

**Parakai School**  
**Parakai, Auckland**

**Education Review Office**

**External Evaluation**

# ERO External Evaluation

## Parakai School

### 1 Context

Parakai School is continuing to develop and progress its strategic school direction. Since the 2012 ERO evaluation a new Principal has been appointed and joined the school in 2014. This has prompted new leadership structures. There have also been changes in the teaching staff, curriculum, school vision and charter. The school's charter and annual plans are strategic, coherent and aligned with the school vision, values and future direction.

Many families and staff have long-standing and inter-generational connections with the school. Local connections to Haranui Marae and four other Marae in the area are important connections for Māori children and their whānau. A significant feature is the services provided by the school. These include an on-site HIPPY centre (Home Programme for Parents and Youngsters), access to a social worker, a breakfast club and a student-led radio station. These services are well used to promote strong pastoral care, strengthen school transitions, and to enhance children's learning and the community participation in the school.

### 2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are about growing G.R.E.A.T citizens, empowered to live successfully in their personal and global lives.

Values encompassed in the G.R.E.A.T terminology refer to:

- giving and receiving the very best
- respecting self, others and our surroundings
- excelling by setting high expectations and having a strong work ethic
- attitudes that foster being open to learning
- thinking critically and creatively in a changing world.

The school's new motto, Dream it - Believe it - Achieve it, underpins the school's vision and the values and principles of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

The school's achievement information shows that many students achieve at or above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The information shows a steady and significant increase in Māori children's achievement over the 2013 to 2015 time interval, reducing some earlier disparities in educational outcomes for this group overall. Senior leaders are now considering ways to increase the numbers of Māori children achieving above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Gender-based differences in achievement levels for reading and writing have also been significantly reduced, with boys now achieving at levels comparable to girls.

Progress in raising student achievement reflects work done by teachers to implement programmes that promote learning success and equitable outcomes for all children.

Since the 2012 ERO report the school has:

- introduced school-wide assessments and documented the school's curriculum in accordance with recommendations in previous ERO report
- increased the use of digital devices to support children's learning and introduced programmes to help teachers, leaders and the board streamline information about children's achievement and school systems
- increased the overall consistency in teaching practice across the school through teacher professional development and improved teacher performance appraisal provisions
- introduced professional learning groups (PLGs) to promote focused teacher discussion about priority learners needing additional learning support
- established special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) roles to provide specialised support for identified children.

### **3 Accelerating achievement**

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

The school is effective in responding to Māori children whose learning and achievement needs to be accelerated. Their progress is closely monitored through planned programmes and initiatives, and most are making accelerated progress in all National Standard areas. They benefit from work undertaken by teachers based on the Ministry of Education's Māori Education Strategy *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Success 2013 - 2017* and the principles outlined in *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*. The use of these documents in curriculum development initiatives and teacher appraisal processes is extending school leaders' and teachers' understanding of what educational success for Māori, as Māori, means.

As a next step in further promoting success for Māori learners, school leaders agree it would be helpful to centralise records about what teachers know about the strengths, needs and interests of these children. This would enable greater sharing of information so that most effective practices can be identified and used in increasingly strategic ways to further accelerate their learning.

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

The school responds well to other children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration. School leaders and staff use achievement information increasingly well to identify at risk students, plan targeted teaching approaches for them, and monitor their progress closely to evaluate outcomes.

Leaders and staff carefully consider what is best for children with special learning needs and their families. A wide range of interventions and targeted programmes are provided, helping to ensure that support is well matched to their needs.

Children are kept informed about their progress and set goals for improvement with their classroom teachers, specialist teachers or support staff. School leaders and teachers meet regularly with students with high learning needs.

## 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?**

The school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices are increasingly effective in helping the school to enact its vision, values, goals and priorities for equity and excellence in student outcomes.

Trustees, school leaders and staff have high expectations that all children will receive a wide range of learning experiences. Children benefit from a settled and positive school tone. They are confident, friendly and respectful and speak with pride about their school and their learning.

Teachers recognise and celebrate children's learning successes. They encourage children to take on new challenges. Children work collaboratively, and have many opportunities to think critically and problem solve. They are actively involved in and excited about learning. Teachers continue to build strategies to encourage children to be self-directed learners who can increasingly taking ownership of their own learning through curriculum design and the school's new thinking based learning model.

A school-wide focus on greater integration of bicultural practices and perspectives in the curriculum, and continuing work to build teachers' knowledge and use of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori particularly benefits Māori children, while promoting bicultural understandings for all children. Māori children and parents who spoke to ERO say these approaches help them feel valued as Māori.

The leadership team work collaboratively. Their leadership of work to improve processes for assessing, analysing and reporting children's progress and achievement is having a positive impact on promoting equitable learning opportunities and outcomes for children. As these developments become firmly embedded, leaders and teachers should be better placed to evaluate the impact of programmes on accelerating children's learning.

The board governs the school well and seeks external training and support to support its governance role. Processes are in place for board induction, and succession planning. Trustees are very visible within the school and have a positive working relationship with the principal and staff. The board receives regular information about children's wellbeing and achievement, and about priority learning groups. Trustees strategically allocate resources needed to support school-wide and classroom programmes to meet children's needs. They have a strong commitment to improved learning outcomes for all learners.

Parents receive clear information about their child's progress and achievement and have opportunities to contribute to their child's learning through parent, student and teacher meetings. Parents who spoke to ERO appreciate the school's open, inclusive culture and the wide range of school activities they can be involved in.

ERO endorses the school's intention to build onto the school's e-learning action plan. Strategies include developing shared understandings and consistency in teaching practice that reflect current theory and practice about most effective ways to enhance learning for all children.

## 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 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.

School leaders, staff and trustees are well placed to sustain and make ongoing improvements in school performance.

The leadership team acknowledge that ongoing development areas for continuing to sustain and improve on existing good practice include:

- building a school-wide vocabulary of learning
- embedding the school's inquiry model of learning
- further progressing work on evaluating the effectiveness of teaching practices and interventions
- continuing to strengthen relationships with family and whānau to further extend learning partnerships and learning pathways for children.

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 the school continues to progress its well considered educational directions and priorities to sustain and further improve practices and processes for promoting equity and excellence in learning outcomes for children.



Graham Randell  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

1 June 2016

## About the school

Location	Parakai, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1432	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	170	
Gender composition	Boys 51%	Girls 49%
Ethnic composition	Māori	36%
	Pākehā	49%
	Pacific	7%
	other	8%
Review team on site	April 2016	
Date of this report	1 June 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	November 2012
	Education Review	December 2009
	Education Review	February 2007