

Confirmed
Education Review
Report
St Clair School
October 2010

Location Dunedin
Ministry of Education profile number: 3835

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Confirmed Education Review Report: St Clair School

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

1 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

St Clair School is located in a suburb of Dunedin. It provides for the education of Years 1 to 6 students within a safe and caring learning environment. ERO identified St Clair School as a high performing school in 2007. The school has sustained and increased its levels of high performance over the last three years.

A significant number of students achieve at or above their peers' performance nationally in reading, writing and numeracy. Teachers have high expectations that students can make progress and achieve well. Students identified for support are well taught by trained and skilful teacher aides.

The school culture is very inclusive and ensures that programmes are designed so that all students are able to take part in them.

Students benefit from well-planned, high-interest, learning experiences. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is very high. Teachers reflect on students' prior learning and include students' ideas and interests in programmes to actively engage them in their learning. Students use a range of information and communication technologies (ICT) with confidence and competence.

Teachers' professional learning is focused on making changes in their classroom practice and raising levels of student achievement. Teachers are very open to introducing new approaches and strategies to improve their practice.

The senior leadership team provides high quality direction and guidance for teachers to implement the school's learning programmes. Teachers focus on making sure the school's self-review findings lead to actions that benefit the students.

Trustees, senior leaders and teachers involve parents in what happens at the school in many ways. Parents are warmly welcomed into the school and actively participate in a variety of school programmes and events.

The board and senior leaders have designed self review as a deliberate, ongoing process. They gather useful information about all aspects of the school's programmes and operations. This leads to recommendations with a focus on improved outcomes for students. The board and senior leaders keep the school community well informed about how students are achieving and what developments are happening at the school.

The board of trustees has demonstrated that it is governing the school in the interest of the students and the Crown. The board, together with the principal and school

leaders, continues to focus on improving student learning, engagement, progress and achievement.

Future Action

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

2 St Clair School's Curriculum

How effectively does the curriculum of St Clair School promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

School context and self review

Previous reviews identified the school as a high-performing school, in particular the quality of self review. This continues to be an outstanding feature of how the school sustains its strategic direction.

The school has made effective use of the Ministry of Education's document *Ka Hikitia* to affirm existing practices that support close and responsive relationships with Māori families. Teachers use some te reo Māori in daily programmes and purposely include Māori perspectives into programmes where appropriate. Māori students are making good progress in their learning. Māori student achievement is recorded and reported separately. Some Māori students are achieving below that of non-Māori students in reading and writing, but are achieving higher than non-Māori students in areas of mathematics and as well as non Māori students in the inquiry approach to learning.

Areas of strength

Culture of learning. Teachers are focused on the interests, abilities and needs of students. They are committed to building a school-wide culture centred on learning. Teachers:

- have high expectations for students to learn and a belief that all students can learn;
- have a strong focus on changing practice to raise student achievement; and
- plan meaningful and purposeful learning contexts, involving students in making choices.

Support for students. The principal and teachers have a clear intent on promoting student achievement. ERO observed:

- students benefiting from teaching by skilful teachers aides;
- specific programmes designed to complement and extend classroom learning;
- students accessing and being encouraged to use a variety of resources to assist them in their learning;
- students' progress being well monitored and tracked within teaching teams; and
- a variety of strategies being used to foster home/school links.

Curriculum design. The school is giving full effect to the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC). The school's curriculum design gives teachers the flexibility to provide innovative programmes that meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students.

Evidence of this is:

- the school-wide vision, goals and values embedded in all aspects of curriculum programmes and practices;
- students' learning enhanced by the development of a purposefully designed school curriculum focused on giving students seamless learning experiences;
- specialist teachers enriching the learning experiences for students and teachers; and
- information and communication technologies naturally integrated into the daily life of the school and across learning areas.

