

Ward School Education Review

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Summary

Areas of strength

The inclusive tone of the school promotes parents and whānau interest, involvement and confidence. A range of suitable processes are in place for consulting with and informing the community about school developments.

Reporting processes are well considered and appropriately comprehensive. Implemented in 2010, three way conferences have a well-structured format and help to build a shared understanding between teacher, student and parents of next learning steps

Trustees are highly committed, well organised and work collaboratively in their role of supporting the school. A range of training has been sought and undertaken to enhance understanding of governance. The recent charter and strategic plan review has assisted trustees' ownership of the school's vision for learners.

The principal leads school operations effectively and is committed to continuous improvement of outcomes for students. He actively seeks development opportunities to support his management role and teaching and learning across the school.

The principal and trustees value self review as a means to promote improvement. Timely reviews are undertaken in response to issues and new requirements. Processes to support operational review are developing. Collation and analysis of student achievement information is well considered. Data is regularly presented to the board and used to inform decisions about programmes and resourcing.

Area for review and development

Establishing a sound framework to support review and development of significant aspects of practice is an area requiring further consideration. Use of specific best practice indicators should enable progress in identified areas to be better monitored and measured.

A stronger emphasis on identification of specific strategies to promote long term improvement, supported by actions to facilitate progress, is likely to enhance strategic planning processes and the evaluation of student outcomes.

Purpose of an ERO Report

The purpose of ERO's reports 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.

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1 Context

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

Ward School is the hub of a small rural community in Marlborough. Facilities include a library and swimming pool that are open to families in the local area. Grounds and buildings are attractively maintained and the school is well resourced. The learning of individuals and small groups of students is supported by additional staff, funded through community grants and local fundraising.

A strong family ethos and focus on community involvement underpins school operations and the vision for learners. Shared values support the positive school tone. Developing and maintaining purposeful relationships with students and their families is a priority for the board and staff.

Since the November 2007 ERO report, there have been several property developments, including the refurbishment of utility areas. There has also been a complete change of staff, with a new principal appointed in term one 2009. In consultation with the community, the board has recently redeveloped the charter and strategic plan.

Professional development in writing has been a focus for teachers in 2010. The school began its involvement in a regional information and communication technologies (ICT) cluster in August 2010.

2 Learning

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

Areas of strength

Most students are achieving at expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers have identified individuals and a group of students who are achieving below expected levels and additional assistance is being provided. The board funds above teacher and teacher aide staffing entitlement to enhance opportunities for learning through small group teaching. Teachers set high expectations for student learning.

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The target setting for achievement is well considered. Following an appropriate assessment schedule, schoolwide student achievement information is collated, analysed and reported to the board. Targets set for student achievement in 2010 were met, with students making good progress throughout the year.

Teachers know their students well. They gather useful information and track individuals' progress throughout the year. The use of nationally-normed assessment tools and ongoing moderation informs teacher judgements as they identify next learning steps and review student achievement against National Standards.

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

Māori students make up 30% of the school roll and achieve at a similar level to their peers. The school is at the early stages of developing a Māori perspective in the curriculum. Teachers have identified a need to increase their knowledge and skills in te reo Māori me ngā tīkanga. Consultation with Māori whānau took place in 2010. Achievement information was shared and parents were asked to contribute ideas.

3 Curriculum

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

Areas of strength

The curriculum clearly reflects the school values and is designed to provide experiences that support students to be actively involved learners. There are clear links to the principles and values underpinning The New Zealand Curriculum. Completed learning area statements are well considered and guide teaching and learning.

Teachers use a range of effective strategies including good modelling and questioning to promote thinking and understanding of new concepts. Regular and specific teacher feedback, related to the purpose of lessons, informs students' next steps for learning. Independent tasks are directly linked to the lesson focus.

High expectations for achievement and behaviour are clearly expressed by teachers and well understood by students. Teachers provide effective opportunities that engage students in purposeful learning and actively work to maintain a constructive and positive environment. Classrooms are well presented and resourced and use of ICT is being extended with the purchase of interactive white boards.

Areas for review and development

Consolidation of practices that support students' understanding of their learning, achievement, self assessment and goal setting is a next step for staff. These practices should strengthen students' knowledge of their next learning steps and ongoing progress and contribute to student engagement with learning.

Further curriculum development for the learning areas of the arts, technology and health and physical education is required. A timeline for this work has been established.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Areas of strength

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Reporting processes are well considered and appropriately comprehensive. Implemented in 2010, three way conferences have a well-structured format and help to build a shared understanding between teacher, student and parents of next learning steps

Trustees are highly committed, well organised and work collaboratively in their role of supporting the school. A range of training has been sought and undertaken to enhance understanding of governance. The recent charter and strategic plan review has assisted trustees' ownership of the school's vision for learners.

The principal leads school operations effectively and is committed to continuous improvement of outcomes for students. He actively seeks development opportunities to support his management role and teaching and learning across the school.

The principal and trustees value self review as a means to promote improvement. Timely reviews are undertaken in response to issues and new requirements. Processes to support operational review are developing. Collation and analysis of student achievement information is well considered. Data is regularly presented to the board and used to inform decisions about programmes and resourcing.

Area for review and development

Establishing a sound framework to support review and development of significant aspects of practice is an area requiring further consideration. Use of specific best practice indicators should enable progress in identified areas to be better monitored and measured.

A stronger emphasis on identification of specific strategies to promote long term improvement, supported by actions to facilitate progress, is likely to enhance strategic planning processes and the evaluation of student outcomes.

Provision for international students

There are no international students enrolled at Ward School.

Provision for students in the school hostel

Ward School does not have a school hostel.

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 within three years.

Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

12 April 2011

About the School

Location	Marlborough	
Ministry of Education profile number	3067	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
Decile [1]	6	
School roll	52	
Gender composition	Males 29 Females 23	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	36
	Māori	16
Review team on site	February 2011	
Date of this report	12 April 2011	
Previous three ERO reports	Education Review	November 2007
	Education Review	May 2005
	Discretionary Review	May 2001

[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