

## ERO External Evaluation

### Goldfields School, Paeroa

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

Goldfields School, located in Paeroa, provides special needs education for students aged five to twenty one. The school's roll of 64 includes 27 Māori students. The students come from Paeroa and surrounding districts. Goldfields School is the base school and has four classes. There are six satellite classes hosted by other schools that include Miller Avenue School, Paeroa College and Te Aroha Primary. All the students have high or very high needs and receive ongoing resourcing funding (ORS) to provide additional learning support.

Since the previous ERO review in 2013 there has been a major upgrade to the school buildings and grounds, which has significantly enhanced the quality of education and wellbeing for students. The leadership team has been restructured and includes the long-standing principal, two deputy principals and a therapy manager. There has been increasing roll growth and some new teachers have been appointed.

The school states its values are:

- student partnerships
- communication rich environments
- sustainable environments and diverse communities.

The overarching vision is that they want students to:

- know themselves and life's pathways
- have a sense of belonging and connection to their kura, whānau, friends and community
- be confident in their identity
- have purposeful, individualised programmes which reflect the essence of The New Zealand Curriculum.

The school is part of the Paeroa Community of Learning | Kāhui Ako

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

- literacy, mathematics, health and physical education
- individual education plan goals

## **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 highly responsive to Māori and other students' learning and care needs. School leaders collate and analyse students' goals from their Individual Evaluation Plan's (IEP) to report to the board of trustees school-wide progress and achievement. School achievement data from 2015 to 2017 shows a consistent pattern with almost all students achieving their goals in literacy, mathematics, health and physical education. Leaders have carefully considered ways to improve progress and achievement for the small number of students not achieving their goals. They report these recommendations to trustees to ensure that resourcing decisions are based on reliable information.

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

The school places high priority on students developing knowledge and skills in communication, literacy, mathematics, health and physical education. Assessment information gathered from a range of appropriate processes is used to set challenging and realistic individual goals for students. These goals are personalised for each student and are co-constructed with specialist teachers, therapists, class teachers and parents. IEP ensure each student's progress and achievement is closely tracked and monitored. Students have ownership of their learning and can monitor their own progress through visual and written task boards which are regularly updated to reflect their progress and achievements.

### **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?**

Senior leaders provide effective leadership for learning. They are highly valued by parents, teachers and support staff as positive role models and advocates for students. Leaders have consistently high expectations for teacher performance, and for building the capabilities of teachers and support staff. There are appropriate organisational structures, processes and practices that promote a collaborative approach to improve learning and care for students. Leaders and trustees work closely together to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for all students. They are highly reflective and use internal evaluation to sustain improvement and innovation.

The school effectively prioritises productive partnerships for learning and wellbeing. There are positive and respectful relationships at all levels of the school. Parents, family and whānau have high levels of trust in school personnel and are provided with timely advice, resources and relevant information to support their children's learning. Communication practices are effective and are used to inform and engage parents in the school and connect them to appropriate community resources. Teachers, support staff, specialists, parents and whānau work well together to develop processes and interventions to improve student learning, social competency and wellbeing.

The curriculum is highly responsive, authentic and relevant to the learning and care needs of students. Teachers are very skilled in adapting resources and strategies to support students to learn in meaningful contexts. They use their knowledge of students, including their interests and personality dispositions to design meaningful learning programmes. There are many opportunities for students to learn and engage with te reo and tikanga Māori in the daily programmes. Personalised individual learning plans are effectively used by teachers to measure each students' progress against their agreed learning goals.

Teachers are flexible, responsive and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of students. They work cooperatively to share successes, challenges and effective strategies through school-wide professional learning groups, to strengthen their practice and improve learning outcomes for students.

Students experience a very positive culture that promotes wellbeing and belonging. ERO observed high levels of student participation and enjoyment in learning tasks and a range of indoor and outdoor activities. There is a strong commitment to providing an environment that recognises the language, culture and identity of individual students. Students are well supported and encouraged to be self-managing and active participants in their learning.

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

ERO and the school have agreed that leaders and teachers need to continue the current focus on reviewing and refining assessment and planning practices to further enhance student learning outcomes.

## **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:

- leadership that has consistently high expectations for teaching and learning
- teachers who have flexible and adaptive expertise
- an inclusive environment that promotes student wellbeing and learning.

### Next steps

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

- ongoing review and refinement of planning and assessment practices.

### ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara Watson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Deputy Chief Review Officer Waikato / Bay of Plenty  
Te Tai Miringa - Waikato / Bay of Plenty Region

14 May 2018

## About the school

Location	Paeroa
Ministry of Education profile number	1726
School type	Special School
School roll	64
Gender composition	Boys            43 Girls            21
Ethnic composition	Māori            27 Pākehā          34 Other            3
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	March 2018
Date of this report	14 May 2018
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review      October 2013 Education Review      December 2010