



Howick College
Howick, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Howick College

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?

Howick College is situated in the eastern suburbs of Auckland. It is a large, multicultural, secondary school catering for students from Year 9 to 13. Thirteen percent of the school's roll identify as Māori and affiliate with different iwi across New Zealand. There is significant growth in the number of students attending the college from the Howick locality. A percentage of students from the wider Manukau area attend the school through a ballot process.

Since the 2012 ERO review, the board of trustees has elected a new chairperson and several new board members. Trustees bring a variety of background experiences and expertise to their governance role. The board is working well with the community, principal and school leaders.

The board is committed to meaningful and purposeful community consultation and has recently implemented a new school vision. The college has a clear focus on building a strong learning community that values inspiration and innovation. Trustees are currently exploring refurbishment options for school buildings to develop environments that match this vision.

The board's current strategic plan sets out high expectations for academic achievement. These goals are balanced with a caring focus on student wellbeing. Students report a positive sense of belonging and pride in their school and agree that the school is inclusive and supportive.

A highly experienced principal continues to lead the school and a new associate principal was appointed in 2015.

The college has responded positively to the recommendations in the 2012 ERO report. Positive connections are fostered with Māori whānau and local iwi. School initiatives aimed at strengthening Māori students' achievement have been implemented. Similar approaches promote learning success for Pacific students attending the school.

2 Learning

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

Howick College is using achievement information very well to make positive changes to learners' progress and achievement. NCEA results at Level 1 and 2 are tracking at a comparable level to similar schools. The college is already meeting the 2017 government targets of 85 percent of students achieving the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) at Level 2. In 2014 increased numbers of students gained merit endorsements in NCEA at all levels.

Teachers, middle and senior leaders have robust systems to monitor, analyse and evaluate achievement information effectively. Teachers respond promptly to students' learning needs throughout the year making adjustments to assessment practice, course content and curriculum delivery for better student outcomes. The board of trustees is well informed by the principal about students' overall progress and achievement.

The increasing use of academic counselling continues to benefit all students and encourages discussion around pathways to tertiary study and future employment. Teachers are committed to promoting student success in many different areas. Parents and whānau are becoming more involved in these school procedures that support good decision-making for school leavers.

There have been positive gains in Māori students' NCEA achievement. Students benefit from additional coaching structures such as the 'quick-fire korero'. Currently there are similar contexts for Pacific students to lift their performance in NCEA to equal that of other students in the school. Overall, Māori and Pacific student achievement is above national NCEA percentages.

At Years 9 and 10, achievement information is gathered and analysed in reading, mathematics and science. Students who need support are tracked and monitored for improvement and acceleration. Useful information about Year 8 students is available from contributing schools and this contributes to smooth transition processes for students from primary school to Year 9. Relationships with local clusters of schools are encouraged and valued by senior leaders.

Senior leaders plan professional learning for teachers to bring about educational change in a considered and careful way. A deliberate focus on teachers evaluating their own practice is proving to be effective. The school's appraisal system shows evidence of a highly reflective teaching culture.

To further enhance student learning, ERO and school leaders discussed increasing the potential for individualised and personalised pathways within the curriculum.

3 Curriculum

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

The Howick College curriculum is well aligned to *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC) and promotes student engagement and learning very effectively. The curriculum is both responsive and inclusive to student trends. Subject pathways are presented clearly as vocational pathways in school documentation.

The new school vision is a key driver in the classroom. Positive and affirming relationships for learning underpin interactions between students and teachers. Teachers have a strong commitment to meeting student aspirations and respond to students' goal setting.

Teachers are increasingly focused on engaging students in classroom programmes that encourage innovation, creative learning and thinking, as well as qualifications success. Teaching approaches that capture students' interests and strengths are proving to be highly engaging, such as the 'sport in education' initiative. A focus on boys' education has resulted in some positive changes to the curriculum which includes a class for boys' dance.

