



**John Paul College
Rotorua**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

John Paul College

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. The report answers four key questions about the school.

Findings

1 Context

What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?

John Paul College is a large, state-integrated Catholic school in the diocese of Hamilton, providing education for boys and girls in Years 7 to 13. The school is located in Rotorua and has a current roll of 1147. There are 221 Māori students who mostly whakapapa to Te Arawa. The proportion of Māori students has increased since the 2010 ERO review, and students from an increasing range of ethnic groups now attend the school. At the time of this ERO review there were 39 international, fee-paying students enrolled.

The school's special Catholic character is highly evident and provides a shared ethos and common sense of purpose for the school community. The Lasallian charism contributes to an inclusive and caring school culture for staff, students and their families.

The school's well-respected and experienced principal provides strong strategic leadership and sets high expectations for the educational outcomes of students. His strong involvement in wider educational networks enables him to keep the board and school community well informed about emerging trends and issues in education.

Board members, including those appointed by the Catholic proprietor and those elected by parents, bring a substantial range of knowledge and skills to their respective roles. The school's board of trustees continues to provide effective governance for the school. Developments since the 2010 ERO review include:

- the ongoing upgrade of buildings and facilities, including a new technology centre, as well as the school's infrastructure for information and communication technologies (ICT)
- the continuing growth of the learning support centre, and additional learning support for students across the school
- a broadening of the curriculum to meet the increasingly diverse range of students' learning abilities, interests and needs
- the closure of the school hostel and the use of the vacated buildings as additional teaching spaces.

The school benefits from strong links with the Rotorua parish communities. Active Māori, Pacific, Filipino and other parent groups provide opportunities for parents and students to network, and engage in the life of the school.

The school has had a very positive ERO reporting history in recent years, and responded positively to areas identified for review and development in the last report.

2 Learning

How well does this school use achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement?

Years 11 to 13

In the senior school achievement information is used very effectively to:

- review and modify National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) programmes and courses to meet the identified needs of students
- guide students into learning pathways where they are likely to experience success
- closely monitor and track student progress to ensure responsive interventions by the academic mentor, Heads of Faculty and teachers
- inform the board about school and faculty performance
- share with parents the progress of their children through the recently established, internet based, parent portal.

More recently, through its data analysis, school leaders have recognised the need to increase the proportion of NCEA merit and excellence endorsements, and this will be a school-wide focus throughout 2015.

Students at John Paul College are achieving very well in NCEA. A high proportion of students are retained to senior levels. Overall, at Levels 1, 2 and 3, achievement is above that of students in similar schools, and nationally. Achievement for Māori is equivalent to that of non-Māori. The school has already well exceeded the Ministry of Education's expectation that by 2017, 85% of all students leaving school will attain NCEA Level 2 or equivalent.

Years 7 to 10

The school is gathering good quality achievement information in literacy (reading and writing) for students in Years 7 to 10. This information is well analysed by the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the Head of Faculty English who share this with teachers. Teachers in the English Faculty are making good use of this information to develop programmes and to plan more specifically to meet the identified needs of students at these year levels. This literacy information has been made available school wide, and leaders recognise the need for all faculties to make better use of this data to plan and differentiate learning opportunities for students.

At Years 7 and 8 teachers are well supported to make increasingly valid and reliable overall teacher judgements (OTJs) in reading and writing, in relation to National Standards. Achievement information is gathered using a good range of standardised and nationally referenced tests at key points throughout the year. The Head of Faculty Mathematics is now working with her team to implement this good practice model.

The school's 2014 achievement information, reported to the Ministry of Education, indicates that the significant majority of students in Years 7 and 8 are achieving at or above the expected National Standard in reading, writing and mathematics. The achievement of Māori students at these year levels is equivalent to that of non-Māori. School leaders now need to give consideration to the development and documentation of targets for identified students who are 'at risk' of not achieving the expected National Standard. The inclusion of these targets in the school's annual plan, and the alignment with faculty plans, is likely to strengthen the reporting of progress and achievement for these priority learners.

In addition, school leaders now need to give consideration to strengthening assessment and reporting practice across all curriculum areas, especially for Year 9 and 10 students.

Support for students at all year levels who require additional assistance with their learning is continuing to develop, and is a notable strength of the school. The learning support unit, led by the SENCO, is providing a range of interventions to support the needs of identified students. There is a comprehensive and well-organised referral process and the progress of these students is closely monitored. Parents and whānau are kept well informed about the support their children are receiving, and there are opportunities for them to be involved in the programme. Useful information is disseminated by the learning support unit to teachers in all faculties. This information is assisting them to understand and respond to the learning and development needs of these students. This high level of support is enabling students to engage more confidently in the classroom setting and to experience success.

The effective academic and pastoral support for students at all levels of the school is contributing to high levels of student engagement and achievement.

3 Curriculum

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

Ongoing curriculum review, in response to the changing needs of the school population, has led to the design of a broad and responsive school curriculum. It provides an appropriate balance of learning pathways that take account of the academic and vocational aspirations of students. There are opportunities for academically able students to have their learning and progress accelerated through initiatives such as NCEA at Year 10 and a Scholarship option at Year 13. There are also course options for students who are interested in more practical and applied programmes of learning.

