



## ERO External Evaluation

### Waiau School, Waiau, North Canterbury

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

Waiau School provides education for students in Years 1 to 6 from Waiau and surrounding rural areas. It has a roll of 37 students, 14 of whom identify as Māori.

The school's vision is 'Learning for Life', and for its students to be confident lifelong learners who are respectful, responsible and resilient. To support the school's vision and values, the strategic goals are for the provision of quality education and to enhance teaching and learning environments.

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

- reading, writing and mathematics
- wellbeing and engagement.

Since the ERO 2017 review there have been ongoing changes in leadership including the recent appointment of a permanent principal. The school has continued to provide a range of support for children and families as they recover from the 2016 earthquake. A community pool has recently opened on the school site.

Waiau School is a member of Tipu Maia Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning.

### 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?

In 2016 and 2017 outcomes for students were moving towards being equitable and excellent.

In 2018 achievement levels were significantly lower, with some emerging disparity in achievement for some groups, especially for some Māori children.

Over time, there has been a decline in achievement for all, including Māori children in reading, writing and mathematics.

The board is not confident that the achievement information it has received in recent years is reliable.

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

The school is unable to provide sound evidence of accelerating learning for those students who need this.

In 2018 and 2019 several teacher interventions were implemented to accelerate the literacy and numeracy learning of a group of students. Reporting to the board on these interventions did not evaluate the sufficiency of progress made by these students or the impact of the resourcing decisions.

## 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?

Students learn in an environment that builds resilience through active play, inclusive relationships and community engagement. They enjoy a sense of belonging and build friendships at school. Senior students experience increasing levels of responsibility.

Parents are involved and informed about their children's learning. Transitions into the school, and on to Year 7, are well managed. Community connections provide opportunities for students to become confident and connected and enhance their learning.

The board actively represents and serves the school and community in its governance role. Trustees have initiated the sharing of responsibilities, reviewing their own practice, and succession planning. They proactively access external support for relevant advice and resources as needed.

The new principal is well supported to effect change for equity and excellence. Having resolved recent property, financial and personnel priorities the board is now prepared to sharpen its focus on improving of learning outcomes for all students.

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

Trustees and the principal need to embed and sustain the school's vision and values by implementing coherent organisational conditions that include:

- using quality achievement information to inform the learning community about student progress and acceleration
- setting explicit targets for groups of students whose learning needs acceleration, and reporting on the outcomes of these and any interventions
- aligning curriculum development and delivery with community aspirations
- developing guidelines for teachers that reflect high expectations for students' learning and behaviour
- building students' knowledge and management of their own learning
- ensuring the language, culture and identities of Māori students are valued and positively responded to in school-wide practice
- developing clear and consistent systems, policies and practices that are widely understood by the school community through consultation and communication
- building trustees', principal's and teachers' capacity to undertake internal evaluation for improvement and to inform future decision making.

Trustees need to ensure policies and procedures are aligned to the school's context and practices. While policies are in place and available to parents electronically, not all policies are consistently followed. Policies should be routinely reviewed by the board, with community consultation.

### 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 Children's Act 2014.

## 4 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Waiau School's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Needs development

ERO will maintain an ongoing relationship with the school to build capacity and evaluate progress.

ERO's Framework: [\*Overall Findings and Judgement Tool derived from School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success\*](#) 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:

- its future-focused board that is building its governance capability for improvement of student outcomes
- its community connections that enhance students' learning opportunities

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in embedding and sustaining the school's vision and values by implementing coherent organisational conditions that include:

- prioritising student achievement and acceleration through effective strategic planning
- aligning curriculum development and delivery with community aspirations, high expectations for students, and learner agency
- ensuring the language, culture and identities of Māori students are valued and positively responded to in school-wide practices
- developing clear and consistent systems, policies, and practices that are widely understood by the school community
- building trustees', principal's and teachers' capacity to undertake internal evaluation for improvement, and to inform future decision making.

Trustees need to ensure policies and procedures are aligned to the school's context and practice. Policies should be routinely reviewed by the board, with community consultation.

### Actions for compliance

ERO identified non-compliance in relation to consulting with the school's Māori community.

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

- consult with the school's Māori community, develop and make known to the school's community policies, plans and targets for improving the progress and achievement of Māori students [NAG 1e)].

ERO recommends that the school seek support from the New Zealand School Trustees Association in order to bring about improvement in its policies and procedures, particularly for aspects of governance and health and safety.



Dr Lesley Patterson  
Director Review and Improvement Te Tai Tini  
Southern Region  
3 December 2019

## About the school

Location	Waiau, North Canterbury
Ministry of Education profile number	3566
School type	Contributing (Years 1-6)
School roll	37
Gender composition	Male 20, Female 17
Ethnic composition	Māori 14 NZ European/Pākehā 23
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	No
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	October 2019
Date of this report	3 December 2019
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review August 2017 Education Review July 2013