



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

St Joseph's School (Dannevirke)
Dannevirke

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

St Joseph's School (Dannevirke)

This review is designed to support schools that were experiencing difficulties at the time of the last review. ERO provides ongoing evaluation over the course of one-to-two years as the school works to improve its overall performance and build its self-review capability.

This report answers key questions about the school's background and the context for the review. The report also provides an evaluation of how effectively the school is addressing areas identified for review and development and the quality of its practices and systems for sustaining performance and ongoing improvement.

Findings

1 Background and Context

What is the background and context for this school's review?

St Joseph's School (Dannevirke) is an integrated Catholic primary school for students in Year 1 to 8. Of the 113 students enrolled, 38 are Māori and two of Pacific heritage.

Since the May 2016 ERO report, the principal resigned and an experienced relieving principal was in place for Term 4, 2017. Currently the deputy principal is the acting principal, pending a permanent appointment for 2019. There have been some recent changes in the teaching staff with two experienced teachers providing continuity for students. A core group of trustees have been in place since the mid-2016 board elections.

The previous ERO report identified the need to improve schoolwide understanding about student achievement for equity and excellence, including accelerating the progress of Māori learners who need this. Redeveloping the school curriculum to guide teaching and learning was a key next step.

Other areas for improvement included governance practice, annual student achievement targets and the alignment of these with teacher appraisal and inquiry and professional learning and development. Strengthening learning partnerships with families and whānau was also a key next step.

2 Review and Development

How effectively is the school addressing its priorities for review and development?

Priorities identified for review and development

These included:

- schoolwide understandings about student achievement for equity and excellence, including Māori student achievement through accelerated progress
- redeveloping the school curriculum to guide responsive and effective teaching and learning
- strengthening learning partnerships with families and particularly with whānau
- improving governance practices, annual student achievement targets and the focus on acceleration for students who need this
- increasing the alignment between key school systems with the annual charter targets.

Progress

Good recent progress is evident in schoolwide understanding about the role of accelerated learning for students who need this support. Student achievement has improved over time since 2016 for many students. The reporting of student achievement to the board includes better analysis of achievement, progress and identifying disparity in student outcomes. Data is increasingly informing schoolwide priorities for action and improvement.

Students experience more responsive curriculum opportunities that engage them in purposeful and interesting learning. The development of collaborative teaching practices enable students to make choices and to lead aspects of their learning. Positive and respectful learning-focused relationships are evident. Learners with additional learning needs are well-known and specific planning for teaching and appropriate resourcing decisions made.

Strengthened schoolwide assessment practices support a clearer understanding about accelerated progress. This enables seamless transitions for students. Teachers have a greater sense of urgency in addressing students' needs.

Schoolwide opportunities to celebrate Māori students' culture, language and identity continue to evolve and grow. Regular whānau hui encourage learning partnerships. Pōwhiri, karakia and kapa haka are central to how the school operates. Whānau and community members' increasing contribution to school activities and parish events is valued.

Trustees have made progress in developing a clearer policy framework, particularly with the input of acting principal. The board is getting more useful data to track the progress of annual improvement targets. This is enabling trustees to scrutinise data to gauge the impact of targets and intervention programmes for students. Ongoing work in this key area is planned for.

Key school systems and processes to support improved student outcomes are better aligned. The 2018 appraisal process is linked to Education Council requirements and includes formal inquiries into individual teaching practices. Staff professional development is linked to school priorities and teacher needs. Provisionally certificated teachers are well supported and encouraged to trial new strategies.

The acting principal's professional leadership supports teachers to focus on enhancing students' learning opportunities. Recent visits to other schools is helping leaders to further refine school systems and processes to strengthen the impact of these on student outcomes. This includes reporting on the outcome of special programmes and interventions to trustees.

3 Sustainable performance and self review

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

The school is better placed to sustain and improve and review its performance. Recent improvements in student achievement reflect growth in effective teaching strategies and professional leadership. Trustees have increased their knowledge and understanding about their governance roles and responsibilities. They continue to strengthen processes for reviewing the school policy framework.

Internal evaluation practices to gauge the impact of school initiatives and programmes is at the early stage of consideration and remains a key next step.

Key next steps

Trustees, school leaders and staff should continue to:

- review and develop a responsive curriculum in consultation with the school's community
- develop school systems and processes to support accelerated learning, particularly for Māori learners that need this support
- strengthen the use of appraisal, teaching as inquiry and internal evaluation to improve student outcomes
- strengthen governance practices
- refine targeted planning to accelerate learning.
[ERO will monitor and discuss progress with the school.]

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.

Conclusion

St Joseph's School (Dannevirke) has made good progress in providing students with more responsive teaching and learning that has improved their achievement. Professional development and growing leadership is empowering teachers to trial strategies to increase students' ownership of learning. The development of governance, the school curriculum, appraisal, inquiry and the use of internal evaluation, is ongoing.

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



Alan Wynyard
Director Review and Improvement Services
Te Tai Pokapū - Central Region

20 September 2018

About the School

Location	Dannevirke	
Ministry of Education profile number	2676	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	113	
Gender composition	Female 53%, Male 47%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	34%
	Pākehā	57%
	Pacific	2%
	Other ethnic groups	7%
Review team on site	August 2018	
Date of this report	20 September 2018	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	May 2016
	Education Review	April 2013
	Education Review	February 2010