

## ERO External Evaluation

### St Joseph's Cathedral School, Dunedin

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 Joseph's Cathedral School is a small Catholic, integrated and contributing school in Dunedin. It has a current roll of 131 children, including many children from different nationalities.

The school's vision is to 'produce Tamariki who are Happy, Engaged, Achieving, Respectful and Thoughtful (HEART)'.

To achieve these valued outcomes, the school's strategic goals are to:

- lift achievement in writing and mathematics for all children
- provide a broad and culturally responsive curriculum
- increase student knowledge about their own learning
- extend digital learning.

To know about its performance, leaders and teachers regularly report to the board, schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- achievement in reading, writing and mathematics
- achievement in relation to school targets in literacy and numeracy
- progress for English Language Learners (ELL)
- progress for those who are receiving learning support or interventions.

Since the 2014 ERO review, a new principal, a number of new teachers and a new BOT chairperson and trustees have been appointed.

The school is currently participating in Ministry of Education professional development to build culturally responsive practice, improve levels of achievement in writing and improve provision for ELL.

St Joseph's Cathedral School is a member of the Dunedin Catholic Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning.

## 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 achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for most children. Over the last three years school information shows that most children achieved at or above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. School information also shows during this time an increase in the number of children achieving at or above expected levels in reading.

Māori children have achieved outcomes comparable to their peers in reading, but there is some disparity in outcomes for Māori children in writing and mathematics. Pacific children have consistently achieved higher than or the same as their peers in mathematics, but there remains some disparity for Pacific children in reading and writing, in relation to other children at the school.

Over the past two years the leaders and teachers have started targeted actions to raise achievement for Māori and Pasifika students. The school is aware that there is still work to do to ensure equity of outcomes for all learners.

While the leaders and teachers gather rich information about the learning outcomes and progress for children with high needs, this is not currently reported on separately to the board of trustees.

English language learners are making sufficient progress.

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

Achievement information shows that there has been some success in accelerating progress of targeted children in reading. There is less success in accelerating progress of target children in writing and mathematics.

### 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?

The Catholic and school values are modelled and highly evident across all levels of the school. Children have many opportunities to develop and demonstrate these values in and beyond the school. They experience learning in a caring, collaborative learning community and have a clear sense of belonging to the school.

The school has a culturally responsive curriculum which effectively enacts its vision and valued outcomes for children. It is broad, inclusive, and is meeting the aspirations of whānau, and the school's community. Children have many authentic leadership opportunities at school (tuakana-teina). Leaders and teachers focus on enabling children to have a greater responsibility for their learning, their progress and their next steps. Relationships across the school are respectful and productive. Diversity and differences are valued.

Leaders collaboratively develop and pursue the vision, goals and targets for equity and excellence. Leaders and teachers have a strong focus on supporting individual children. Close ongoing monitoring and working collaboratively is improving learning outcomes for children. There is also a strong focus on implementing effective systems to support the consistency of collaborative practice for supporting children's progress, learning and achievement. School leaders have a determined focus on setting high expectations for effective teaching. They have developed capability amongst teachers through well-planned and purposeful professional development.

The board effectively meets its statutory responsibilities and actively consults with the school community to develop the school's vision, values, strategic direction and targets. Trustees make appropriate resourcing decisions to support strategies for improving learner outcomes. This includes the appointment of extra teaching staff to support in-school learning initiatives and professional development opportunities for teachers.

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

School leaders and ERO agree there are some areas of the school's processes that need to be strengthened and embedded to improve the effectiveness of achieving equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning.

The board and school leaders need to continue to build internal evaluation capacity to improve and sustain positive outcomes for learners. This includes evaluating the effectiveness and impact of programmes and practices to know what is working well and what needs to change.

School leaders have identified that the school's curriculum needs to continue to be reviewed. This should include ensuring bicultural understanding and cultural values are more clearly embedded in documentation and everyday practices.

Leaders and teachers need to ensure targets include all children not achieving at expected levels, and extend reporting to focus on the rates of progress children are making. Leaders and teachers need to develop ways to know how well programmes supporting children to achieve outcomes are working.

## **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.
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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:

- the shared practice and modelling of Catholic values that promotes children’s learning and wellbeing
- a responsive curriculum that meets the aspirations of families, communities and the school
- the leadership team’s focus on embedding effective systems and practices to support a collective responsibility for children’s progress and learning.

### Next steps

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

- developing a school-wide framework and practice for internal evaluation to know how well programmes are supporting all learners
- building the rigour of evaluation at all levels of the school in order to better know the effectiveness of strategic goals and targeted actions to raise achievement
- extending culturally responsive practice and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of this
- ensuring school achievement targets are inclusive of all children not achieving at expected levels
- extending reporting to include a focus on the rates of progress learners are making.

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

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



Dr Lesley Patterson  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern  
Te Waipounamu - Southern Region

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## About the school

Location	Dunedin
Ministry of Education profile number	3827
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)
School roll	131
Gender composition	Boys: 51% Girls: 49%
Ethnic composition	Māori: 14% Pākehā: 50% Pacific: 10% Other: 26%
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	March 2018
Date of this report	14 June 2018
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review: February 2015 Education Review: February 2010 Education Review: February 2007