A well considered e-learning vision is being implemented in stages to develop digital competencies for both staff and students. This vision uses the ako principle of both adults and young people learning together.

Student engagement in the curriculum is strongly supported by a comprehensive and inclusive pastoral care network. Well embedded restorative approaches support changes in student behaviour.

Students with special learning needs are taught by teachers who have a depth of knowledge about each student's requirements. The board prioritises resourcing for special to moderate needs and English language learning.

The school offers an enriching range of co-curricular activities. There are many opportunities for students to experience success and build their leadership capability and social competencies. A variety of sporting, cultural and academic events celebrate student success and achievement.

To further enhance the college curriculum school leaders could continue to develop:

- the creative thinking approaches that lead to innovation in the classroom
- culturally responsive teaching practice school-wide.

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

The school is promoting educational success for Māori students effectively, as demonstrated in the positive NCEA Level 2 results for 2014.

Māori students benefit from appointed mentors as well as from their tutor teacher, subject teachers and house deans. A Māori community liaison worker has been appointed by the college to support students and whānau when needed.

Te reo Māori is available for Year 10-13 students to study as a full subject. There is a semester programme of Māori language available for Year 9 students to choose as a language option. A long-term and successful teacher of te reo has created a whānau environment for students that affirms their culture and identity.

Senior Māori students are increasingly involved in the guidance of younger students. Highly successful kapahaka is a well embedded feature of school culture. Kaumātua are involved in celebratory events.

College leaders have worked hard to engage whānau and iwi in the Howick and Manukau areas. Connections are evident with local marae in the Howick township and with Umupuia.

School leaders are discussing the strengthening of bicultural practice in the school through:

- the board and school leaders continuing to investigate ways to consult and engage with Māori whānau more formally

- increasing leaders' and teachers' reflection on the quality of their own culturally responsive practice
- regular evaluation and development of the school's current Māori Education Plan.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Howick College is very well placed to sustain and improve its high quality performance. A culture of continuous improvement permeates the school. The management of change is well paced and considered. Self review has effectively promoted school development and coherence in its systems.

Board governance is based on sound policies and systems that are regularly reviewed. The board is succession planning to ensure sustainability of the school's governance if individuals or groups of trustees move on.

The principal provides experienced and respected leadership. He is distributing leadership throughout the school to sustain and strengthen school initiatives.

Teacher capability is continuing to grow through carefully designed in-house professional development. Various groups of staff in the school work collaboratively to find innovative approaches that stimulate and challenge students' interest in learning.

There is evidence of many students becoming connected, successful learners. They hold an optimistic view of their future. College resourcing for student wellbeing underpins this success. Students have leadership opportunities in the college where they can express their views, develop their skills and contribute to school decision-making.

Provision for international students

Howick College is a signatory to the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* (the Code) established under *238F of the Education Act 1989*. 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 documentation that guides provision for international students is comprehensive and clear. The director, dean and other staff involved with international students are caring in their approaches.

International students have access to very good quality learning experiences, enjoy participation in co-curricular activities and are well supported by high quality pastoral care systems. The school has a flexible approach to its English language learning, catering for individual pathways. At the time of this review there were 91 international fee-paying students attending.

Student wellbeing, academic progress and achievement are closely monitored and reported regularly to the board of trustees. Students who spoke to ERO during the review reported that they felt welcome and well supported during their time at Howick College.

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

Howick College provides high quality education. Students engage positively with a curriculum that supports and strengthens their learning. A school-wide focus on student wellbeing underpins the school's educational vision. School leaders and teachers are highly committed to fostering each individual's present and future potential.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

5 October 2015

About the School

Location	Howick, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	87	
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)	
School roll	1895	
Number of international students	65	
Gender composition	Boys 52% Girls 48%	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā Asian Indian Samoan Tongan other European other Pacific others	13% 48% 8% 6% 3% 1% 14% 1% 6%
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	5 October 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Special Review	October 2012 September 2010 April 2009