

## ERO External Evaluation

### **St Mark's School (Christchurch), (Christchurch)**

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for students. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

#### **School Context**

St Mark's School (Christchurch) is a state integrated Anglican full primary school. A new principal was appointed in April 2016. There have been significant changes in staffing and leadership since the 2016 ERO review. The school has a roll of 241. It is governed by the board of trustees and proprietors representatives.

The school's vision is for a partnership with parents which encourages every child to develop the skills and knowledge to serve God and others in an ever-changing world. The foundations for achieving this vision are the character values of grace, excellence, courage and faithfulness. The school has aligned its special character ethos and values with a commitment to excellent learning outcomes for children. Meaningful bicultural practices acknowledge key Māori values and a commitment to language, culture and identity.

The school community is becoming more ethnically diverse. The relationship between the school and the local parish community is purposeful. The school is part of Te Mana Raupō Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning.

The school has made good progress in areas identified for improvement in the 2016 ERO report, including strengthening management processes that support children's learning progress and achievement.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board, schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- progress and outcomes in relation to key initiatives such as Habits of Mind dispositional learning
- progress and achievement in relation to school targets for reading, writing and mathematics
- outcomes for students with special and/or additional learning needs, including gifted and talented students.

## Evaluation Findings

### 1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

#### 1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school is effectively supporting most students to achieve the school's valued equity and excellence outcomes.

School information over the last four years shows that:

- most students, including Māori students, achieved at or above expected curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics
- there is some disparity between boys' and girls' achievement in reading, and significant disparity in writing, with girls achieving higher.

The school has high expectations that every child will achieve success.

#### 1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

The school is reasonably effective in responding to those students whose learning needs acceleration. The school's current strategic focus is on improving achievement in writing to successfully accelerate progress for some targeted students, including Māori students.

School information in 2017 and 2018 shows that the school has had some success with accelerating the progress of those students in reading whose learning needed to be accelerated.

Children with additional learning needs are well supported to make progress.

### 2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

#### 2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Leadership-inspired relational trust and collaboration, within the school and with parents, has led to significant and positive changes for children. Respectful relationships are actively fostered with parents/whānau and the parish community. Teachers take collective responsibility for all children's learning and wellbeing. Leaders, teachers and families effectively model the highly-valued special character and ethos of the school to children, and live the shared values within the school.

Children benefit from an inclusive school culture that values their language, culture and identity. Māori students are successfully identified, tracked and reported on as a priority group. The school's cultural narrative, culturally responsive practices and commitment to te ao Māori align with the faith-based values and ensure that children are at the centre of decision making and actions.

School leaders provide a strategic framework for further strengthening the professional capability of teachers. Professional learning and leadership opportunities are focused on school improvement. Effective teaching strategies and programmes engage children in learning and support their wellbeing. A responsive, flexible and reflective curriculum is providing children with learning choices and strategies for problem solving, deeper levels of thinking, and the development of persistence and resilience.

School leaders are establishing robust professional inquiry and review processes to improve outcomes for children. Systematic processes have been established to promote a reflective school culture. Teachers are now able to monitor, discuss and report student progress and achievement with confidence.

The school board is informed about children's progress and actively represents and serves the school in its stewardship role. Useful systems and processes are guiding its practices, and informed resourcing decisions are supporting outcomes for all children.

## **2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?**

School leaders have identified, and ERO agrees, that the school needs to:

- continue to consolidate and embed inquiry and evaluation processes, focusing on the impact of these on outcomes for children
- continue to consolidate and embed appraisal, attestation and teaching as inquiry processes
- review, evaluate and report the impact of specialised programmes and resourcing on outcomes for children
- continue the redesign and adoption of the curriculum
- collaboratively develop the new strategic plan with priorities that reflect future school goals and objectives.

## **3 Board assurance on legal requirements**

Before the review, the board 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- finance
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student safety and wellbeing:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

## **4 Going forward**

### **Key strengths of the school**

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- partnerships with parents and the local Anglican parish that strengthen children’s character values and wellbeing
- a collaborative and inclusive school culture that builds relational trust and places children at the centre of thinking and action
- achieving outcomes for children that generally show expected or better than expected levels of achievement for most children.

### **Next steps**

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in:

- consolidating inquiry and evaluation processes to support ongoing equity and excellence
- further strengthening and refining the curriculum to meet learner needs and aspirations
- preparing the new strategic plan to establish ongoing priorities for continuous improvement.

### **ERO’s next external evaluation process and timing**

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



Alan Wynyard  
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Te Waipounamu - Southern Region

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## About the school

Location	(Christchurch
Ministry of Education profile number	4135
School type	Full state integrated Anglican
School roll	241
Gender composition	Boys 53%: Girls 47%
Ethnic composition	Māori 5% Pākehā 88% Asian 6% Other ethnicities 1%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	August 2018
Date of this report	20 September 2018
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review February 2016 Education Review November 2010 Education Review October 2007