

CONFIRMED
EDUCATION REVIEW
REPORT
TIRIMOANA SCHOOL
November 2008



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CONFIRMED EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT: TIRIMOANA SCHOOL

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

1 About the School

Location	Te Atatu South, Waitakere City
Ministry of Education profile number	1536
School type	Contributing (Years 1-6)
Decile rating ¹	6
Teaching staff:	
Roll generated entitlement	28.84
Other	.56
Number of teachers	29
School roll	582
Number of international students	4
Gender composition	Boys 50%, Girls 50%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 49%, Māori 14%, Chinese 15%, Indian 6%, Samoan 5%, South African 3%, Korean 2%, Tongan 1%, other Asian 3%, other ethnicities 2%
Special features	Attached satellite class of Arohanui Special School
Review team on site	September 2008
Date of this report	24 November 2008

¹ Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.

Previous ERO reports	Education Review, November 2005 Education Review, May 2002 Accountability Review, July 1998 Effectiveness Review, September 1994
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2 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Tirimoana School continues to provide students with very good quality education. Trustees, staff and parents work collaboratively to provide an inclusive environment in which students are valued and able to flourish. A strong sense of a school community based on caring reciprocal relationships is evident.

The board continues to upgrade school facilities and the school's physical environment reflects a school-wide commitment to environmental sustainability and the visual arts. Recently completed projects include the establishment of a learning support centre, repainting the school externally, the purchase of a hall sound system, upgrades to computer hardware and the introduction of interactive white boards. Environmental education programmes are well developed and the school is preparing to meet the requirements for a gold award from the *Enviro Schools Project*.

School achievement information shows that students are generally achieving at or above national expectations in literacy and mathematics. Achievement information is well analysed at each year level and is used to inform teaching and to track the individual progress of students. Students who require extra support are identified and provided with suitable learning programmes.

Students are confident, friendly and very positive about their school. They take responsibility for themselves in learning and social situations and appreciate the wide range of opportunities that the school provides for them to develop their talents. Students of all ages are actively involved together in games at break times. All staff take a role in providing daily physical activity opportunities for students. Senior students are given leadership roles in planning and organising many physical activities for the younger year levels. Senior managers report that the high level of physical involvement of students has a positive impact on their learning.

Teachers are enthusiastic, receptive to new ideas and provide good quality teaching programmes. They are reflective practitioners who participate eagerly in professional learning conversations with their colleagues in the school and across the cluster of neighbouring schools. Consideration should now be given to how these learning conversations can be deepened by including students' and parents' perspectives. Teachers report that they feel valued by the school and community and that they enjoy their teaching. They are a united team and model positive relationships for the students.

The principal is pivotal to the culture of the school and is well regarded by staff, the board and community. He provides equal opportunities for all children and an inclusive environment for students, staff and parents. He leads the school in a positive, consultative and collaborative style that empowers others and values

individuality. A capable management team with complementary skills and clearly defined areas of responsibilities supports the principal. The principal enables staff to take responsibilities and develop as leaders within the school.

Trustees work with the leadership team to govern the school effectively, and bring a variety of expertise and perspectives to their roles. The board is well informed about curriculum matters and student achievement and has an established process of self review. Trustees participate in board training and have an appropriate emphasis on succession planning to maintain the board's role. Trustees should consider how the increasingly multicultural school community could be better reflected in the board composition as they plan for the future.

This report identifies good quality learning and teaching in writing and physical education. Readiness to implement the 2010 New Zealand Curriculum, progress in providing for the achievement of Māori and Pacific students, and the school's compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* are also evaluated. ERO and the board of trustees agreed that senior managers should plan ways to encourage rich learning conversations between students, teachers and the wider school community.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO is likely to review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

3 The Focus of the Review

Student Achievement Overall

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

Senior managers collate achievement data in literacy and mathematics using standardised testing tools. This information identifies that most students are achieving at, or above, national expectations in literacy and mathematics.

Analysis of achievement data in reading, writing and mathematics is detailed and includes information by year group, gender and ethnicity. Achievement targets set in the annual plan align well to identified needs, and progress on the targets is tracked over the year. Senior managers could improve their reporting of achievement information to the board by collating the year level information into a school-wide picture. This overall information would help the board identify gaps and trends more readily.

Selected students compete in international tests of mathematics, writing, spelling and science. Results show some students receive distinction and high distinction awards.

Students perform well in school sporting and cultural events. The school chess team competes in the Auckland Primary Schools' Competition and was placed second this year. First placings in the cluster inter-school speech finals for the last two years and regular top placings in athletics, rugby, netball and basketball are achievements of which the school is proud.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Tirimoana School was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Tirimoana School.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus areas for the review:

- the quality of teaching and learning, with an emphasis on writing; and
- the impact of professional development on improving physical education programmes and physical activity.

ERO's findings in these areas are set out below.

Teaching and learning, with an emphasis on writing

Background

Tirimoana School is part of the Ministry of Education initiative, Extending High Standards Across Schools (EHSAS). Through this initiative teachers in a cluster of six schools are supported to develop writing programmes and assessment tools.

The teachers at Tirimoana School are also working with an external facilitator to develop strategies for teaching writing to students for whom English is an additional language. Five teachers are presently engaged in tertiary study for teaching English speakers of others languages (ESOL). The board asked ERO to evaluate the impact of these developments on teaching and learning.

Student progress and achievement

School-wide achievement information indicates that most students are achieving at national expectations in writing. The school is developing good systems for assessing student progress and achievement in writing. All students are assessed against sets of indicators in different forms of writing. Students' progress is recorded twice a year. Teachers make effective use of assessment information for planning and teaching purposes.

Areas of good performance

Student engagement. Students engage well in the process of writing. They are aware of their writing abilities and are increasingly able to discuss what they are learning and how well they are progressing. Student writing is shared and prominently displayed to provide examples of good quality work. Students report that they enjoy school and value their learning opportunities.

Consistent standards of teaching. There is a high level of consistency in good teaching of writing throughout the school. Teachers have developed shared understandings and a common vocabulary for modelling language features. Teachers respond confidently to students' immediate needs during writing lessons. Good teaching of writing across the school is likely to impact positively on student literacy achievement.

Sharing learning goals. Teachers use student-friendly language when talking to students about their writing goals. They check to see that students understand the purpose of lessons and give them opportunities to clarify their thinking about the intended learning. In some classes, differentiated learning goals are prominent in students' writing books or displayed with work samples that clearly reflect the purpose of the learning activities.

Success criteria. Teachers set success criteria to guide students in the steps they need to take to achieve the learning goal. The success criteria reflect the relevant features of different forms of writing. In some classes students are involved in the process of setting success criteria and refer to them during the lesson. These teaching practices are encouraging students to become more focussed learners.

Giving and receiving feedback. Teachers give students specific and constructive oral, and sometimes written, feedback on how well they are learning. Students reflect on their own writing and give critical comments to each other on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work further. These practices enhance student understanding of the learning process.

Regular writing. Class timetables maximise writing opportunities for students. Students are provided with opportunities to write daily in a variety of genre. Ensuring that students are engaged in writing processes daily should enhance their learning opportunities.

Resources to support writing. Teaching and learning resources are well used. Students have ready access to a variety of dictionaries, word banks and alphabet cards. Teachers' resources support the teaching of writing and meet students' diverse learning needs, encouraging students to become independent learners.

Providing for gifted and talented students. Good provision is made for students who are gifted and talented in writing. A range of high quality programmes and extension groups is offered across all levels of the school. Student writing is celebrated in newsletters and on the school website. Each year a group of talented student writers produce the school newspaper. These opportunities for students help to meet their particular needs, aspirations, and interests.

Positive professional culture. Teachers are committed to their own ongoing learning. They share professional practice and participate in discussions about writing between the cluster schools. During 2008 an external facilitator is working with teachers to enhance strategies for teaching writing to students for whom English is an additional language. These strategies are worthwhile and benefit all students. Teachers note an increase in their own knowledge and appreciation of the craft of writing.

Planning. Classroom lessons are well planned. There is a clear relationship between planning documents and the programme in action. Teachers differentiate learning at the planning stage so that they address the needs of different groups of students. Senior managers have quality assurance systems in place and provide regular feedback to teachers. This is good practice as effective planning contributes to high quality teaching.

Writing indicators. The school writing overview gives clear achievement indicators for two forms of writing over four curriculum levels. Teachers use these indicators to assess students and set goals for individuals and groups of students. The use of the indicators is helping to ensure that teaching is responsive to students' needs.

Moderation of assessment. A collective understanding of the progressive development of writing skills and achievement is becoming well established. Teachers assess and discuss samples of student writing against success indicators. This collaborative process generates rich dialogue about students' learning and builds teachers' confidence in their teaching and assessment of writing.

Areas for improvement

Increasing deeper conversations about learning. Senior managers should now explore ways that learning conversations between students, teachers and parents can be deepened. Strategies to consider may include the involvement of students in reporting achievement progress to parents, and providing more information for parents to understand and support the school's literacy focus.

Inquiry learning approaches. There is a need to develop a more consistent school inquiry-learning model where students follow their interests and increase their research skills. This approach would give students a greater ownership of, and input into, the learning process.

