeracy, the proportions of Taieri College students attaining both requirements was higher than students in similar schools in 2009, 2010 and better for numeracy than literacy in 2011.

The school has identified, and ERO agrees, that the proportion of students gaining excellence awards in NCEA could be an area for improvement.

Most students from the trades academies experience success in moving to ongoing training or employment.

Findings

Student engagement strategies. Teachers of Years 7 and 8 students are using a range of highly effective strategies to engage these students, including extending their critical thinking skills. These students closely monitor their own learning through their learning journals.

Year 11 students and their parents receive three-weekly reports showing whether or not students are meeting required expectations. The school is extending these learning-readiness reports to other year levels in the school. The school's focus on increasing students' attendance is showing positive results.

The school-wide focus on managing students' behaviour in ways to support their learning is having some positive outcomes for students and teachers.

Areas for review and development

Student engagement. Levels of engagement of students in Years 9 and 10 should continue to be a focus for improvement. The board and senior leaders should identify their overall expectations for student engagement and how these intentions can be effectively monitored.

Monitoring student achievement and progress. Some departments closely monitor the achievement and progress of individual students and year groups. Overall, the school is in the early stages of developing effective systems for monitoring student achievement and progress and reporting these. Better monitoring would enable teachers, leaders and the board to:

- know how well cohorts of students are meeting expectations for their year level
- implement timely support for those students most at risk of not meeting these expectations
- know how well students are making shifts in their learning over time.

Senior students could also be better supported in monitoring their overall progress towards NCEA and their goals and aspirations for educational success.

3 Curriculum

How effectively does this school's curriculum promote and support student learning?

The school's curriculum effectively promotes and supports students' learning.

Findings

Home/school partnerships. Senior leaders and teachers have strengthened the ways parents and students are involved in discussions about how well students are learning and what they need to do to improve. Effective methods include:

- student-led conferences with parents and teachers
- an improved information evening for Year 10 students and their parents about senior school options
- more frequent contact between parents and teachers about students' upcoming assessments.

Feedback from parents indicates that they feel better informed about their child's learning.

Senior-school course choices. Students benefit from a wide range of pathways to success in Years 10 to 13. A high proportion of senior students find a successful course and remain engaged in school until the end of Year 13. Examples of courses that meet the diverse interests of students well include:

- trades and sports academies options
- horticulture, forestry, and agriculture courses
- textiles, technology, and art and design programmes
- tourism and hospitality programmes.

There are strong links with local tertiary organisations to support students in senior programmes.

Curriculum leadership. Most curriculum leaders provide clear guidance for high-quality teaching and learning. In the best examples of this, teachers:

- are guided to be effective in their planning
- use achievement information to plan how to support students
- maintain what is going well and improve where needs are identified.

The challenge for senior leaders is to ensure that these good practices are consistently followed in all areas of the school so that best practice becomes more widespread.

Teaching practice. The principal can identify where teaching and learning is effective and where teachers need support. Teachers have a range of guidelines for effective teaching and learning. In the sample of classrooms ERO observed, good teaching practice was seen when:

- teacher-student relationships were positive and focused on the learning
- high expectations were being set and met
- learning was relevant and authentic for students
- students were active and highly involved in their learning.

The challenge for senior leaders and curriculum leaders is to find more effective ways to ensure that all students experience this level of teaching.

How effectively does the school promote educational success for Māori, as Māori?

The college has some programmes and initiatives to promote Māori student engagement and achievement. The number of students learning te reo Māori at the Year 10 level has increased. Teachers in Years 7 and 8 strongly promote Māori language, culture and identity. Individual teachers and programme area leaders promote aspects of te reo and tikanga Māori in their programmes.

The board, principal and staff support initiatives to improve outcomes for Māori students. The principal has helped lead staff development for improving Māori student achievement and engagement. Improving consultation with the Māori community was a recommendation for the school in the 2009 ERO report. This has not improved to a satisfactory level.

Some Māori students said they enjoy good relationships with their teachers and friendships with their peers. The school has yet to gather the views of Māori students to know how well all Māori students feel supported and to inform future self review.

It was not clear to ERO that outcomes for Māori students were similar to other students. While there is school-wide data and information about Māori success this is not sufficiently analysed to inform ongoing planning and improvement. The board needs to develop a clear strategic focus and processes for promoting educational success as Māori. This includes developing:

- a shared college-wide understanding of what educational success as Māori looks like
- realistic plans and clear indicators for Māori success
- culturally appropriate support for Māori students
- leadership and support to promote Māori success initiatives
- ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Māori success initiatives
- effective ways for engaging with the college's Māori community.

Action

The board, through the principal and staff must, in consultation with the school's Māori community, develop and make known to the school's community policies, plans and targets for improving the achievement of Māori students. [NAG 1 (e)].

4 Sustainable Performance

How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance?

The board and senior leaders will be in a better position to sustain what is going well now and lead improvements for the future when they have addressed the following:

Areas for review and development

Leadership. The principal and senior leaders need to review their effectiveness as a team. Processes for internal consultation and communication are not as effective as they should be. The many current roles carried out by the principal need to be supported by other senior leaders and the board. Senior leaders need to ensure they can effectively maintain a focus on leading and sustaining ongoing improvements to teaching and learning.

Governance. Aspects of current governance practices need to be improved. During 2012 much improved processes for managing the school's finances have quickly produced positive improvements. Further improvements should include:

- more rigorous processes to ensure the school is compliant with current legislation
- better processes for ensuring that the board is meeting its good employer obligations.

Self review. Self-review processes should more rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of school operations and programmes. Trustees and senior leaders need to:

- ensure that useful policies and procedures are matched by sound practices
- place a greater emphasis on evaluation of the impact of strategies and programmes
- extend the range of sources for review by gathering the views of staff and groups of students
- develop more useful and evaluative guidelines for reports that come to the board.

Recommendation

ERO recommends that in order to improve its performance the principal and board should provide action planning to ERO that shows how they plan to address the areas for review and development outlined in this report.

Provision for international students

The 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. At the time of this review there were fourteen international students attending the school.

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.

International students benefit from high-quality pastoral care. Their accommodation needs are well met, managed and monitored. All aspects of their education, involvement in and integration into the school and its community are closely monitored and supported.

Reporting to the board about the international students' learning and pastoral care could follow more usefully evaluative guidelines.

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:

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

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- processes for appointing staff
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

During the onsite stage of ERO's review, it was not clearly evident that the principal's performance was being appraised against the professional standards for secondary principals as required from 2010. The school's systems for police vetting of non-teaching staff did not comply with the need for renewal every three years, as required from 2010.

To address these issues, the board must:

- 4.1 comply with Ministry of Education requirements for the appraisal of principals and or teachers. [State Sector Act 1988 s77C (NZ Gazette No 180: Dec 1996)]
- 4.2 comply with Ministry of Education requirements for the police vetting of non-teaching and unregistered employees at schools. [Education Act 1989 s78C, s78CA, s78CB s78CC]

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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



Graham Randell
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Southern Region

23 November 2012

About the School

Location	Mosgiel	
Ministry of Education profile number	495	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
School roll	971	
Number of international students	14	
Gender composition	Boys 53% Girls 47%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	86%
	Māori	9%
	Asian	3%
	Other	2%
Special Features	Technology centre for students in Years 7 and 8 from Taieri Plain Schools	
Review team on site	September 2012	
Date of this report	23 November 2012	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review	March 2009 October 2005