

ERO External Evaluation

The Catlins Area School, Owaka

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for students. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

School Context

The Catlins Area School is a Years 1 to 13 school in Owaka, South Otago. At the time of this review there were 112 students. Students attend from the surrounding rural area.

The school's vision is for 'each student to be the best they can be' through enacting the school's TCAS values of Tenacity, Care, Achievement and Service. Altogether, these represent the school's valued outcomes for its learners.

The 2019 goals are for all senior students to achieve the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) at their respective level as part of a meaningful and personalised pathway, to continue to increase the proportion of students in Years 1 to 10 who are achieving at or above their appropriate curriculum levels, and to further increase student engagement.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- senior students' achievement in NCEA
- reading, writing and mathematics for students in Years 1 to 10
- progress and achievement of students in groups, where their learning has been targeted for acceleration
- progress for Years 7 to 10 students in relation to science capabilities
- aspects of wellbeing
- progress in relation to a mathematics intervention programme
- attendance.

There have been changes in school staffing since the 2016 ERO review. The school had a relieving principal in term one 2016. A new principal and deputy principal have since been appointed. The senior leadership team has been extended and many other staff are new to their roles at the school. Several trustees are new to the board.

Teachers are participating in professional learning and development (PLD) in accelerating students' achievement in mathematics, managing students' behaviour positively, and digital technology.

The Catlins Area School is now a member of the Big River Kāhui Ako |Community of Learning.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school is achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for its students well.

NCEA achievement shows that between 2016 and 2018:

- almost all students achieved Levels 1, 2 and 3 at their year level (all in 2018)
- all students achieved Level 1 literacy and numeracy qualifications by the end of Year 12
- most of school leavers achieved NCEA Level 2 or higher.

In 2018 most Years 1 to 8 students achieved at or above the school's expectations for reading, with an increase to most students in writing and mathematics.

During the first half of 2019, school reported data indicates that overall Years 1 to 10 boys are not achieving as well as girls in reading, writing and mathematics.

Overall levels of school attendance are high.

1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

The school is effective at accelerating learning for any students who need this.

The school can show that in the first half of 2019 it has accelerated the progress of almost half of those students in Years 1 to 10 who needed this in reading and mathematics, and almost a third of those students in writing.

Over a third of Years 7 to 10 students made more than expected progress with respect to capabilities in science between 2017 and 2018.

All Pacific students have made accelerated and significant progress in reading and mathematics.

All Year 5 students who completed a targeted intervention programme in mathematics in 2019 have made accelerated progress.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Students experience a meaningful curriculum that focuses on their needs, abilities and interests. Senior students are benefiting from relevant, directional courses based on their needs and future aspirations. Teachers make good use of the local environment and expertise to provide authentic learning contexts. Students participate in many learning opportunities designed to strengthen their understanding and enacting of the school's values. Of particular significance is the value of service to their community.

Students are increasingly managing aspects of their own learning. Priority students are provided with extra support from within the school and other agencies for improved wellbeing and greater success in their learning. A key feature of the school's science curriculum is the high quality leadership, teaching and learning of concepts and thinking across the school.

Leaders and teachers have established reliable baseline data to measure and monitor the progress and achievement for students in Years 1 to 10. Learning information gathered enables students who may need extra help to be identified and provided with relevant learning support. Trustees now receive useful information to inform decision making.

Leaders and teachers are now better placed to use learning information to promote equity and excellence for all students. They gather and analyse useful information about students' learning from multiple sources such as reading, writing and mathematics, science capabilities, and wellbeing and behaviour.

Strong professional, strategic leadership is enabling a future-focused, collaborative school culture to be built within the school. Trusting relationships amongst staff, and targeted PLD provide a sound platform for positive improvements to be made in teaching and learning. Leaders have established an orderly and supportive environment for the wellbeing of students and staff. Effective lines of communication have been developed to support school improvement.

The principal provides high quality, responsive leadership. The vision and school values have been collaboratively refreshed. These are interwoven throughout the curriculum and teaching and learning expectations. Leadership has developed useful working partnerships with parents and the wider community by seeking their views and aspirations to inform decisions about improving and responding to outcomes for learners.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Students could be more consistently informed about the purpose of their learning, how well they are achieving, and what their specific next learning steps are. All students whose progress needs to be accelerated should have a sound understanding of what will help them to be successful learners.

Leaders and teachers now need to extend the use of student achievement and progress information to enable closer monitoring and reporting of the progress priority students are making. It would be timely for leaders and teachers to provide consistent analysis and evaluation of achievement targets and progress of students in reports to the board.

Aspects of leadership should continue to be strengthened in some areas of the school to build capacity and ensure agreed expectations are clear.

Leaders and teachers should continue to raise the profile of te ao Māori within the school, including within teaching and learning programmes.

3 Other Matters

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016* established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

No international students were enrolled at the time of the ERO review.

4 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board 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
- finance
- 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 and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Children's Act 2014.

5 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of The Catlins Area School's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

[ERO's Framework: Overall School Performance is available on ERO's website.](#)

6 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- a responsive, local curriculum that provides meaningful learning for students
- the focus on enabling students to manage aspects of their learning that increases their ownership and self-efficacy
- learning information that enables students' achievement and progress to be known and used
- effective leadership that is driving improvement and positive outcomes for students.

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in:

- strengthening student agency and knowledge of themselves within the learning process
- extend the use of student achievement and progress information to inform internal evaluation
- continuing to strengthen aspects of leadership and te ao Māori that supports teachers to best meet the needs of students in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Dr Lesley Patterson
Director Review and Improvement Services Southern
Southern Region
11 October 2019

About the school

Location	Owaka								
Ministry of Education profile number	394								
School type	Composite (Years 1-13)								
School roll	112								
Gender composition	Boys 50%, Girls 50%								
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NZ European/Pākehā</td> <td>75%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	17%	NZ European/Pākehā	75%	Pacific	6%	Other ethnic groups	2%
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Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes								
Provision of Māori medium education	No								
Review team on site	August 2019								
Date of this report	11 October 2019								
Most recent ERO reports	<table> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>July 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>February 2013</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>November 2010</td> </tr> </table>	Education Review	July 2016	Education Review	February 2013	Education Review	November 2010		
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