

ERO External Evaluation

St Bernadette's School (Forbury), Dunedin

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

St Bernadette's School (Forbury) is a Catholic state integrated school for children in Years 1 to 6. The roll is 184 children, 19% of whom are Māori and 23% are Pacific. The school also a significant number of students (approximately 19%) who are English language learners (ELL).

Since the last review the school has appointed a new principal. It's vision is shared with the Dunedin Catholic Schools Kāhui Ako: 'Strengthened by Faith. United for Equity and Excellence.' The vision is supported by a set of Mercy values;

- Te Tapu o Tangata/Respect - Understanding and appreciation
- Manaakitanga/Hospitality - Welcome, inclusion and acceptance
- Aroha/ Compassion - Love, forgiveness and care
- Rato Awhina/ Service - Helpfulness, sharing and giving
- Panekiritanga/ Excellence - Trying, encouragement and achievement
- Tika/Social Justice - Support, change and improvement

To achieve these outcomes the school has identified the following strategic goals: understand and live out the special character of the school; fully engage all children in their learning; display pride in cultural identity; achieve success; and, to develop effective learning partnerships with whānau and the wider community.

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

- progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- the special Catholic character of the school
- the school's identified valued outcomes, such as progress and achievement in the arts
- the progress and achievement of children for whom English is a second language.

The school is an active participant in the Dunedin Catholic Schools 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 most of its students.

The school's achievement information over the last three years shows that most students achieved at or above the school's curriculum expectations in reading and mathematics, and for the majority of students in writing.

However, there was some disparity in achievement for Pacific students in mathematics and reading over the last three years. Disparity in outcomes for reading has been reduced. There was a little disparity in achievement for Māori students and for boys in writing over the last two years and some disparity in achievement for girls in mathematics.

Boys and girls have similar levels of achievement in reading as do students of Pacific and NZ European/Pākehā students in writing. Over the last three years there is a pattern of sustained high achievement for almost all boys in mathematics. The majority of students achieve at curriculum expectation in the visual arts, with a higher proportion of students achieving above those expectations in Years 4-6.

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

This school responds well to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration.

The school recognises the need to increase the numbers of students working at expected levels in writing. To achieve this the school is implementing the long and short-term strategies of:

- school-wide teacher development to increase the professional capability and collective capacity in the teaching of writing
- targeting students in all classrooms to support them to accelerate progress in their learning.

The school is successful in accelerating the learning for the majority of students who need differentiated teaching approaches to achieve at the school's expectations.

School information reported to the board at the end of 2018 shows that the majority of these students met expectation in reading, writing and mathematics.

School information over the last three years shows that by the end of year 6, almost all students are achieving equitable and excellent outcomes.

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?

The school has a number of processes and practices that are highly effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence.

The curriculum is very responsive. The Mercy values underpin an inclusive culture of care and are well integrated through the school's curriculum. The language, culture and identity of students is valued and is strongly reflected in the design and enactment of learning. Students know about their own progress and are developing ownership over their effectiveness as learners. Students with additional needs experience a collaborative approach to wellbeing and learning for success across the school. Students benefit from a coherent, integrated curriculum that meets their social, cultural, spiritual and academic needs.

Trustees, leaders and teachers are highly focused on student's wellbeing and learning. They establish intentional partnerships with parents and whānau, with an increasing focus on learning. There is clear alignment between the strategic priorities, actions and positive outcomes for students. The school community is characterised by respect, high relational trust and shared Catholic faith and values.

Leaders have developed effective systems, processes and practices that support an improvement focused culture. Leaders and teachers are increasing using smart tools effectively to know more about the progress, learning and achievement of all students, and to report this regularly to the board and its community. There is a strong focus on collaborative inquiry to build effective teacher practice. Leaders and teachers are supported by experienced teacher aides, together they demonstrate adaptive expertise to better meet the needs of students.

Beyond the school, effective learning partnerships and connections within the Kāhui Ako provide opportunities for leaders and teachers to share ideas about practice and participate in professional learning. Leaders and teachers are positive and proactive in responding to the culturally diverse needs of students in the school. These approaches are being increasingly effective in enhancing children's learning, engagement and sense of belonging.

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

ERO and the school agree that trustees, leaders and teachers should consider:

- using the learning information already in the school to know more about and report on the sufficiency of progress for all students, especially those students receiving additional support
- strengthening capability and capacity in evaluation.

These developments should enable leaders and teachers to clearly identify the teaching practices that are most effective in promoting positive outcomes for students.

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 Children’s Act 2014.

4 ERO’s Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO’s overall evaluation judgement of St Bernadette’s School (Forbury) performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

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

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- a school-wide focus on equity and excellence
- effective partnerships for learning at all levels of the school and extending to the parent community
- improvement-focused governance and leadership
- school-wide processes and practices that create a nurturing, responsive and inclusive learning environment for all students
- a responsive, well-integrated curriculum that is effectively supporting the engagement of children in their learning.

Next steps

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

- strengthening capacity to use internal evaluation, that includes inquiry into the impact of teaching approaches designed to improve outcomes for students
- continuing to monitor the impact of interventions on the progress and achievement of all students, in particular, those students identified as needing further support to accelerate their learning.



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

About the school

Location	Dunedin								
Ministry of Education profile number	3819								
School type	Catholic State Integrated (Years 1 to 6)								
School roll	184								
Gender composition	Girls 56%, Boys 44%								
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NZ European/Pākehā</td> <td>41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>23%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic groups</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	19%	NZ European/Pākehā	41%	Pacific	23%	Other ethnic groups	17%
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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	14 October 2019								
Most recent ERO reports	<table> <tr> <td>Education Review:</td> <td>March 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review:</td> <td>August 2012</td> </tr> </table>	Education Review:	March 2016	Education Review:	August 2012				
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