

Gisborne Girls' High School
Gisborne

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Gisborne Girls' High 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?

Gisborne Girls' High School caters for students from Years 9 to 13, in Gisborne city. Students are drawn from the wider Tairāwhiti district with 58% of the roll identifying as Māori and 3% Pacific. A very small proportion of the school roll is male. These students are part of the Tairāwhiti Services Academy, which provides students with a pathway towards military and related careers.

Hinetu embodies the philosophy of Gisborne Girls' High School. It reflects school understandings of the range of opportunities, connections and ways of working that explicitly develop young women to be ready for the world they will move forward into and allow them to 'stand tall.'

Teachers participate in *Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success*, as a continuation of Te Kotahitanga, an in-depth professional development programme aimed at raising Māori student achievement.

Several changes to senior leadership and governance occurred following the August 2014 ERO report. A Limited Statutory Manager (LSM) was appointed to support board governance and school leadership. A newly appointed principal took up her position during 2015, following a period of time with an interim principal. The 2016 senior leadership team now includes a recently appointed assistant principal. The board comprises both experienced and recently elected members, including a new board chair.

The board of trustees and school leaders have actively addressed the areas of concern outlined in the previous ERO report. These include specific focus on assessment practices, review and appraisal processes, financial operations, board operations and relationships between staff and managers.

2 Learning

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

The school successfully uses achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement.

The percentage of students achieving National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) at Levels 1, 2 and 3 exceeds national figures. A relentless strategic focus on raising Māori student achievement has resulted in significant improvement over time of the percentage of Māori students achieving NCEA. The rate of increase has exceeded that of other ethnic groups.

Close monitoring of student progress at Years 11 to 13, and prompt intervention to individually support those students most at risk of poor educational outcomes, contributes to many students' success at Years 11 and 12.

There remains some disparity of outcomes for Māori learners, when compared to Pākehā. This is especially evident for those students who leave without NCEA Level 2 qualifications and for a number of students not yet achieving NCEA Level 3 or University Entrance. Further exploration of the curriculum pathways chosen by Māori learners is required. Teachers must continue to target and strategise for students' accelerated progress from Year 9, in order to prepare them for later success in qualifications.

Assessment data is gathered for students at Years 9 and 10 to establish their achievement levels and learning needs in reading, writing and mathematics. This data is shared with classroom teachers and there is a clear expectation that they will adapt programmes to meet students' needs. Additional literacy and mathematics support for those students needing to make the most rapid progress in learning shows good success for some students. A range of special educational needs is recognised and a variety of programmes and interventions provided in response.

Currently, targets are set to raise the percentages of students meeting national expectations in specific assessments for reading, writing and mathematics at Years 9 and 10. Some accelerated progress was evident in writing for Year 9 students over 2014 to 2015. Very good progress was made in raising the percentage of Year 9 students meeting expectations in mathematics during 2015.

Senior leaders are committed to accelerating literacy and mathematics progress for a greater number of Years 9 and 10 students. Reframing strategic goals to focus explicitly on these students should allow better alignment between the strategic goal and all teachers' classroom practice.

3 Curriculum

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

The school provides a diverse curriculum, with a tradition of balancing academic, cultural and sporting success. The approach is successful for high numbers of learners.

The special education needs coordinator (SENCO) leads a comprehensive range of student support initiatives that includes: a pastoral care service; a Learning Support Centre for students with high needs; innovative services for at-risk students; health services; and links to many community agencies.

The SENCO systems of support are well organised and student progress is comprehensively tracked. A wide range of special needs is recognised, and responsive and individualised approaches help students transition to the school and achieve success.

Staff in the Learning Support Centre implement well targeted programmes based on individual education plans for each student. Teachers are developing ways to assess student progress against school-developed matrices for pre-Level One of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Education is inclusive and students are in mainstream when appropriate.

The careers faculty is pro-active in its approach to preparing students for their transition to future programmes, tertiary learning and the work place. Comprehensive careers education programmes cater for all year levels. Opportunities available for all students include Gateway, Secondary Tertiary Alignment Resource (STAR) courses and Trades Academy. These complement the wide range of other courses in the curriculum. Strong links are maintained with external providers. An established relationship with Gisborne Boys' High School allows reciprocal teaching of specialist subjects across the two campuses.

Year 9 students are carefully transitioned to the school in a process that deliberately involves parents and whānau. A Hinetu programme of events brings whānau into school, with initial powhiri for new students.

