

Otaua School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Waiuku, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1410	
School type	Full Primary (year 1 - 8)	
Decile [1]	8	
School roll	127	
Gender composition	Girls 53% Boys 47%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	75%
	Māori	18%
	Tongan	3%
	South East Asian	2%
	other European	1%
	other	1%
Review team on site	May 2012	
Date of this report	19 June 2012	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	May 2011
	Supplementary Review	May 2009
	Education Review	March 2008

The Purpose of an Arotake Paetawhiti Report

ERO's review process takes into account each school's context, performance and self-review capacity. ERO differentiates between schools that are having difficulties, schools that are performing well, and schools that are high performing and have well-developed self review. Arotake Paetawhiti reviews are designed to support schools that are experiencing difficulties. These reviews involve ERO providing 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 Arotake Paetawhiti 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.

[1]

School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides.

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1 Background and Context

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

The 2009 ERO report identified concerns about the quality of leadership, management, teaching and learning and school self review. The ERO review that followed in 2011 found that there had been improvements in teaching and learning. However, important aspects of school leadership, management, governance and self review had not improved.

In mid 2011, following the resignation of the principal, the school's deputy principal became acting principal for six months. She was appointed to the principal position permanently in late 2011.

Over the past year, the board of trustees and principal have benefited significantly from external advice and guidance. As a result of this support and their own commitment and hard work, they have successfully improved educational leadership, management, governance and self review.

Priorities identified for review and development

The board, principal and teachers of Otaua School prioritised the following key areas for review and development:

- educational leadership and management
- curriculum development and teaching practice
- increasing understanding of governance roles and responsibilities, including the quality of self review
- success for Māori.

2 Review and Development

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

The principal is providing sound educational leadership and is managing the process of change effectively. She is working in partnership with school leaders and teachers to further improve the quality of teaching and learning. Particular aspects that are providing a sound foundation for developments in teaching, curriculum and management include:

- a school charter and strategic plan that documents the school's educational vision
- a revised performance management and appraisal system that include teachers setting achievement targets for priority learners
- more focussed and regular feedback for teachers about the quality of their teaching
- use of teacher meeting time for teachers to discuss professional and teaching matters.

The principal plans to support teachers to reflect on their practice and further improve the quality of their teaching. She has identified updating the school's curriculum guidelines as another important next step.

Curriculum development and teaching practice

Teachers have a shared educational vision for students of Otaua School and are working as a team to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They are designing a curriculum that is focussed and targeted to the learning needs of individuals and groups of students. Their professional learning and development is usefully aligned to the school's strategic goals and student achievement targets.

Students are engaged and enthusiastic and keen to talk about their learning. They speak positively about the mix of activities that reflects the school's history and community. Their classrooms are well resourced and they benefit from teachers' good use of information communication technologies (ICT). Teaching is targeted to students' needs, and there are good opportunities for them to work collaboratively and to learn by doing.

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 very well placed to sustain the progress made and to continue to improve. The school's progress is underpinned by a foundation of explicit values, good leadership and positive relationships. The principal and board reflect, plan and act systematically to improve students' learning opportunities and their achievement. They report comprehensively and accurately to the school community about the school's progress. Trustees are making good progress to progressively review and develop policies and procedures.

The board's performance agreement with the principal is appropriately linked to its strategic goals and targets. The principal now reports to the board regularly about progress towards achieving the school's strategic goals. These improvements to reporting and performance management enhance the board's capacity to govern and carry out effective self review.

The board has improved the way it consults with its community.

Success for Māori

The board has set a strategic goal to improve consultation with Māori parents/whānau and increase the extent to which the school's curriculum reflects tikanga Māori. The board has targets to improve Māori student attendance and achievement in reading. ERO recommends that the board and teaching staff refer to The Ministry of Education resources, Ka Hikitia and Tātaiako to help them develop further strategies to achieve these goals and targets.

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
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

4 Recommendations

Recommendations, including any to other agencies for ongoing or additional support.

The principal and the board acknowledge that further development is required to embed and enhance recent improvements. ERO recommends, and the board and principal agree that:

- teaching staff continue with targeted professional and curriculum development in the areas identified through the analysis of student achievement information
- teachers develop a “teaching as inquiry” approach to support their ongoing reflection about the quality and impact of teaching
- the board develop a programme of board training which should focus on increasing trustees knowledge and understanding of charter development and strategic planning, the board’s role in managing and appraising personnel and board self review.

In addition, the board and principal should consider developing resources and strategies to assist with succession planning for the board and the induction of new trustees.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Makere Smith
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19 June 2012