

## ERO External Evaluation

### Selwyn Park School, Dargaville, Northland

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

Selwyn Park School is located in Dargaville, in the Northern Wairoa area. Currently 126 students attend the school from new entrants to Year 6. Most have Māori heritage. Families and staff have strong inter-generational connections to this school. There are established facilities for a Tongan playgroup and a neighbouring kindergarten, supporting transition for children to school. Some annual transience is a significant factor of the school roll.

The school's mission statement aims for students to develop skills to make positive life choices, which will enhance their physical, mental, cultural and emotional development.

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

- analysed achievement data in reading, writing and mathematics
- information about other curriculum areas, including education outside the classroom
- attendance information.

#### 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 successfully supports most students to achieve at appropriate curriculum levels in literacy and mathematics. Māori and Pacific students achieve as well as their peers. Students with additional learning needs are respectfully supported to learn at their pace alongside their peers.

The school has identified that achievement data in Years 1 to 3 are exceptionally high, and that lower numbers of children achieve at expected curriculum levels from Years 4 to 6. Leaders are investigating the disparity in their data, and the possible reasons and solutions for this.

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

The school has some success in accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this. Teachers and leaders identify those students who they need to support in a more targeted way to accelerate progress. Data demonstrate many students for whom interventions have been successful. The school continues to review and refine practices to further accelerate learning.

## 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 Selwyn Park whakatauki Titiro ki te Matauranga, promotes high expectations for all. The school has worked respectfully in partnership with whānau to review its charter and to create a graduate profile that expresses valued student outcomes. This provides a robust foundation for all future school development, including reviewing curriculum priorities. It strongly acknowledges Māori as tangata whenua, and expresses the significance of the school location through the school's pepehā.

The school benefits from its longstanding leadership team, a committed board, and diligent staff. Together they foster an orderly and supportive environment for learning. Students enjoy settled and attractive classroom environments. Their interests and successes are affirmed and celebrated. Respectful and trusting relationships are established with the parent community and with support agencies, further supporting children's health and wellbeing.

Since the 2016 ERO review, the school has continued to develop teaching practices to target students' learning needs. Teachers collaborate to identify the strengths and needs of individual students and to discuss teaching strategies. The board invests in extra support staff and in professional development for staff to promote success for students achieving below expectations. Digital technologies and learning through play have been prioritised. Teachers aim to capitalise on student interests and motivations, initiating greater opportunities for authentic, engaging and meaningful learning.

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

Leaders are keen to continue to build on the curriculum, programmes and practices that have been established. The school's graduate profile and new indicators of success are beginning to unpack the school's valued outcomes. There is some variability in how teachers prompt and support students to discuss their learning strengths and to identify their next steps. A more consistent school-wide approach would help students to understand their learning goals, and to lead and monitor their own progress.

The school is considering ways to improve existing leadership systems and structures. Leaders should align strategic goals more directly to their annual plans and actions, fostering a more coherent and coordinated approach to achieving these priorities. Leaders are considering more structured support within and across syndicates to foster teachers' shared understanding of effective teaching practices. This includes a more deliberate alignment of teachers' inquiry and appraisal goals to the school's key priorities.

It is timely to develop a school-wide understanding and approach to using internal evaluation. As a tool for improvement, this would support the board, leaders and teachers to determine their effectiveness in meeting goals and targets. Teachers also need greater clarity and support from leaders to guide their use of inquiry to improve outcomes for target groups. These improvements should focus more purposefully on accelerating learner progress and achieving valued outcomes.

### **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 ERO's Overall Judgement**

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Selwyn Park School's 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:

- the charter's clear priorities and valued outcomes for students
- respectful and responsive relationships at all levels of the school
- strong collaboration and shared commitment to achieving positive outcomes for all students.

## Next steps

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

- enhancing student involvement in discussing and assessing their achievement and progress
- evaluating and developing more coherent leadership systems in order to achieve school goals.

## Actions for compliance

ERO identified non-compliance in relation to the appraisal of teaching staff.

In order to address this, the board of trustees must ensure that:

- 1) there is a meaningful annual appraisal of each teacher based on the *Standards for the Teaching Profession* established by the Teaching Council for the issue and renewal of practising certificates
- 2) these appraisals are signed as completed by the professional leader of the school
- 3) there is a meaningful annual appraisal of the principal, as the professional leader of the school.

[(Part 31 Education Act 1989) – *Standards for the Teaching Profession*]

## Areas for improved compliance practice

To improve current practice, the board of trustees should:

- seek training from the New Zealand School Trustees Association about trustees' governance role
- ensure that a cycle of policy review is followed to keep policies and procedures up-to-date with legal requirements, including alignment to the Children's Act 2014
- consider police vetting for volunteers at camps and overnight excursions to ensure children's safety.



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Northern Region  
1 July 2019

## About the school

Location	Dargaville, Northland
Ministry of Education profile number	1097
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)
School roll	126
Gender composition	Boys 59% Girls 41%
Ethnic composition	Māori 89% NZ European/Pākehā 5% Tongan 4% other ethnic groups 2%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	May 2019
Date of this report	1 July 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review February 2016 Education Review November 2012 Education Review March 2010