

Oceanview Heights School ERO Report - 18/08/2016

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1 Context

Oceanview Heights is a small school that supports children and their families from diverse backgrounds. Children learn in multi-levelled classes, in newly developed purpose-built teaching spaces. Further building work on other parts of the school is still to occur.

A new principal was appointed in 2014. The rest of the teaching team has mainly remained unchanged. The board has a mix of new and experienced trustees following the 2016 elections.

Oceanview Heights is the lead school for the South Canterbury Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour service (RTLb) and hosts Special Education Services on its site.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are the CARE values - co-operate, achieve, respect and encourage. These support children getting along with others, working to their potential, treating everyone with respect and helping them to be their best.

Since the last ERO evaluation the school has increased the range of assessments used, including standardised tests in maths. The ways parent and child views and opinions are gathered has been strengthened. The board has improved health and safety policies and practices.

The school's achievement information shows that additional support is needed for children when they first arrive at school to enable them to be better prepared to learn. Many children do not achieve at expected levels, however many make very good progress over their time at the school. Achievement is highest in reading. The school has identified that the areas of greatest need are boys' and Māori children's achievement. Pacific children achieve at mostly higher levels than their peers, particularly in reading and writing, although there has been some variation over time.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to Māori children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school is highly responsive to Māori children whose learning and achievement needs accelerating.

Teaching staff are inclusive and highly responsive to individual children's emotional and wellbeing needs. They know children well. There are well-established systems for quickly identifying, appropriately planning and closely monitoring Māori and other groups of children who need additional support to progress.

Teachers use many targeted strategies and programmes to accelerate children's learning. They also make use of an extensive and wide range of external specialist agencies to support children and their families. This is helping to accelerate learning for children in need of additional support. The ongoing and targeted professional training for teachers is having a positive impact on children's learning. The principal and teachers agree that they need to continue to improve moderation practices, to ensure that teachers' assessment judgements are robust and reliable.

Māori and all other children have increasing opportunities to hear and see Māori language and culture within the school environment and learning programmes. They are well supported by positive Māori role models and have opportunities to experience success in a range of learning activities.

How effectively does this school respond to other children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school has similar processes and practices to effectively respond to other groups of children whose learning needs acceleration.

Teachers deliberately plan a range of interesting experiences to broaden children's opportunities to extend on, accelerate and enhance their learning.

Priority is being given to extending the ways teachers engage with Pacific children and their families.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?

The curriculum and other organisational processes successfully support the school's vision and values.

Children learn in a caring and supportive environment that promotes their sense of belonging and wellbeing and helps them focus on their learning. Positive relationships are promoted among children, and between children and staff. The school has highly effective links with groups in the local community who offer practical support and additional funding for school programmes. Parents and whānau are actively encouraged to be involved in school activities and with their children's learning.

The curriculum successfully reflects the emphasis the school places on life skills, literacy and numeracy. Guidelines are in place so that teachers are clear about what and how to teach. Teachers provide a broad range of relevant and meaningful learning experiences. This includes education outside the classroom and beyond the school.

Teachers are reflective and responsive to identified areas of need in teaching and learning. They effectively engage children in learning and make it enjoyable. Teachers make good use of professional learning and development to strengthen aspects of the curriculum. The principal is clearly focused on raising student achievement. She provides teachers with ongoing opportunities to build their capacity in teaching and promoting learning. The principal facilitates a team approach in planning for future school developments.

Governance is supportive and focused on improvement. While many members of the board are new to their role, the experienced trustees have a good understanding of governance responsibilities. There is a collaborative working relationship between the principal and trustees. The board receives useful information to inform its decision making. It is particularly focused on ensuring sufficient provisions are in place to support children's learning needs. The board and teachers regularly discuss and informally evaluate aspects of programmes and practices.

Next Steps:

ERO, the principal and board agree that the next steps are to:

- strengthen processes for reporting to parents
- continue to develop the school's vision and direction for new flexible learning spaces and teaching approaches
- develop strategic planning with the new board.

The board and teachers also need to develop more systematic and formalised school-wide evaluation processes. This includes having a clearer process for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum.

5 Going forward (Sustainability, overall finding)

How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

Children and their families are well supported. The school and community are proactive in providing all children with opportunities to be successful in their learning. There is a culture of high expectations for teachers and children. Continued focus on raising achievement and building teaching practices are the key priorities for this school.

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

6 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

In order to improve on current practice the school should further strengthen appraisal practices so that:

- policies and procedures are in line with the Education Council expectations, including the school's responsibility for attestation of RTLBs
- teacher aides' appraisals are introduced.

The board should also continue work relating to updating policies and procedures relating to the Vulnerable Children's Act and Health & Safety Act.

7 Recommendation or Recommendations

For the school to continue to improve its performance, ERO recommends that the next steps identified in this report are acted upon.

Lesley Patterson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern

18 August 2016

About the school

Location	Timaru	
Ministry of Education profile number	2110	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	60	
	Girls 31	
Gender composition	Boys 29	
Ethnic composition	Māori	16
	Pākehā	27
	Pacific	14
	Other	3
Review team on site	July 2016	
Date of this report	18 August 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	February 2012
	Supplementary Review	May 2009
	Education Review	June 2008