

Beachlands School
Beachlands, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review
Report

Education Review Report: Beachlands 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. ERO's reports are intended to be clear, concise, constructive and evaluative. 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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

Findings

1 Context

What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?

Beachlands School, in the growing coastal settlement of Beachlands, Auckland, provides education for Years 1 to 8 students. An increasing roll has resulted in the addition of a new classroom block, library and administration facilities. Further building projects are being planned to cater for anticipated growth.

The principal was appointed in 1999, at a time when ERO was concerned about the performance of the school. The 2003 and 2006 ERO reports recognised the improvements that had been made and made further recommendations to guide on-going developments. The recommendation of the 2008 ERO report has been used to guide developments in learning and teaching. The stable staff is a mix of experienced teachers and those new to the profession. Most new teachers have been employed to meet the growth in the school roll.

Relationships within the school are shaped by the school values of 'friendship, encouragement, respect and nurturing' (FERN). Learning and teaching are guided by the concept of 'The Beachlands Learner', which promotes leadership, contribution to the school and wider community, communication with a wide range of people and the development of skills to be a lifelong learner.

Environmental education is an important part of the curriculum. Students and staff are involved in developing the school grounds and in learning about growing food and the sustainability of the environment.

2 Learning

How well are students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

The 2008 ERO report commented positively on student achievement and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Senior managers have a clear picture of how well students are achieving in relation to the National Standards and report on this to the board. These reports enable the board to set targets based on the National Standards and inform decisions about resource allocation. The school should be well prepared to report to the Ministry of Education against National Standards in 2012. Teachers have reported to parents in clear language about the extent to which their child is achieving in relation to the National Standards. They provide parents and students with useful information to guide future learning.

ERO reported in 2008 that levels of student engagement at Beachlands School were high, with students becoming increasingly knowledgeable about, and making decisions related to, their learning. Over the last three years the leadership team and staff have successfully supported students to know how well they are achieving and to understand what they need to do to make further progress.

Each term, all students reflect on their learning with their teacher. Together, they develop a written review of their learning and set new learning goals. These conferences support teachers' overall judgements on students' achievement in relation to the National Standards.

The learning of individual students is closely monitored and any student at risk of not achieving is quickly identified. Appropriate interventions are put in place and progress is monitored. Similarly, groups of students who need additional assistance are identified and strategies are put into place to support their learning.

How well are Māori students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Māori students, as a group, are achieving well and participate in learning in all areas of the curriculum. They engage well in their learning and enjoy participating in school life. Staff have an expectation that Māori students will achieve. Teachers and senior leaders take time to know students' families/whānau. A trustee has the specific community liaison role of supporting positive relationships between the school and parents of Māori and Pacific parents.

The school supports students to succeed as Māori. The board and staff are committed to valuing tikanga and te reo Māori and provide opportunities for students to experience and participate in pōwhiri and kapa haka and to learn te reo Māori. A more progressive te reo Māori programme could now be considered so that students' learning is systematically advanced.

Any Māori students at risk of not making good progress and engaging are identified quickly and provided with appropriate support.

3 Curriculum

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

The school curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning. It is well documented and, while providing clear guidelines, is flexible enough to enable teachers to respond to children's interests as they arise.

There is a strong sense of a learning partnership between students and teachers. The Beachlands Learner profile and the FERN values provide a clear framework within which students and teachers operate and maintain positive relationships.

Consistently high expectations of learning and behaviour are shared by the school's community. The Beachlands Learner and FERN are reference points for discussions relating to children's learning and behaviour. Relationships at all levels are positive and affirming. Teachers invite feedback from their students and set goals to improve their teaching.

Teachers provide well planned literacy and mathematics programmes that take into account the students' knowledge and skills and what they next need to learn. Teachers are skilled at supporting students to learn. Additional support programmes supplement class-based programmes when the need is identified.

A learning pathways programme integrates learning in curriculum areas, including social studies, health, science and technology. Teachers plan authentic learning opportunities that enable students to learn with purpose and to demonstrate their learning in meaningful ways. A specialist teacher teaches the learning pathways programme with a technology focus, to Year 7 and 8 students, in a well resourced learning space.

Environmental education continues to be an important part of the school curriculum. It provides a focus for some authentic learning opportunities, enabling students to engage in genuine problem solving.

A transition programme for parents and preschool children helps to prepare children in the district for primary school. While children are spending time in a new entrant classroom, parents have an opportunity to discuss useful ideas about how to help their child to make a successful transition to school. The school also has a programme in place to prepare Year 8 students for their move to secondary school.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

School leaders have a cohesive approach to building and maintaining an effective school. Trustees have a clear understanding of their role and a good policy base to guide school operations. Strategic planning and self review are well planned and executed and progress towards goals is constantly evaluated. Information to guide strategic planning is gathered through consultation and the principal regularly reports to the board on school operations.

With the support and guidance of an external mentor, the principal has successfully built a learning community for staff as well as students. Teachers share ideas and concerns confidently and support each other to develop strategies to improve teaching and learning.

The school's performance management system is used to further develop teachers' professional skills. The process is collaborative and inclusive. All teachers have undergone training in coaching and use these skills to engage their colleagues in professional discussion. Teachers have many opportunities for leadership and are supported to develop appropriate skills.

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. At the time of this review there were no international students attending the school.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of the school completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. 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 students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Thornton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Thornton
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

22 August 2011

About the School

Location	Beachlands, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1224	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
Decile ¹	10	
School roll	517	
Number of international students	0	
Gender composition	Boys 55%, Girls 45%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	80%
	Māori	9%
	British/Irish	6%
	South African	3%
	Pacific	1%
	Asian	1%
Review team on site	June 2011	
Date of this report	22 August 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2008
	Education Review	August 2006
	Education Review	June 2003

¹ School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrate schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides