

Farm Cove Intermediate Education Review

- 1 Context
- 2 Learning
- 3 Curriculum
- 4 Sustainable Performance
- School Statistics

1 Context

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

Farm Cove Intermediate, in east Auckland, caters for students from Year 7 to 8. The school has a positive profile in its community with a significant number of out of zone enrolments. The school roll has remained stable, with low staff turnover. Second generation families now attend the school and this sense of history is valued by the school community. The students come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Eight percent are Māori and four percent have Pacific heritage.

The 2011 ERO report noted that the majority of students achieved well and teachers were effective classroom practitioners. The focus for the school since the last review has been to review the school curriculum. Outcomes of this review have led to the introduction of teaching practices that increase students' ownership of their learning, and encourage their development of self-managing independent learning skills. The board of trustees continue to oversee property developments, including upgrades to teaching spaces to turn them into modern learning environments to support the delivery of the school's vision for learning.

At the time of the previous ERO review a new principal had recently been appointed. Since this time a different and larger leadership structure has been put in place. Different leadership approaches encourage all staff and students to take more responsibility for themselves as learners.

The board and senior leaders have led consultation with all stakeholders, including students, as part of reviewing the school mission statement and values. This consultation has resulted in the mission statement, of Reaching Out to enjoy learning and celebrate success together. The mission statement is underpinned by values of friendliness, cooperation, integrity, respect, enthusiasm and persistence. The board and senior leaders recognise that the school is entering a new stage of development. This stage involves balancing the traditions of the past with the advancement of innovative approaches to learning.

The school's promotion of and response to students' wellbeing is extensive. A positive school tone supports the learning of all students. Respectful relationships underpin all practices and students show pride in their school and display a sense of belonging to it.

2 Learning

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

The board, senior leaders and teachers use achievement information very well to make positive changes for learners.

Publically available school achievement information for reading shows that the school already meets the government determined achievement goals for 2017 of 85 percent of students achieving at or above National Standards. The school is making good progress towards achievement goals in mathematics and writing. Overall Māori students are achieving at similar levels to the school population. The school is aware of the need to focus on Pacific student achievement in mathematics.

School leaders continue to refine the systems in place to support teachers to make reliable judgements in relation to the National Standards. Moderation with local primary schools and the college support well-evidenced judgements in writing. The new school assessment schedule introduced for 2014 is appropriate for supporting the new direction of teaching and learning in the school.

The board, senior leaders and teachers use achievement information to set school priorities and achievement targets, design curriculum programmes, and closely monitor student progress. Teachers use achievement information to plan programmes to cater for students' strengths and learning needs. Achievement information is also used by senior leaders and teachers to identify suitable professional learning and development opportunities for teachers.

Teachers share assessment information with students and help them to understand where they are at in their learning. New teaching practices being introduced are giving students greater opportunities to be actively involved in decisions about how to further improve their achievement and giving students a greater sense of ownership of their learning.

Achievement information is used well to identify students who are underachieving and whose progress needs to be accelerated. Initiatives are in place to support these students and student progress is closely monitored. Collaborative working relationships with parents and whānau are fostered to support student success. School data show that most of the target students make good progress and that the progress of some students is significantly accelerated.

The school has inclusive and responsive practices and systems to support students with special learning needs. There is a shared commitment and responsibility for student progress

on the part of teachers and learning assistants. This ensures students participate fully in appropriate learning programmes and classroom activities. Transitions into, through and out of the school are well managed for students with high learning needs.

Student enjoyment and engagement in the learning process is clearly evident. They talk about their learning with confidence and support the learning of their peers.

3 Curriculum

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

The school based curriculum is appropriate for the future learning needs of students. Students are responding well to more student-centred teaching approaches.

A clear rationale drives the curriculum design. The intention is to have a school-wide curriculum that provides cohesive individual learning pathways and negotiated learning approaches with students. The stronger emphasis placed on the principles and key competences of The New Zealand Curriculum shifts the focus of teaching and learning to students knowing themselves as learners, and learning how to learn. A strong focus on literacy and mathematics is maintained. The natural integration of information and communications technologies (ICT) to enhance learning opportunities for students is also a priority.

The curriculum includes some aspects that reflect the bicultural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand. Considering how these learning experiences can be more cohesive and consistent across the curriculum is a next step for school leaders to pursue.

Teachers are capable, confident, and skilled practitioners who manage their classrooms effectively. Specialist subject teachers, together with general classroom teachers are eager to implement the updated and appropriate expectations of the school curriculum. There are already some good role models in the school of flexible learning programmes and teachers providing opportunities for students to make decisions about their learning. The revised performance management system introduced in 2014 supports effective professional practice and growth.

ERO and senior leaders agree that the priority for the school is to plan strategically for the embedding of teaching practices that will enrich the implementation of the school curriculum. This could include developing agreed in-depth understandings of what effective modern teaching and learning practice looks like at Farm Cove Intermediate.

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

Good progress is being made to promote educational success for Māori as Māori.

The school has 47 students who identify as Māori. These students have positive attitudes to school and learning. Their learning is supported by holistic approaches to raising student achievement. The inclusion of cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners into the new school curriculum reflects the school's increased expectations for teaching practice.

Senior leaders have high expectations for Māori students and are proactive in fostering positive relationship with whānau.

Senior leaders are responsive to the views of Māori students. Māori students value the inclusion of aspects of Māori culture and language in the environment, curriculum and school practices. Further extension and enrichment of te reo and tikanga Māori in the school curriculum will increase opportunities for Māori students to celebrate their backgrounds and cultural heritage.

It is timely for the board to consider how to sustain and build on current initiatives designed to further promote success as Māori. Monitoring progress against the board's strategic intent could also provide a useful platform which the board can use to determine how well school policies and practices help to develop the potential of all Māori students.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The board provides effective governance. Trustees are well informed about curriculum developments and student achievement. Board decision making is strategic and has a focus on improving outcomes for all students. Very good working relationships ensure the work of the board and school management is well coordinated through the school's strategic and operational planning processes.

School leadership is highly effective. The principal is leading the school effectively through this time of change and new direction. She is well supported by the wider leadership team. The priority of recognising people's capabilities across the school is helping to grow new leaders. It is complementing and enhancing school developments by creating a culture of innovation and ongoing expansion and change in the curriculum.

Ongoing critical reflection and outcomes of school wide self review provide clear rationale for positive improvements. Students, staff and the school community are consulted widely as part of review processes in order to get things right and develop shared ownership of outcomes. Robust self-review processes are also being introduced at the class and individual practitioner level to support the school's overall improvement focus.

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. At the time of this review there were 28 international students attending the school. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough.

The school provides its international students with a very good standard of education that includes good quality English language tuition. International students are warmly welcomed and enjoy many opportunities to participate in school activities. The school provides high quality pastoral care for students and ensures that students are well integrated into the life of 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

Farm Cove Intermediate is entering an exciting new stage of educational development. Students are responding well to a curriculum that is becoming increasingly student centred and appropriate for their future learning directions. A positive school tone supports the learning of all students.

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

Dale Bailey
National Manager Review Services
Northern Region

6 October 2014

School Statistics

Location	Pakuranga, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1272	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
School roll	591	
Number of international students	28	
Gender composition	Boys 50% Girls 50%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	8%
	NZ European/Pākehā	42%
	Chinese	18%
	Indian	8%
	Filipino	4%
	Pacific Nations	4%
	Middle Eastern	3%
	African Nations	2%
	Sri Lankan	2%
	other ethnicities	9%
Review team on site	August 2014	
Date of this report	6 October 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	September 2011
	Education Review	August 2008
	Education Review	February 2005