Impact of professional development on improving physical education programmes and physical activity

Background

During 2006 and 2007 teachers participated in the School Community Physical Activity Project (SCPAP) professional development initiative. The focus of this initiative is to ensure that student learning in physical education is purposeful and is applied to situations that are meaningful to students. The success of SCPAP centres on increasing student decision-making and involvement in physical activity.

Student progress and achievement

Students perform well in school sporting events. Regular top placings in athletics, rugby, netball and basketball are achievements of which the school is proud.

Senior managers report that the high level of physical involvement of students has a positive impact on their learning.

Areas of good performance

Opportunities for physical activity and leadership. Students benefit from frequent involvement in physical activity. Class fitness activities start the school day. Supported by staff, students initiate their own games, engage in a variety of sports and physical activities and support each other's play. Students appreciate the number of interschool sports as well as games organised by student sport leaders, councillors and peer mediators during their break times. Regular physical activity gives students confidence, opportunities for leadership and a sense of well being.

Physical education lessons. Consistently good physical education teaching is evident across the school. Lessons are well paced with consideration given to teaching skills and games for understanding. There is high awareness of the links between skills learnt in lessons to the different sporting codes. Teacher skill and knowledge is a major contributing factor to the success of the physical education programme.

Promotion of thinking skills. Teachers promote the use of thinking tools in physical education lessons. There are some excellent examples of teachers creating success criteria with students to assist in self-evaluation. Teachers use open-ended questions to clarify meaning and extend students' thinking. They allow for a range of responses and wait so that students are able to process questions and formulate responses. Students are encouraged to set the direction for their own learning by creating games. These strategies are likely to shift the locus of control of learning from the teacher to the student and deepen engagement in learning as a consequence.

Motor coordination programme. All Year 1 students participate in a regular motor coordination programme. The programme comprises sequential movement activities with specialised equipment aimed at teaching students positive perceptions of themselves through movement and motor experience. Parents contribute to the programme as instructors. This programme builds a foundation for all students to have the motor skills to be physically active.

Student learning reflections. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning in physical education. In most classrooms, lessons end with time for discussion about what has been learnt. Teachers also provide older students with opportunities for self-assessment. These students set personal goals and assess themselves against agreed criteria for achieving success in a specific physical activity.

Provision for gifted and talented students. Good provision is made for students who are gifted and talented in physical education. Local cluster schools have established a sports academy that offers talented students weekly extension programmes in a variety of sporting codes. The commitment and expertise of school personnel also

ensures students are coached well and able to perform with excellence at all inter-school sporting events. Students and parents value these opportunities.

Using strengths and accessing support. The school makes good use of the strengths of available personnel to extend its ability to deliver the physical education curriculum. Students benefit from the interests and expertise of all staff members. The school has developed a partnership with Sport Waitakere that offers skills tuition to students in a variety of sport codes.

Planning and resources. Appropriate time is allocated for physical fitness, skills teaching and sport. There is clear relationship between planning documents and the programme. Students have good access to sports equipment and a wide range of organised physical activity at break times. There are efficient systems for the storage, distribution, and retrieval of equipment thereby maximising opportunities for physical activity.

4 Areas of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Tirimoana School ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

The Achievement of Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of Māori students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement. Fourteen percent of the school roll (81 students) identify as Māori.

Areas of progress

Māori student achievement. School information about achievement in literacy and mathematics indicates that Māori students continue to achieve at levels similar to other students. Teachers identify the Māori students and monitor their progress through the year. Māori students are encouraged to take up leadership roles.

Specialist teacher. The board funds a part-time specialist teacher of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga. This is a new initiative since the 2005 ERO review. This teacher works

with all classes throughout the year. She supports teachers to incorporate te reo Māori and tikanga into class programmes. Growing teacher confidence in developing a greater understanding of the needs of Māori students is an important part of the specialist teacher's role.

Reflecting New Zealand's dual heritage in the environment. The school's physical environment proudly reflects New Zealand's dual cultural heritage. Plants in the school grounds include New Zealand native varieties and students are encouraged to learn about these trees. Numerous art works created by students incorporate Māori elements. The high profile of Māori culture in the environment enriches the whole school community.

Community consultation with the Māori community. The board recognises its role and responsibilities in meeting the requirements of *The National Administration Guidelines*. They network with parents of Māori students in an informal way and carry out a formal survey annually. Information gained from this consultation is used to consider further strategies to enhance the achievement of Māori students.

Areas for further improvement

Te reo Māori curriculum. The school's te reo Māori curriculum plan should outline a skills progression and include measurable performance expectations. This would help teachers to monitor student progress in te reo Māori. The school could also consider opportunities for students to assess their own progress and include these reflections in student portfolios.

