

## ERO External Evaluation

### Whakamarama School, Whakamarama, near Tauranga

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

Whakamarama School is a rural primary school located north of Tauranga. The school caters for students in Years 1 – 8. The current roll of 61 includes 23 students who identify as Māori.

Over the last three years there has been significant roll growth. The school reports increased transience during this time.

The school's vision focuses on 'a community preparing and empowering lifelong learners who are confident to achieve and make a difference'. Values of respect, unity, perseverance, responsibility, curiosity and confidence are promoted.

Since ERO's last review in 2015 there have been several changes to the teaching team. The majority of board members have remained in their governance roles. All staff have been involved in a wide range of professional learning and development. This includes the development of a responsive school curriculum in consultation with the community, building teacher capability to raise student achievement in mathematics and writing, and students leading their own learning.

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

- reading, writing and mathematics.

#### 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 working towards equitable outcomes for all students. Most students achieve at or above curriculum expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there is gender disparity, with boys achieving at lower levels than girls' overall.

While the majority of Māori learners achieve well, overall achievement is significantly lower for non-Maori. In writing and mathematics, disparity for Māori is reducing.

The school reports that girls' achievement has improved over time in writing and reading, and as a group, they are outperforming boys in literacy.

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

The school is accelerating learning for some identified at-risk learners, particularly boys and Māori in reading and writing. The school reports that students who have been at this school for over a year have made accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

## **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?**

A well-considered and inclusive approach supports learners with additional needs. Purposeful interventions are carefully selected and informed by achievement information. Leaders and teachers actively seek professional development to further understand learners' needs and effective strategies. A highly collaborative approach with parents and external agencies supports the school to extend opportunities for these learners. Programmes enable students at risk with their learning to fully participate in all aspects of school life.

Effective teaching strategies are contributing to positive outcomes for students. Teachers use student achievement information well to inform specific planning for individuals and groups, along with formative strategies to support improving student achievement. Students benefit from purposeful teaching and well-resourced environments across the school.

The broad and responsive curriculum reflects the school's values and virtues that were recently redesigned in partnership with the community. There is a strong focus on reading, writing and mathematics and these areas are well integrated. A diverse range of learning opportunities across the curriculum further extends learners' knowledge and development. Meaningful inquiries challenge students' thinking and actively promote understanding of the world around them.

Leaders are focused on improving outcome for students. They have established a welcoming culture and strong reciprocal partnerships with parents and whānau. The principal keeps the board well informed about the professional learning needs of teachers, and these are well resourced.

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

The principal, trustees and teachers need to:

- strengthen their knowledge and understanding of internal evaluation for ongoing improvement. School-wide achievement targets need to be inclusive of all those students below and well below curriculum expectations. Ongoing tracking, monitoring and reporting in relation to these targets is needed to show the impact of initiatives and interventions to accelerate learning for students who need this.
- implement a strategic and deliberate approach to integrate te ao Māori school-wide and build reciprocal relationships with local iwi. This needs to include, building leaders and teachers' capability and confidence in te reo and tikanga Māori, and culturally responsive practices. This is necessary to ensure te ao Māori is visible, valued and authentically used as the foundation of the local curriculum.

## **3 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 Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

## 4 Going forward

### Key strengths of the school

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

- leadership for learning that is highly focused on student learning and wellbeing
- reflective leading and teaching that contributes to inquiry into practice to support professional growth and development
- a school culture that empowers students to take responsibility for, and to lead their own learning.

### Next steps

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

- internal evaluation that identifies the progress and effectiveness of strategies and initiatives for improving student outcomes
- culturally responsive pedagogy that embeds the natural integration of te ao Māori for equity and excellence.

### ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



Phil Cowie  
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Te Tai Miringa - Waikato / Bay of Plenty Region

1 February 2019

## About the school

Location	Whakamarama, near Tauranga
Ministry of Education profile number	2079
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)
School roll	61
Gender composition	Girls            33 Boys            28
Ethnic composition	Māori            23 Pakeha          37 Other            2
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	November 2018
Date of this report	1 February 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review August 2015 Education Review December 2012 Education Review September 2009