

Longburn School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Palmerston North	
Ministry of Education profile number	2388	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
Decile [1]	5	
School roll	64	
Gender composition	Female 34 Male 30	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	42
	Māori	14
	Pacific	2
	Other ethnic groups	6
Review team on site	March 2012	
Date of this report	1 June 2012	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	December 2008
	Supplementary Review	December 2007
	Supplementary Review	November 2006

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. 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.

[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 that have an impact on student learning?

Longburn School is a small, semi-rural, full primary school near Palmerston North. Spacious grounds and facilities are extensively used by the local community, including a playgroup.

Robust partnerships with parents are demonstrated by their readiness to participate in the curriculum and be involved in school events and activities. Students and families show a strong sense of pride in the school. A positive school tone supports students' learning.

The school is well resourced to meet the local curriculum. Extensive use is made of information and communication technologies (ICT).

Mutually respectful relationships, evident at Longburn School, contribute to a positive learning environment. Improving outcomes for students is an ongoing focus.

2 Learning

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

Students enthusiastically engage in learning. The school reports that most students, including Māori and Pacific, achieve at the National Standards expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. A wide range of achievement by students is evident in each multi-level classroom. Teachers continue to increase their understandings of moderation practices to make overall teacher judgements about student achievement. Targeted students are effectively identified and receive additional support.

Current assessment practices and tools have been reviewed to assist teachers to plan programmes and group students. A consistent approach, across the school, to using student achievement data to inform teaching decisions continues to be a focus for development.

Reports to parents include achievement and progress information with specific strategies to enable parents to support student's learning at home. They contain information to show progress from beginning to end of year. Individual portfolios support this reporting process and are used as evidence of learning in relation to National Standards at parent/student/teacher interviews.

Teachers successfully motivate students and engage them in learning when they:

- provide learning activities that are differentiated to cater for diverse needs
- use effective questioning strategies to promote thinking and understanding
- use instructional group teaching to target learning
- promote buddy support

This good practice should be more consistent across the school to accelerate student achievement and progress.

Teachers work collaboratively and use assessment information to identify gaps in students' learning and develop common understandings of effective practice. Future self review should continue to focus on improving the analysis and use of data and include a clear definition of accelerated progress.

How well does the school promote Māori student success and success as Māori?

Staff and trustees are committed to an inclusive culture where New Zealand's dual cultural heritage is celebrated. Teachers proactively promote and value te reo Māori and tikanga

through daily schoolwide practices where learner's success is celebrated and shared. Planned opportunities and experiences in a positive learning environment encourage students to take risks, share and demonstrate leadership in authentic Māori contexts.

The principal leads, with teachers having undertaken individual professional development to foster personal understandings of te reo Māori.

The next steps for development include continuing to explore opportunities to involve whānau in the curriculum. Using self review to identify strategies that are particularly successful in promoting Māori learners' success is an ongoing focus.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum effectively promotes and supports student's interests and learning. Teachers continue to work towards further implementing, embedding and taking ownership of the Longburn School Curriculum. It reflects parent's aspirations, planned experiences and strategies to engage students and promote their learning.

Clear and well-considered school guidelines and expectations inform effective teaching and student achievement. Literacy and numeracy priorities are well integrated across the curriculum. ICT is successfully used as a tool for teaching and learning by both teachers and students. This is a strength of the school and is well supported by the board.

An agreed next step is the further development and formalisation of teaching as inquiry to support teachers formally reflecting on the impact of their teaching to raise student achievement. Schoolwide professional development should further assist teachers to accelerate student progress in multi-level classrooms across the school.

The learning purpose of lessons is well planned and shared with students. However, students are still developing their understanding and ownership of their achievement and next steps for learning.

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 to accelerate student learning. Since the December 2008 ERO report, there has been a continued focus on change management. The teaching principal, appointed in 2010, has focused on reviewing, developing and embedding documentation to provide clear understandings and expectations for management, teaching and assessment. Consistency of practice in these areas is an agreed ongoing area for development.

The experienced principal has a clear vision for student learning and provides professional leadership focused on enhancing student welfare and building community. A collaborative environment includes close, meaningful relationships with the board and parents.

The teacher appraisal process is successfully focused and structured to improve teaching and learning and ongoing staff development. Teachers reflect on their practice and are beginning to take ownership of the process.

Governance is proactive, well-led and includes partnerships with the diverse school community. Trustees regularly receive student achievement information to inform strategic planning and annual targets for achievement. Analysis and commentary in these reports requires further development to assist trustees to make decisions and monitor the impact of improvement targets and interventions.

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
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

The board must:

- Annually assess the principal against all the professional standards for principals and teachers.
[NZ Gazette; and relevant employment agreement]

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Joyce Gebbie
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1 June 2012