



Cromwell Primary School
Cromwell

Confirmed

Education Review Report

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Cromwell Primary School

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. The report answers four key questions about the school.

Findings

1 Context

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

Students are at the centre of all decisions. Their views and choices are valued. The school's vision is 'Making a difference as confident, connected and actively involved life-long learners'. This applies to adults and students and drives how learning happens.

The school has embraced the 'visible learning' approach. Teachers endeavour to see learning through the eyes of their students. Students are seen and see themselves as both learners and teachers. The development of deep-thinking skills, attitudes and dispositions that support life-long learning are prioritised.

Students are very enthusiastic about their learning. They see their school as safe and friendly. Respect and care are very evident. Effort is made to ensure that all children have equitable opportunities to be successful learners. The school has a stable, experienced and committed staff.

The school is extremely collaborative. It consults widely, and keeps its parents well informed about key initiatives. Parents and the wider community are actively involved in supporting students' learning. In addition, the school genuinely collaborates with its neighbouring schools and early childhood services.

Since the last ERO review, the school has developed an outdoor classroom/amphitheatre and planted native gardens. The school environment increasingly celebrates New Zealand's bicultural heritage. For example, students have created large murals about local Māori legends. Work is underway to adapt school buildings to better suit the school's beliefs about how students learn.

Past ERO reviews have been very positive. This continues to be a high-performing school.

2 Learning

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

Senior leaders, teachers and students use achievement information in purposeful ways to ensure students are empowered and successful in their learning.

Students achieve at high levels in reading, writing and mathematics against the National Standards. Over a four-year period, writing and mathematics results have significantly improved. Any student who is at risk with their learning is identified, given intensive support and their progress carefully monitored. Each year useful targets to lift achievement are set.

Students are actively involved in assessment processes. They confidently show and talk about their progress, achievement and next learning steps. This is part of the school's commitment to visible learning. On a daily basis, students:

- assess their own and their peers' work against clear criteria
- monitor their progress in reading, writing and mathematics against useful progressions
- use what they learn from assessing their own and their peers' work to help each other in their learning.

The teachers have deep knowledge of each student's learning needs, strengths and interests. They see assessment as a collaborative and complementary process with the student. Teachers:

- use assessment information as the basis for learning conversations with students
- emphasise individual progress and success
- use a wide range of assessments to make consistent and reliable judgements
- are exploring meaningful ways to assess students' shifts in thinking and other related skills.

The board is well informed about student progress and achievement.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum is highly effective. Students are excited and motivated about their learning. They experience high levels of success and feel empowered. The curriculum is broad and deep.

Students benefit from innovative and well-researched approaches to teaching and learning. Over several years, school leaders and teachers have researched and implemented 'visible-learning' approaches. This approach is known and understood by students. ERO found that students increasingly:

- understand the language of learning and the learning process
- recognise the difference between surface and deeper thinking and can talk about different levels of complexity in thinking and their progress against these
- understand and can talk about the mindsets, attitudes and dispositions that enable them to become confident, competent, lifelong learners.

Appropriate to their year level, students take increasing responsibility and have increasing choice in how, where and what they learn. Students see themselves as leading their learning. They know how to work well independently and collaboratively and enjoy sharing their thinking, knowledge and skills with each other.

Digital technologies are used extensively as tools for teaching, learning and communicating. By the time students reach the senior class they are very digitally literate. Students see technology as enabling deeper and more collaborative approaches to learning. It is also enabling them to access and share their learning anywhere and at any time. This is leading to greater parent involvement in their children's learning.

Collaboration is evident on many levels. School leaders and teachers deliberately seek parents' views and ensure that they understand the school's approach to learning. Teachers keep parents well informed about their child's progress and achievement. They also ensure that parents know how to best support their child's learning.

Other strengths in the school's curriculum are the:

- variety of extension and enrichment opportunities within and beyond the classroom
- well-planned initiatives and practices to support students as they move into, through and beyond the school
- strong focus on oral language.

The school is making a genuine effort to value Māori culture and language and integrate this in meaningful ways into students' learning. School leaders see this as an ongoing journey. ERO noted that the school's approach to learning is consistent with core Māori concepts. Ako, mahi tahi and tuakana-teina are strongly evident.

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

Māori students achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics. Each year specific targets to lift their achievement have been set. These have resulted in a steady improvement in achievement over four years.

School leaders make a genuine effort to seek the views of Māori parents and to keep them well informed about how the school is supporting their children. Together they have recently established a whānau group to better involve parents.

The school's commitment to serve their Māori students and families well is evident in:

- the strategic appointment of staff with an interest in Māori language and culture
- the team approach to achieving school goals related to Māori success
- how Māori students are encouraged to stand proud in their culture, build on their strengths and take on leadership roles.

Teachers are keen to further develop their cultural competency and language skills.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

This is a high performing school. It is very well placed to continue to improve its performance.

Board members are confident and competent in their role as trustees. They make well-informed decisions and are very supportive of staff. They are very focused on what is best for all students. They frequently seek the views of parents.

The principal is a strong professional leader. She is research informed and passionate about providing the best for children. She works closely with her very capable senior-leadership team. Staff strengths and skills are valued and used. Shared leadership is encouraged. School leaders are actively involved and play a leadership role in education initiatives beyond the school.

The school has a very strong professional-learning culture. Innovation, critical discussion and reflective thinking are very evident. These are supported by:

- in-depth teacher inquiries that contribute to individual and school-wide development/improvement
- a meaningful appraisal process that encourages teachers to become even better
- a very collaborative staff culture, where adults constantly share ideas, best practice and resources.

ERO found strong evidence of ongoing, deep review (internal evaluation) and development of teaching and learning in the school. Reviews are often sustained over several years and result in well-informed and well-embedded change. Research as well as parent, student and staff voice contribute to these reviews.

The next step is for the school to review and simplify its strategic plan (including sections relating to Māori and Pacific). The strategic plan could better reflect the school's key priorities.

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

This is a high-performing school. It has a broad, deep and innovative curriculum. Students are excited about their learning. They see themselves as both learners and teachers. Increasingly they lead their learning and confidently talk about their progress, achievement and next learning steps. Thinking skills and digital literacy are strongly emphasised. Students achieve very well against the National Standards.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.



Chris Rowe
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern (Acting)

17 November 2015

About the School

Location	Cromwell	
Ministry of Education profile number	3729	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	239	
Gender composition	Boys: 56% Girls: 44%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā Māori Other	81% 13% 6%
Review team on site	September 2015	
Date of this report	17 November 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	June 2011 May 2008 June 2005

