

Onewhero Area School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Onewhero, Franklin District	
Ministry of Education profile number	108	
School type	Composite (Years 1 to 15)	
Decile [<u>1</u>]	7	
School roll	450	
Number of international students	0	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European 68% Māori 21% Asian 2% Cook Island Māori 1% Samoan 1% other European 5% other Pacific 1% other ethnicities 1%	
Review team on site	May 2011	
Date of this report	13 June 2011	

Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	April 2008
	Education Review	January 2007
	Education Review	June 2003

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. ERO's reports are intended to be clear, concise, constructive and evaluative. 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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

[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 integrate 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's context that have an impact on student learning?

Onewhero Area School is a coeducational school for students from Years 1 to 15. The roll is predominantly drawn from the rural Onewhero area although in the last three years the school has attracted numbers of students from outside the area. Since the 2008 ERO review, the school roll has almost doubled. The board of trustees and the principal have successfully managed significant building programmes to accommodate the increased roll.

The community is supportive of the school and has confidence in school leadership and in the school as a whole. A sustained focus on building trust and relationships both within and outside the school helps to provide students with a respectful and settled learning environment. The promotion of values across the school has led to an increased focus on learning, rather than on managing student behaviour.

The school is led by a responsive, collaborative principal and a well informed, capable board of trustees. School managers make strategic appointments to the management team and use ongoing professional development for teachers to maintain a focus on the areas for development identified in the 2008 ERO report. This planned approach to improvement has raised the quality of teaching and has impacted positively on student achievement, particularly in Years 1 to 8.

2 Learning

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

Most students are focused well on classroom tasks and work within a settled and supportive environment. Achievement information in Years 1 to 8 indicates that the majority of students meet or exceed National Standards in mathematics, reading and writing.

Good practices evident in Years 1 to 8 include:

- leaders developing targets that are focused on student progress as well as on achievement
- teachers focusing on accelerating the progress of students identified as being at risk
- students receiving explicit advice about what they do well and the specific next steps to develop their learning
- provision of differentiated learning programmes to cater for the diverse learning needs of students.

Effective learning support programmes throughout the school assist underachieving students to make accelerated progress. Good relationships between teachers, parents and support agencies, as well as links with local schools and early childhood centres help to ensure that students' diverse needs are identified early and appropriate support is accessed for them.

During 2010, a focus on literacy has resulted in most Year 9 students making accelerated progress. Students' achievement at NCEA Level 1 has been low over the last three years in comparison with national averages. However, in 2010, more Year 12 students were retained at school than in previous years and most achieved NCEA Level 2.

Areas for ongoing review and development, identified by managers, include:

- increasing students' knowledge of the progressions of learning so that they can evaluate their own progress
- giving students in Years 9 to 13 explicit advice about what they do well and the specific next steps to develop their learning
- developing procedures to record Year 9 and 10 student achievement information electronically so that teachers and managers can effectively analyse, track and monitor the progress of these students.

Other areas that school leaders have agreed to review and develop include:

- setting specific, measureable targets for academic achievement, particularly in Years 9-13
- working with staff to develop agreed practices for effective teaching that promotes student engagement and learning in Years 9 to 13
- further developing succinct reporting on the overall achievement of all students and of specific groups of students.

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

The school's achievement information indicates that many Māori students meet or exceed National standards in reading and writing. In response to the lower levels of Māori students' achievement in National Standards for mathematics in 2010, school managers reviewed teaching and learning in mathematics and provided teachers with professional development to improve mathematics teaching in Years 1 to 8. The achievement of Māori students in NCEA Levels 1 and 3 in 2010 was better than the achievement of other students in the school.

Through ongoing consultation, the school has developed good relationships with Māori whānau. Leaders plan to continue to develop strong partnerships with parents/whānau to support students' learning and progress.

School leaders agree on the importance of improving the tracking of Māori achievement over time. They also agreed to develop specific targets and strategies to promote success for Māori students, making use of the Ministry of Education's strategy for Māori education, Ka Hikitia: Managing for Success.

3 Curriculum

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

School leaders and teachers are continuing to develop a school curriculum that aligns well with The New Zealand Curriculum. A broader range of options is now offered in Years 9 to 13, with a strategic focus on responding to student interests and needs. Teachers have an increased focus on careers education and a related Gateway programme is available for students in the senior school. The school has an ongoing focus on teaching literacy and numeracy and an increased focus on science within an integrated curriculum in Years 1 to 8. It is timely now for school leaders to evaluate curriculum initiatives to determine their effectiveness.

Students participate in an increased range of opportunities to complement their classroom programmes. Additional opportunities accessed by students after school include art, music, sport and drama. Some of these activities build good links with community expertise and facilities.

Senior leaders encourage staff to strengthen the inclusion of bicultural perspectives at all levels of the school so that students develop their understanding of New Zealand's bicultural heritage and have greater confidence in using te reo Māori, which they learn in meaningful contexts.

Leaders acknowledge the value of reviewing implementation of the school's curriculum to ensure that it:

- aligns with the principles of The New Zealand Curriculum
- provides a more seamless pathway for student learning at all levels of the school
- integrates key competencies within programmes and uses them to help students to manage their own learning more effectively
- promotes and supports the development of students' thinking and creative skills.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Onewhero Area School is well placed to sustain and build on improvements in teaching and learning. The principal and senior managers are a cohesive team with an ongoing focus on improving teaching and learning in the school. The board of trustees has worked with the principal to place the school in a sound financial position. The board and leaders plan well for the ongoing resourcing of the school. They support significant professional development to develop teachers' skills in facilitating students' learning and helping them to understand their learning and the next steps they need to take.

To further support sustainable performance, school leaders agree that they could strengthen selfreview practices considerably by developing a school-wide focus on evaluative thinking. They should establish clear expectations for teachers to reflect on the impact of their teaching practices on students' engagement, progress and achievement. The school should further develop appraisal goals that are linked to the implementation of agreed practices for effective teaching.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. At the time of this review there were no international students attending the school.

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.

Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of the school completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. 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 students' 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 three years.

Richard Thornton
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