The school's broad curriculum is well resourced, and enriched by extra-curricular opportunities. Students have access to a wide range of sporting, cultural and leadership experiences, as well as the arts. In keeping with the school's special character, all students are involved in a programme of religious education, and have opportunities to be involved in spiritual, liturgical and community service activities.

In support of this responsive curriculum, the principal and senior leaders are promoting a more student-centred approach to learning and teaching. This has included professional development in thinking strategies, formative assessment and an emphasis on reciprocal relationships to actively involve learners. More recently, there has been professional development to up-skill teachers in the use of e-learning to enhance teaching practice and engage students.

The principal has recognised the need to strengthen curriculum leadership in order to achieve greater consistency of these pedagogical practices within and between faculties. The inclusion of the

Specialist Classroom Teacher (SCT), and more recently a head of faculty, into the senior leadership team, has the potential to strengthen leadership for learning across the school. Leaders of learning recognise the need to develop and embed a process for regular and planned inquiry into the effectiveness of teaching practice. A process of 'teaching as inquiry', that is informed by the school's very well analysed achievement information, is likely to enhance critical reflection about pedagogical practice in the school's culture for learning.

The deputy principal (human resources) and the SCT, with support from the principal, are leading the review and development of the school's appraisal process, with a view to making it more robust. School leaders recognise that the inclusion of goals focussed on teacher development, and feedback that is both constructive and critical, are more likely to enhance teacher capability.

The deputy principal (student services) coordinates the strong and effective pastoral care networks that continue to be a feature of the school, and which have a positive effect on the school's learning culture. Key personnel such as deans, the academic mentor and school counsellors, overseen by a deputy principal (student services), liaise closely to provide comprehensive support and guidance for students. Restorative Practices, a new initiative established in 2013, is being well implemented. This approach is having a positive impact on relationships between students, and between students and adults, and is leading to students taking greater responsibility for their actions and behaviour.

How effectively does the school promote educational success for Māori, as Māori?

The school continues to be committed to building meaningful partnerships between Māori and non-Māori that lead to success for Māori, as Māori. Parents have developed a strong whānau support group. This group is highly respected by the board. Trustees listen and respond to their advice. This has included the adoption of the Treaty of Waitangi policy and more appropriate support for Māori students during the board's discipline processes.

The achievement and progress of Māori students is closely tracked and monitored, and reported to the whānau at regular intervals. They have used this information to draft a Māori achievement plan, which includes goals to increase the proportion of NCEA endorsements.

A small but vibrant kapa haka has contributed strongly to Māori students' sense of identity and wellbeing. The school has begun to take a systematic approach to the inclusion of Māori content and contexts throughout the curriculum. The school recognises that this needs to be continued.

The school's commitment to strengthening a student-centred approach to learning and teaching is important in ensuring that high levels of Māori achievement are sustained.

To further enhance the successful engagement of Māori students, the board intends to continue to enact its Treaty of Waitangi policy. Senior leaders will work with teachers to include the principles of *Ka Hikitia, the Māori Education Strategy*, Ministry of Education and *Tātaiako, the Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori*, New Zealand Teachers' Council (2011).

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance because:

- the board and principal work collaboratively to establish a clear vision and strategic direction
- the principal provides strategic and well-informed leadership for the school and its community

- there is a culture of high expectations and a very strong focus on academic achievement and success
- the environment for learning and teaching is attractively presented and well resourced
- the board allocates resources effectively to support the curriculum
- teachers are highly committed to positive learning outcomes and student wellbeing
- there is a settled and respectful school culture, characterised by positive relationships that support learning, teaching, and student wellbeing
- there is a high level of parent and Catholic community support
- self-review practices are informing decisions, especially in relation to operational matters and curriculum design.

The agreed priority for continuing school improvement is to enhance the quality of critical inquiry in the school's internal evaluation processes.

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. 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 learners is thorough, effective and has resulted in ongoing development of the programme.

At the time of this ERO review there were 39 international fee-paying students in the school from a number of countries. These students are well supported by an experienced international student director, home-stay coordinator and administrative support person. The principal and board of trustees take a close interest in the learning and welfare of international students. Policies, procedures and other documentation that guides provision for international students are clearly documented. Students receive high-quality learning opportunities and are supported to participate in sporting and cultural activities. Their progress is carefully monitored and there is strong support for their well-being and pastoral care. Students spoken to during the review were positive about their experiences in the school.

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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

The principal must ensure that an attestation process for all teaching staff is carried out annually against the relevant Professional Standards.

Conclusion

Students achieve high levels of academic success. They receive a well-rounded education that is enriched by the school's Catholic character. The wide range of co-curricular activities and the variety of learning pathways enable students to make responsible choices about their education. There is a well-organised, purposeful atmosphere for learning.

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



Dale Bailey
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

28 April 2015

About the School

Location	Rotorua	
Ministry of Education profile number	532	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
School roll	1147	
Number of international students	39	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā Māori Pacific South East Asian Indian Other Asian Other European Chinese	56% 19% 7% 5% 4% 4% 3% 2%
Review team on site	February 2015	
Date of this report	28 April 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	February 2010 October 2007 October 2004