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

Involvement in *Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success* is important and significant in fostering culturally responsive relationships and teaching practice. The school has undertaken inquiry into the effectiveness of its approaches to promoting educational success for Māori through Te Kotahitanga and now *Kia Eke Panuku: Building on Success*. Both programmes have had a positive impact and made valuable contributions to curriculum enactment. Staff benefit from the professional learning involved. These programmes and a restorative practices approach to managing behaviour have relationships at their core, strongly aligning with school vision and values.

Students appreciate opportunities to learn te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. Students develop a sense of belonging and connection with the school and community through the Year 9 Te Raukura course and Hinetu programme.

Positive Māori role models support students' engagement in learning. Two whānau-based form classes provide for students to grow leadership and to share and develop their skill in te reo Māori.

Whānau relationships are valued. The board and leaders are focused on improving consultation to make sure that whānau aspirations for their children are reflected in strategic direction.

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

Twenty-six Pacific students attend the school. They identify as Tongan, Samoan, Cook Island Māori, Tokelauan and Ni-Vanuatu. A performance group, organised and led by Pacific students, has recently restarted.

There is a need for a more strategic approach to providing for Pacific learners and their families. In 2014, a full Pacific hui was held for students and their families. Student feedback was positive about the encouragement they received to consider possibilities for learning and careers, to achieve and to be proud of their cultures.

The board and staff monitor Pacific students' progress, achievement and participation in school life. Self-review processes should include evaluation of how well the school's curriculum supports and affirms their languages, cultures and identities.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to accelerate students' progress, continue to raise achievement and sustain school improvement.

The board, working alongside the LSM, has significantly improved governance. Trustees participated in a wide range of professional development to strengthen understanding of their roles and responsibilities. A comprehensive portfolio of policies and procedures supports efficient conduct of school operations and board business. Sound systems for financial management are now in place.

Since the previous ERO report, the board has developed relationships and restored trust with the school community. A positive working relationship exists between trustees and the principal. Trustees regularly receive a wide range of information from school leaders about student outcomes and school operation. They scrutinise the data and information shared and provide a good level of challenge to leaders about the effectiveness of curriculum provision. Open discussion characterises the approach to deciding school priorities and resourcing.

The board and leaders have appropriately consulted the community, teachers and students to gather feedback about progress made and to develop its vision, values and a clear strategic direction for 2016 and beyond. They recognise the need to continue to develop partnerships with key stakeholders.

Members of the new senior leadership team bring a diverse range of skills to their roles, and work collaboratively. They recognise the need to further build the capability of middle managers to lead changes in teaching pedagogy, and to support inquiry and evaluation. They are reviewing current systems and structures to strengthen information sharing and student support. Leaders take a considered approach to change, emphasising collaboration, valuing teacher input and building productive working relationships.

Teachers are knowledgeable and committed to student success and improving outcomes for those at risk. They are at the early stages of using evidence to critically inquire into the effectiveness of their teaching practice. Encouraging teachers and leaders to ask themselves more explicit questions about what is working well in the classroom and what they could do differently to accelerate student progress, is a key next step.

Appropriate professional development choices are made in response to school development needs. The appraisal process is a useful model for raising teacher capability and schoolwide teaching capacity.

Regular review occurs at all levels of school operation. Senior leaders gather and share a wide range of information to establish actions taken in the school and the results of those actions. Students and parents have input into review. Encouraging a more evaluative approach, focusing on the quality of outcomes should strengthen internal evaluation and development.

Provision for international students

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

At the time of this review there were eight international students attending the school.

The school has appropriate systems in place for the pastoral care and the education of international students. Sound processes for monitoring student wellbeing, achievement and progress in relation to their individual goals are evident.

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

An extensive curriculum successfully supports success for high numbers of students. A relentless, strategic focus has raised Māori student achievement over time. The new senior leadership team is managing change and raising professional capability through collaboration. The school is well placed to continue to raise achievement and sustain school improvement.

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



Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

3 May 2016

About the School

Location	Gisborne	
Ministry of Education profile number	210	
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)	
School roll	755	
Number of international students	8	
Gender composition	Female 99%, Male 1%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	58%
	Pākehā	36%
	Pacific	3%
	Asian	2%
	Other ethnic groups	1%
Special Features	Attached Activity Centre Tairāwhiti Services Academy	
Review team on site	February 2016	
Date of this report	3 May 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	August 2014 May 2009 November 2005