

Hamilton North School Education Review

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

About the School

Location	Hamilton	
Ministry of Education profile number	1732	
School type	Special School	
Decile [1]	3	
School roll	101	
Gender composition	Boys 65 Girls 36	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	54
	NZ Māori	43
	Other	4
Special Features	Satellite Classes 3	
Review team on site	February 2012	
Date of this report	5 April 2012	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	January 2009
	Education Review	March 2006
	Education Review	September 2002

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?

Hamilton North School is a specialist service provider located in Hamilton and caters for students aged between 5 and 21 years with intellectual and/or multiple disabilities. It operates from a base school and three satellite units that are attached to primary and middle schools in Waipa and Hamilton.

Since the last ERO review in 2009 there has been no significant change to leadership and staffing, and the school has successfully addressed the area for improvement related to sustainability of practice.

The school vision states that Hamilton North is a school where students know that:

- everyone treats each day as a new beginning
- team work is central to the school's philosophy
- they are valued as unique individuals co-operatively supported by their family and school
- their potential will be maximised by the school offering them new challenges and opportunities
- a safe and caring environment is provided
- their successes will be celebrated.

The school aims to enable all students to reach maximum potential with regard to their abilities, to foster skills and provide opportunities that will allow students to successfully integrate into a multi-cultural society.

2 Learning

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

Students are strongly motivated and engaged in their learning, which is well-supported by:

- consistently responsive interactions
- calm and focused learning environments
- high expectations for student participation and contribution
- creative use of good-quality resources
- therapist expertise and external agencies
- relevant community-based programmes.

Teachers use their knowledge of the learning styles and needs of individual students to develop expectations for their learning and development, and provide appropriate support. In cooperation with therapists and parents, teachers develop an (IEP) Individual Education Programme for each student.

The progress and achievement of each student is carefully monitored, evaluated and reported using IEP goals. Well-designed assessment tools systematically measure students' progress in literacy, numeracy and aspects of health and physical education. This information is used to celebrate each student's progress and achievement, and is collated to review the quality of teaching and learning school wide.

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

Māori students are active participants in all school and community programmes.

Individual Māori students' progress and achievements are recognised in two written reports and presented in a comprehensive portfolio that is shared regularly with parents.

The whānau, teacher and support team, celebrate each student's successes, and together they plan for the student's next learning progressions. The school has fostered a partnership with Māori parents based on mutual respect and understanding, and in the student's best interest.

Māori students learn and are cared for in a school that places a high priority on cultural awareness. The board and staff have shown their commitment to developing their

understanding of te Ao Māori through:

- provision and participation in high-quality professional development
- displaying mātāpono, particularly manaakitanga and whanaungatanga
- recognising, valuing and utilising the strengths of Māori staff members to enhance school programmes
- using te reo Māori and waiata throughout their classroom programmes.

Māori parents and their children are welcomed and valued in this school's inclusive culture.

3 Curriculum

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

The school has developed a dynamic Hamilton North curriculum that is responsive to each student's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and cultural and care needs.

Highly-skilled and knowledgeable teachers, teacher aides and therapists work together to provide a curriculum that includes:

- detailed individualised educational plans
- authentic contexts for the natural integration of learning areas
- a wide range of learning experiences focused on developing students' capabilities
- community involvement
- a focus on life skills.

All students benefit from a school curriculum that is designed and used to enable them to reach their potential and ultimately prepare them for successful transition as contributing members of the community.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The knowledgeable, experienced principal deputy and assistant principals provide a clear focus for school improvement and direction. They are committed to empowering staff and growing leadership capacity. Senior management have developed highly effective self-review systems and practices that positively influence the quality of teaching and learning. Students and teachers are benefiting from the support, guidance and expertise of the professional leadership team.

Trustees are well informed about student progress and achievement, and have been involved in the review and development of the school's curriculum, charter and strategic plan. A capable chairperson is well supported by enthusiastic trustees. They contribute complementary experiences and skills to effective school governance, and maintain a focus on student care and education, and school improvement.

The board and management have established a school culture that is fully consistent with their philosophy, values and vision. The challenge now is to further expand the school while sustaining its current high-quality care and education.

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.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Makere Smith
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