Teaching practice. Students demonstrate that they meet the school's vision to be confident, capable, caring and contributing learners. Examples of high quality teaching practice include:

- students being supported to set goals for their learning and monitor these to show improvement;
- teachers sharing the high expectations they have for learning with the students; and
- teachers providing a learning environment of respect, cooperation and curiosity.

These practices are helping students to become more involved in their own learning and develop greater levels of independence.

Writing development. Students have made significant progress in writing since 2007. Teachers have:

- used achievement information to identify specific skills where students can improve;
- audited their teaching of writing and identified where they need to make improvements; and
- used professional learning and development (PLD) opportunities to improve guidelines for supporting sustainable improvements for teaching and learning.

Community partnership. Trustees, senior leaders and teachers use a range of effective strategies to involve parents in the life of the school. This is evident through:

- students and teachers using a range of technologies to keep parents well informed about school events and the learning that is taking place; and
- students leading the discussions with parents and teachers about how well they are learning and their next learning steps.

Self review. Trustees and senior leaders have designed and implemented ongoing review as a deliberate and purposeful process. They gather specific information and carry out critical and reflective analysis. They make well-informed decisions that bring about sustainable improvements.

Area for development and review

The board has recently undertaken a major building project. The building has been designed to foster further development of the school's vision and goals through the implementation of a learning environment that promotes and sustains continuity and cohesion across all class levels. The school should continue to explore innovative ways to make the best use of the new spaces to reflect the school vision and extend 'connected learning' approaches.

3 Implications for action

ERO and the board agree that the next stages of school development will focus on trustees, teachers, students and parents seeking increasingly innovative ways to further enhance and extend 'connected learning' within and beyond the school.

4 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of St Clair 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 legal obligations related to:

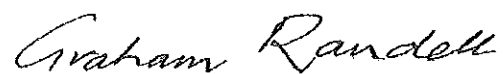
- board administration;
- curriculum;
- management of health, safety and welfare;
- personnel management;
- financial management; and
- asset management.

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; and
- attendance.

5 Future Action

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



Graham Randell
National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

5 October 2010

About The School

School type	Contributing (Years 1-6)	
Decile ¹	6	
School roll	355	
Gender composition	Boys	52%
	Girls	48%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	71%
	Māori	11%
	Asian	6%
	Other	12%
Review team on site	August 2010	
Date of this report	5 October 2010	
Previous three ERO reports	Education Reviews	July 2007
		October 2004
	Accountability Review	September 2001

¹ School deciles range from one to ten. Decile one 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 integrated 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.

5 October 2010

To the Parents and Community of St Clair School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on St Clair School.

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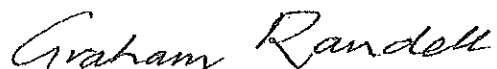
Review Coverage

This report provides an evaluation of how effectively the school's curriculum promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement. ERO's evaluation takes account of the school's previous reporting history and is based on:

- what is known about student achievement information, including the achievement of Māori and Pacific students;
- decisions made to improve student achievement using assessment and self-review information; and
- teaching strategies and programmes implemented to give effect to the school's curriculum.

ERO also gathers information during the review to contribute to its national reports. The national reports are published on ERO's website.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, www.ero.govt.nz.



Graham Randell
National Manager Review Services
Southern Region

General Information about Reviews

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting integrates the following:

- **school curriculum;**
- **national evaluation topics** –contribute to the development of education policies and their effective implementation; and
- **Board Assurance Statement**, including student and staff health and safety.

ERO's review is responsive to the school's context. When ERO reviews a school, it takes into account the characteristics of the community from which it draws its students, its aspirations for its young people, and other relevant local factors.

ERO also builds on the school's own self-review information. ERO is interested in how a school monitors the progress of its students and aspects of school life and culture, and how it uses this information to improve student learning.

This helps ERO to answer the major evaluation question for reviews:

How effectively does this school's curriculum promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

Areas for Development and Review

ERO reports include areas for development and review to support ongoing improvement by identifying priorities. Often the school will have identified these matters through its own self review and already plans further development in those areas.