

Farm Cove Intermediate Education Review

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About the School

Location	Pakuranga, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1272	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
Decile [<u>1</u>]	8	
School roll	571	
Number of international students	39	
Gender composition	Boys 52% Girls 48%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 36% Māori 10% Chinese 18% Indian 10% Filipino 4% British/Irish 3% Samoan 2% Sri Lankan 2% other European 7% other 8%	
Review team on site	August 2011	

Date of this report	30 September 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2008
	Education Review	February 2005
	Accountability Review	June 2001

The Purpose of an ERO Report

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. 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.

[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 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.

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1 Context

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

Farm Cove Intermediate School provides good quality education for Year 7 and 8 students and the longstanding board of trustees provides the school with effective governance. The school has an increasing Māori and Pacific community. A new principal has recently been appointed, following the retirement of the previous principal, who had led the school for 17 years. While this is a time of transition for the school, well established, effective policies, procedures and values continue to guide the school's operations. The school vision and curriculum promote consistently high expectations for student achievement at all levels of the school.

Teachers engage in successful team work. Their individual strengths and interests are reflected in the makeup of teaching teams and in the specialist opportunities available to them. Students' movements into and out of the school are supported by the school's cooperative relationships with feeder and destination schools and with other intermediate schools.

2 Learning

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

Students continue to achieve well, with the majority achieving at levels that are at or above national expectations. Respectful relationships across the school support learning. Students are highly engaged and make steady progress. Teachers and school leaders know students well and use assessment information to group students for learning. Teachers have provided parents with written reports on their children's achievement in relation to the National Standards in 2011.

Teachers use variable classroom spaces effectively and students enjoy settled learning environments. Students are confident learners and know they are making progress. They respond positively to working in groups and appreciate this style of learning, which enables them to challenge each other.

The twenty-two Pacific students in the school are generally achieving at levels that are comparable to those of other students. School leaders have recently started to collect and analyse data on the achievement of Pacific students. The principal has identified that the monitoring and analysis of information about the achievement of Pacific students should be a regular part of classroom assessment practices.

Teachers plan, develop and implement teaching and learning programmes that promote student learning. A range of assessment tools and processes provides sound information about student progress. Teachers identify students who need extra support in their learning. The inclusion of teacher aides in professional learning opportunities helps these staff to be more effective in supporting classroom learning programmes.

The senior leadership team has identified that students could be further encouraged to participate in decision-making about learning programmes and in identifying their next learning goals. These improved practices would increase students' ownership of their learning and would further encourage the development of their self-management and independent learning skills.

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

Māori students comprise 10% of the school roll. School-wide and classroom level information is collected about Māori student achievement. Analysis of this data shows that Māori students are achieving at levels that are comparable to those of other students, and are generally achieving at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Classroom groupings and cross-groupings enable Māori students to achieve at their own pace. Support and extension programmes are available for students needing extra help. The positive support teachers provide for student learning promotes the achievement of Māori students.

The school has a strong kapa haka group, which has been invited to perform at a number of high profile community events. Māori students have opportunities to develop leadership roles in this group, and as student councillors and class team leaders.

A detailed school-wide review of the provision of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori in classroom programmes is underway. Teachers should continue to explore ways of further including Māori dimensions in curriculum plans and classroom programmes.

3 Curriculum

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

Farm Cove Intermediate School successfully promotes its vision of 'Excellence in all things' for students. The vision is clearly reflected in practices and programmes across the school. Values and key learning competencies are well integrated into the school curriculum.

Effective teaching practices are evident across the school and teachers respond well to students' identified learning needs. Classrooms reflect and celebrate students' work. Teachers use good questioning techniques to extend children's thinking. Relationships between students and teachers are positive and students interact well with one another. Classroom tone throughout the school promotes students' learning.

Areas of strength that contribute to student progress and achievement include:

- authentic learning programmes that are relevant to students' interests
- teachers acting as facilitators during some teaching programmes so that students take more responsibility for their own learning
- an emphasis on literacy and numeracy learning
- a wide range of opportunities for students to participate in and represent the school in sports and the arts
- school-wide timetabling of learning programmes so that students can work within groups of students with similar abilities.

Specialist learning programmes support students' interests and enable them to experience success in their learning. An emphasis on aspects of literacy and mathematics in specialist classes enables students to acquire transferable skills across the curriculum.

Teachers undertake regular review of the curriculum. The senior leadership team has identified the need to link specialist programmes more closely with school-based classes.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Farm Cove Intermediate School is well placed to sustain and improve its performance. The board of trustees includes longstanding members who bring a range of useful skills and who are receptive to new ideas and initiatives that will benefit students. Trustees are well informed about student progress and achievement and have set achievement targets based on the National Standards. They are focused on maintaining high standards of learning and teaching in the school.

Staffing in the school is stable and the senior management team provides sound leadership. A professional learning culture provides an environment in which teachers are willing to adapt practices to improve outcomes for students. The implementation of new systems and expectations has been at a measured pace so that changes can become embedded in practice.

School self-review processes are regularly reassessed. The senior leadership team has identified, and ERO agrees, that to further improve self review teachers should now:

- document their analysis and interpretation of student achievement data
- provide students with more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and progress
- implement a continual cycle of evaluation of the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

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 ERO review, 11 long-stay and 28 short-stay international students were attending the school. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. ERO's investigations confirm that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough.

The school has a systematic approach to enrolling international students. Effective self-review processes help to ensure that international students' experiences in New Zealand are positive and that the students are making appropriate progress in their learning. The principal visits Korea and reports to the parents of international students enrolled in the school. The school has positive relationships with home-stay families. International students have many opportunities to integrate into the life of the school.

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 in three years.

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30 September 2011