

Cashmere Primary School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Cashmere, Christchurch	
Ministry of Education profile number	3310	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
Decile [1]	10	
School roll	475	
Number of international students	7	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	90%
	Māori	4%
	Asian	5%
	Other	1%
Review team on site	August 2011	
Date of this report	19 September 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	September 2008
	Education Review	October 2005
	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. 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 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's context that have an impact on student learning?

Since the school's September 2008 ERO report, the principal, other leaders and teachers have continued to enhance the quality of education they provide for students. Improvements to the school's curriculum have extended learning opportunities across all learning areas.

Considerable professional development and support for leaders and teachers, along with improvements to self review, have helped to build on existing good practices and continue to raise the quality of teaching and learning.

The board and school leaders have made ongoing improvements to the facilities and resources they provide for students to support their learning.

Earthquakes, particularly in 2011, have had a significant effect on children, their families and staff. School leaders and teachers have been proactive in identifying and responding to students' needs.

2 Learning

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

School leaders and teachers gather a wide range of achievement information so that they can make well-informed judgements about student achievement levels.

Overall students achieve very well in literacy and numeracy. Levels of student engagement in learning are generally high and students display a positive attitude to their learning.

The school's 2010 and 2011 achievement information shows that students achieve highly in reading and in numeracy. For example, 91% of students achieve at or above the National Standards in reading with 60% being above the standard. In numeracy 86% of students achieve at or above the National Standards with 40% being above the standard.

While achievement in written language is below that in reading and numeracy, significant numbers of students, 82%, still achieve at or above the National Standards.

School leaders have high achievement expectations for students and continue to raise these. They methodically address any concerns related to student achievement.

Some students have achieved notable success in sporting competitions. Five Year 8 students won scholarships to local secondary schools in 2010.

Overall, students display a positive attitude towards learning.

The principal, school leaders and teachers effectively use student achievement information to:

- set well-defined annual targets to further raise student achievement
- develop useful annual plans and actively support students to achieve these targets
- provide a range of well-managed and targeted extra support for students most at risk of underachieving
- consider how best to meet the needs of gifted and talented students and reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching programmes.

Recent improvements in collecting and recording achievement information have placed the school in a better position to use this information to analyse the progress that groups of students make during their time at the school. For example:

- assessment practices now in place for students in their first year at school mean their progress can be better tracked
- significant improvements and adjustments to the school's data base make it easier to locate and use key achievement information.

ERO agrees with school leaders that their next step is to use this information to provide further evidence of the impact of teaching programmes on student progress and achievement.

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

Maori students achieve at similar levels to their peers in literacy and numeracy. In some instances such as in written language, they made greater progress than their peers in 2010.

The school's curriculum is giving growing emphasis to including aspects of biculturalism within teaching programmes. This is increasing opportunities for Maori students to have their culture acknowledged and affirmed.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum is well designed and successfully promotes and supports student learning.

Strengths

Curriculum design

The school's curriculum effectively integrates the key elements of the New Zealand Curriculum. For instance it

- includes clear expectations for high-quality teaching and student achievement
- provides good opportunities for students to build on previous learning and achieve success across the curriculum
- gives suitable emphasis to integrating learning to help make it meaningful for students
- places an appropriate focus on environmental education and sustainable practices.

Curriculum in action

Teachers use a range of effective teaching practices to engage students and lift their achievement. For example teachers:

- create positive learning environments for their students
- focus on responding to students' identified strengths and needs
- explain the purpose of learning and give useful feedback to students about their achievement and next steps
- give priority to helping students understand and manage their own learning and behaviour.

The school has well-developed transition procedures for supporting students when beginning school in Year 1 and when leaving at the end of Year 8.

Area for review and development

Building on curriculum initiatives

School leaders have identified, and ERO agrees, that some aspects of curriculum implementation could be further developed. These include continuing to:

- explore ways of catering for the range of student strengths, needs and interests within classroom programmes
- build on the best of current practices in inquiry-based learning to achieve school-wide consistency and continuity for students
- increase the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to support teaching and learning.

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 school performance for the benefit of students.

Strengths

Professional Leadership

The principal, with the support of other school leaders, provides effective leadership for learning, teaching and managing the school. The principal:

- has high expectations for students' learning and achievement and for teachers as professionals
- maintains a strong focus on teaching and learning
- appropriately delegates responsibilities, uses staff strengths effectively and supports staff to grow as leaders
- works actively with the board and staff to achieve the school's vision and goals.

School culture and self review

The principal, with the support of other leaders, has created a school culture that encourages collaboration, innovation and critical reflection.

The school has a well-developed programme of curriculum self review that incorporates both internal and external evaluations. Review practices help leaders and teachers to evaluate the quality of education they provide for students and make well-informed decisions about school improvement.

Reviewers' class observations confirmed the school's self review findings in regard to the quality of teaching practices.

Professional learning and support

Teachers are well supported by wide-ranging opportunities for professional development and growth. Teachers engage in regular and focused professional discussions. They receive useful feedback about their teaching programmes and practices through a range of appraisal

and review practices. This feedback is helpful in affirming strengths and identifying areas for personal development.

Where teachers may not be consistently meeting the school's expectations for high-quality teaching, the principal and other leaders actively provide additional support and guidance for them.

Governance

The board performs its governance role well. This is most evident in:

- trustees' focus on promoting high-quality learning and teaching
- the good working relationship between the board and principal
- the school's clear strategic vision and well-developed plans
- the board's support and resourcing for school initiatives.

Areas for review and development

Enhancing aspects of self review

While the school has many well-developed review practices, the quality and usefulness of some of these could be enhanced through:

- the board extending the provisions it makes for seeking feedback from parents on key school matters
- the principal and other leaders extending reports to the board to include progress and achievement information about international students and students receiving additional learning support
- the principal and other leaders extending their reviews to include more analysis of the factors that may be contributing to students' progress and achievement.

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 seven 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

needs to be extended to ensure the board receives regular reports on the outcomes of self review and the progress and achievement of students.

There are good provisions for pastoral care, learning support and student involvement in the school's community.

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 four-to-five years.

Graham Randell
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Southern Region

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