



Dairy Flat School
Dairy Flat, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Dairy Flat School

The purpose of ERO's reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. 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. The report answers four key questions about the school.

Findings

1 Context

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

Dairy Flat School is a semi-rural school north of Auckland. It provides education for students from Years 1 to 8. The school population is becoming increasingly diverse. Approximately 30 percent of students come from a variety of different cultural backgrounds. Māori students make up 10 percent of the roll. The school's roll continues to grow. In response, the community is planning to build new learning spaces using a modern learning environment (MLE) design.

The principal describes the school as "passionately country". The students' rural experiences and the school's environment are valued by parents, students and the community. Leaders regard these rural aspects as special to their school and plan the curriculum around these features. The school's vision 'Striving for excellence while caring for others' affirms the importance of high expectations for students and the valuing of people.

The school's 2012 ERO report noted that teachers know families and students well and that positive, caring relationships supported student learning. These continue to be strengths of the school. Since 2012 the long serving leadership team has strengthened its assessment and documentation practices.

2 Learning

How well does this school use achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement?

Dairy Flat School uses student achievement information effectively to inform decision making at all levels of the school. The board of trustees is very aware of student achievement levels and uses this information to make appropriate resourcing decisions. Significant numbers of students achieve well above National Standards for reading, writing and mathematics. Māori and Pacific students achieve at similar levels to non-Māori students at the school.

Teachers use student achievement information well to plan and monitor their programmes. They work collaboratively to analyse student achievement information in reading, writing and

mathematics. They also group students according to areas of need and use targeted strategies to raise student achievement and plan interventions to support all learners.

School leaders and teachers are moving their focus towards enabling students to know more about, and take ownership of, their learning. Part of this approach involves students using digital devices as practical learning tools. Their use of digital tools is:

- enabling students to personalise their own learning
- increasing students' engagement
- further promoting students' independence with their learning
- supporting collaborative learning approaches.

Students are purposefully engaged in their independent learning activities. These activities, planned by teachers, use a range of learning styles that are appropriately levelled to challenge individuals. Classroom displays include many prompts for learning where students can readily find strategies and resources to help them learn.

Students with special learning needs are promptly identified by teachers. Accelerating the progress of learners who need additional support is a priority. Teaching teams collaboratively inquire into their practice to find and implement strategies and programmes to improve students' achievement.

The school's intention is to promote student-led learning in preparation for working in new MLE classrooms. Students are beginning to lead their own learning and talk about their progress in conferences with parents and teachers. Students find it motivating to choose their learning activities and decide how to present their new learning.

School leaders have identified that their next steps are to:

- continue exploring ways to give students more input into the design of their learning programmes
- progressively give all students more choices in the daily programme
- support students in identifying their own next steps in learning.

3 Curriculum

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

The curriculum reflects the school's vision and values well and is responsive to student needs. It encompasses the learning areas, principles and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC). School leaders are developing bicultural and Pacific perspectives in the curriculum.

Students can talk about the school values and behaviours for learning- 'Respectful, responsible and resilient, considerate, honest and fair'. These values are explicitly taught and are emphasised and reflected in school policies and procedures.

Leaders and teachers maintain a strong emphasis on positive and reciprocal learning relationships. Students feel valued and supported by teachers in this inclusive setting. Students know what they are learning and why.

The school provides a broad curriculum with an emphasis on literacy and mathematics. Teachers plan collaboratively, supporting each other to meet the needs of their students. They are

increasingly using students' interests to engage, motivate and sustain learning. Students benefit from an unhurried curriculum which allows them to delve into areas of interest.

Partnerships between the school and home are supported by digital learning technologies. Parents are increasingly able to be involved with their children's learning. Students are motivated to continue their learning inquiries at home. E-learning development is supporting modern learning practices and communication links with home.

Students are provided with many sporting, cultural and arts opportunities. Parents coach various sports teams. They involve themselves in activities in the classrooms that further enhance children's enjoyment and skill levels.

Parents feel welcome in classrooms and the school. School leaders and teachers build positive connections and learning partnerships with parents. They plan school events that have both educational and social aspects for families. Parents enjoy these events.

School leaders agree that the next steps in curriculum development are to:

- continue to review, explore and design a school curriculum and teaching approaches that support MLE and personalised learning
- strategically develop structures and approaches to strengthen te reo me ōna tikanga Māori across the school.

How effectively does the school promote educational success for Māori, as Māori?

The school has taken steps to promote educational success for Māori, as Māori. School leaders and teachers know their students and whānau well. The school's strategic plan includes consultation meetings with the school's Māori community.

Some school practices enhance the language, culture and identity of Māori students. The school kapa haka is well established and supported by an external tutor and a senior teacher. The school environment shows some evidence of te reo Māori and teachers' planning reflects and celebrates New Zealand's bicultural heritage.

School leaders agree that a next step is to embed te reo me ōna tikanga Māori at the classroom level and include te ao Māori in school practices. Strategic planning and seeking external expertise should help to enhance educational success for Māori students, as Māori.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school has good systems and strategies in place to sustain and build its capacity as it enters its next phase of development. An important part of this is the principal's focus on building leadership capability across the school.

School leaders have established a very good teacher appraisal process. It is focused on helping teachers to improve outcomes for students. There is good alignment and cohesion between the school's charter goals and teacher professional development. Teaching teams collaborate in professional practice with a focus on improving outcomes for students. School leaders create an environment for teachers to trial new ideas and support each other.

The principal is considered and reflective in her approach to change management. Good collaboration and communication are features at all levels of the school. The principal is strategic in promoting collaboration to support the school's MLE plans. Appropriate external support and advice is sought to help teachers develop modern learning practices.

The board provides effective strategic, future-focused leadership and stewardship of the school. They make decisions based on evidence, their values, and the rural context of the school.

School trustees are well informed and work collaboratively. The school's strategic planning is student focused. There is clear alignment between strategic and annual planning, performance management documentation and the principal's regular reporting.

The school's self-review processes ensure ongoing responsiveness to parents and a focus on continued improvement. The board promotes meaningful consultation and open communication with the school community. This helps trustees to shape decisions about the direction of the school.

Plans have been made to consult in more depth with Māori whānau. This review concludes that there needs to be a more strategic approach to ensure that Māori students have optimum opportunities to succeed as Māori.

School leaders agree that the next steps to sustain and improve school performance include:

- extending and strengthening self-review processes through more evaluative reporting
- consulting regularly with the Māori community.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* (the Code) established under *section 238F of the Education Act 1989*. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

At the time of this review there were no international students attending the school.

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:

- 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 student achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- processes for appointing staff
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

Conclusion

Dairy Flat School provides children with a broad curriculum with an authentic rural flavour. The school's values underpin teaching and successfully help to create a calm, unhurried environment for learning. Students achieve well. The curriculum is becoming increasingly student- centred and appropriate for the future needs of learners.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

5 November 2015

About the School

Location	Dairy Flat, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1258	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	264	
Number of international students	0	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	Maori Pākehā Other European Middle Eastern/African Asian Samoan	10% 59% 17% 7% 6% 1%
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	5 November 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	November 2012 September 2009 July 2006