Extending links with the Māori community. The board should continue to explore how the Māori community can gain greater levels of involvement in strategic goal setting with a view to supporting the implementation of goals that will benefit Māori students.

The Achievement of Pacific Students

During the review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school has knowledge of and strategies for promoting the achievement of its Pacific students. Eight percent of students at Tirimoana School identify as Pacific, with heritages from Samoa and Tonga. One staff member is of Pacific origin.

Areas of good performance

Pacific student achievement. Information about the achievement of Pacific students in literacy and mathematics indicates that they continue to achieve at levels similar to other students. Teachers identify Pacific students and monitor their progress through the year. Pacific students are encouraged to take up leadership roles.

Opportunities to make connections for Pacific students. The school encourages students to be strong in their Pacific identity. The school's art programme reflects Pacific themes and the annual whole school cultural unit has a Pacific dimension.

Books with Pacific themes and readers in Pacific languages are available in the school library. These strategies promote and support Pacific cultural values and practices.

Areas for improvement

Extending links with Pacific community. The board agrees it should continue to explore ways to consult effectively with the Pacific school community about their aspirations for their children.

Implementing the New Zealand Curriculum in 2010

Progress to date

In preparing for teaching the New Zealand Curriculum in 2010 the school has made some preparation. The steps taken include:

- aligning the school values with the values outlined in the New Zealand 2010 Curriculum;
- trustees and teachers participating in professional development about the New Zealand Curriculum document;
- reflecting the language of the 2010 New Zealand Curriculum in school curriculum policies;
- continuing programmes linked to student appreciation of environmental issues and internationalism; and
- providing opportunities for students to learn other languages.

Next steps

The school has decided that its priorities for preparation over the next three to six months are:

- to carry out a focused review on how the key competencies of the 2010 New Zealand Curriculum can be integrated into daily teaching programmes; and
- to develop a curriculum vision statement for the school that involves consultation between staff, board, parents and the wider school community.

Provision for International Students

Compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* and the Provision of English Language Support

Tirimoana 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students.

There are currently four international students from Korea enrolled in the school. The students live with their families.

The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

Areas of good performance

Administration. The director of international students has established clear processes and documentation systems for the administration and management of international students.

Student support. The school offers high levels of pastoral care for international students, who report being settled and enjoying school. The international students are well accepted by other students and have equal opportunities to participate in all school activities.

English language support. International students receive good levels of English language support. The language programmes focus on oral and written language aimed at helping international students become more confident in their regular class programmes and in conversations with other students. Classroom teachers have undertaken professional development to help them meet the in-class needs of students who are not fluent in the English language and to support them to better understand cross-cultural factors in teaching and learning. Cross-cultural training should remain a feature of the professional development received by all teachers who are in regular contact with international students.

Sense of community. The school encourages the parents of international students to be involved in the school. A Korean parent group comes together each week to help in the library. Senior managers regularly use this opportunity to discuss with the parents ways they can help their children's learning.

5 Board Assurance on Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Tirimoana 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; 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.

Each school needs to acknowledge that bullying is a risk to be managed. The board of trustees has ensured that it has policy and procedures in place to address bullying of all kinds, including racist bullying, bullying of students with special needs, homophobic bullying, and sexual harassment. Staff have taken part in professional development and used the results of a parent survey to review the strategies in place to deal with student behaviour concerns. Peer mediation, good information and a well thought out behaviour management programme are in place to make children feel safe at school.

Compliance

ERO's investigations did not identify any areas of concern

6 Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees have together agreed that senior managers should plan ways to encourage rich learning conversations between students, teachers and the wider school community.

7 Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO is likely to review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

Elizabeth Ellis
Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer

24 November 2008

24 November 2008

To the Parents and Community of Tirimoana School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Tirimoana School**.

Tirimoana School continues to provide students with very good quality education. Trustees, staff and parents work collaboratively to provide an inclusive environment in which students are valued and able to flourish. A strong sense of a school community based on caring reciprocal relationships is evident.

The board continues to upgrade school facilities and the school's physical environment reflects a school-wide commitment to environmental sustainability and the visual arts. Recently completed projects include the establishment of a learning support centre, repainting the school externally, the purchase of a hall sound system, upgrades to computer hardware and the introduction of interactive white boards. Environmental education programmes are well developed and the school is preparing to meet the requirements for a gold award from the *Enviro Schools Project*.

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Future Action

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Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

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

Elizabeth Ellis
Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer

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 is based on three review strands.

- **School Specific Priorities** – the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- **Areas of National Interest** – information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements** – assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

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Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.