

**Maungatapere School**  
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**Education Review Office**

**External Evaluation**

# ERO External Evaluation

## Maungatapere School

### 1 Context

Maungatapere School, situated west of Whangarei, caters for children from Years 1 to 8. The school's inclusive, country feel, and the meaningful learning opportunities provided for children, are valued by parents and whānau. Strong inter-generational links between the community and the school and the school's local and rural context for learning, are also valued.

The board of trustees and leadership team provide stability in the school and manage new trustees and staff succession planning well. Recent curriculum focus areas for teacher professional development have been mathematics, science and co-operative learning. Teachers and students continue to benefit from collaboration with local schools.

The Ministry of Education recently implemented an enrolment scheme to manage the school's growing roll.

### 2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are actively promoted by staff and understood by children. The school's motto, '*Ka Whawhai Tonu Ake Ake*': 'Make it Happen' is well embedded. Children are very proud of the recently introduced whakataukī/proverb which encourages them to set challenging goals and persevere to achieve them. Establishing strong, respectful relationships is also valued.

School achievement information shows improvement over time. The majority of children, including Māori children, continue to achieve at or above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Māori children's levels of achievement are similar to other groups within the school and, in writing, their achievement has been slightly higher over the past two years.

In 2015 all Year 8 students leaving Maungatapere School were achieving at or above the National Standards in reading and mathematics. Achievement in writing was also very high. While boys achieve well overall, staff have plans in place to accelerate their achievement in reading and writing. The school also has improvement targets for children who achieve well and need extending to reach their potential.

Since the last ERO evaluation the school has employed external specialists to provide teacher professional development in mathematics and science, and to provide targeted support for children whose learning needs acceleration. Cooperative learning techniques and teaching as inquiry have been a particular focus to target children who require alternative strategies and to engage them in learning.

The school has continued to strengthen its links with Māori whānau to support their children to succeed as Māori. Transitions into and out of the school have also been strengthened.

The board has initiated a number of property developments in the last three years. Most recently a hallway and toilet block have been converted and refurbished to create a break-out space that provides teachers and children with increased opportunities to learn collaboratively. Children's lobbying has also resulted in improvements to outdoor play spaces.

### 3 Accelerating achievement

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

School leaders and teachers use achievement information well to identify Māori children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration. Teachers use this information to group children with similar abilities for instruction, particularly in reading and mathematics. The school has a variety of in-class and withdrawal interventions to provide additional targeted support. The establishment of a whānau group has increased opportunities for the school to communicate and engage with the whānau of Māori children to support their learning. Teachers could now use *Tātaiako - Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*, more formally when their inquiry includes Māori learners.

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

The school uses achievement information effectively to identify other children whose learning and achievement need acceleration. They also use a variety of other information to identify children whose levels of engagement or resilience might be preventing them from achieving. The school has a number of processes in place to accelerate progress. These include supporting children directly by providing relevant professional development for teachers to develop their practice, and by working with children's 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 priorities for equity and excellence?**

A variety of good processes and practices are in place to promote equity and excellence in student outcomes. School leaders are focused on learning and learning relationships. In consultation with parents and whānau, school leaders and teachers have developed a broad curriculum that builds on children's interests, develops their confidence and helps to ensure that they experience success. Children have many opportunities to learn about their local history and environment, strengthening connections with their community.

Children are developing a strong sense of belonging and whanaungatanga. A number of buddy systems ensure strong relationships and opportunities for younger children to learn from their older peers. Inclusive practices are also evident for children with high needs. Cooperative and hands-on activities, including the use of digital technologies, provide learning experiences that promote active engagement and learning challenges. These approaches encourage all children to contribute and allow them to show their abilities in ways other than through written work.

Children recognise that their school has high expectations of them. They are encouraged to set personal learning goals and some teachers effectively support them to develop goals that are challenging. There are a variety of ways and degrees to which children know what they are learning and how successful they have been.

To support children to become confident, life-long learner's senior leaders could now consider ways to ensure that children have more consistent opportunities to take greater responsibility for their learning. Considerations could include reviews of the ways achievement information is used and the

way the curriculum is designed and implemented. Feedback invited from children has contributed useful information about their curriculum interests and the ways they prefer to learn.

The whānau group has provided very good support for the school in promoting success as Māori and for helping all children to learn about New Zealand's bicultural heritage. Teachers have continued to develop their knowledge of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. For some Māori children, the increased value and visibility placed on te Ao Māori, including kapa haka, has strengthened their sense of mana, pride and personal identity. Teachers could consider working with the whānau group to develop progressions for te reo Māori for children as they move through the school.

There are positive, learning-centred relationships between home and school. Parents value the proactive communication they have with their child's teacher and with the school generally. The school provides a variety of opportunities for families to engage with the school and to contribute suggestions for improvement. Parents receive good information about their children's progress and achievement, including information relating to the National Standards and how they might support their child's learning at home.

School leaders purposefully support teachers' growing leadership. They provide targeted professional development to strengthen teacher capability and improve outcomes for children. Teachers are open to learning. Their personal inquiries, including peer mentoring and opportunities to share practice, have been particularly useful in helping them to reflect on and develop their practice for children whose learning needs acceleration.

The school has a comprehensive self-review programme. Leaders and teachers have good analysis and evaluation skills. Strengthening the consistency of evaluation so that it includes information about the effectiveness of programmes in accelerating children's progress should inform and support the high standards that they set for themselves.

Trustees bring a range of skills and governance experience to their stewardship role. They are well informed and use information effectively to manage priorities and make resourcing decisions that benefit children's learning.

## 5 Going forward

### **How well placed is the school to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children?**

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children who need their 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.

The senior leadership team have identified that to further enhance equity and excellence outcomes for all children they should continue to focus on teacher capability building initiatives. They have also identified consolidating the implementation of the Māori Education Strategy, *Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success 2013 – 2017*, cooperative learning techniques and the integration of digital technologies as key areas to provide teachers with ongoing support.

Senior leaders believe that the further embedding of identified initiatives will support children's increased engagement, progress and achievement across the curriculum, including the development of the skills they need to be independent, life-long learners.

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*.

## 7 Recommendations

ERO recommends that the school continues to use internal evaluation to monitor and report on the effectiveness of school improvement initiatives, including those relating to increasing student knowledge about and ownership for their learning.



Graham Randell  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

23 May 2016

## About the school

Location	Maungatapere	
Ministry of Education profile number	1048	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	312	
Gender composition	Boys 53%	Girls 47%
Ethnic composition	Māori	22%
	Pākehā	73%
	British/Irish	3%
	Cook Island Māori	1%
	other	2%
Review team on site	March 2016	
Date of this report	23 May 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	January 2013
	Education Review	September 2009
	Education Review	July 2006