

ERO External Evaluation

Holy Cross School (Papatoetoe), Papatoetoe, Auckland

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

Holy Cross School (Papatoetoe) is a Sisters of Mercy Catholic integrated school. It caters for girls from Years 1 to 8, and boys from Years 1 to 6. The school serves a widespread Catholic community in South Auckland. The school roll of approximately 600 students includes seven percent Māori, 60 percent with Pacific heritage, and a variety of other ethnicities.

The school's vision is for children to learn and grow through Christ within a nurturing, safe, Catholic environment. The values of service, compassion, reconciliation and human dignity underpin the vision. These values are well understood and are shared by parents, teachers and students.

The school is led by a long-standing principal, deputy principal and assistant principal.

Holy Cross School (Papatoetoe) has a positive reporting history with ERO. The 2013 report noted high expectations for students that support good levels of student achievement. This feature has been sustained and strengthened.

The school is part of the South Auckland Catholic Community of Learning | Kāhui Ako.

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

- achievement in literacy, written and oral language and mathematics
- outcomes for students with additional learning needs, including new English language learners
- progress and achievement in relation to school targets
- student engagement and wellbeing
- outcomes related to identity, culture and language
- the special character of the school's curriculum.

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 its students.

The school's achievement information over the last three years shows that students have sustained and improved high levels of achievement in literacy and mathematics. This information indicates that almost all children are working within or beyond expected national curriculum levels in reading, and the majority in mathematics and writing. The school has identified the need for extra support for boys to achieve parity of achievement in writing.

A variety of effective assessment tools are used to track and monitor students' progress and achievement. Strategic planning is informed by useful achievement data, and strategic goals support ongoing improvement in student achievement.

Students achieve very well in relation to other school valued outcomes. Children:

- are confident and show a sense of pride in and belonging to the school
- collaborate with, learn from and support the learning of others
- demonstrate the school values in their everyday school life
- show respect for and celebrate individual identity, language and culture
- value the contribution they can make to the school environment and community.

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

The school is successfully accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need it. Almost all Māori children are achieving within or beyond expected curriculum levels in reading, mathematics and writing.

Teachers have a very good understanding of accelerated learning. Highly effective strategies are shared and used by leaders and teachers to support students to make accelerated progress.

Children with additional needs and their families receive high quality inclusive care that helps them succeed. They make significant progress and have equitable learning opportunities. New learners of English make very good progress over their time at school.

Student progress is regularly monitored and reported to the board to inform decision making, future planning and resourcing.

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?

Children learn in settled, positive environments. They are highly engaged and experience consistently high expectations for learning and achievement. Children are well supported to be independent and confident learners. Teachers actively promote practices that focus on children's wellbeing, their engagement in their learning, and confidence in their identity, language and culture.

Teachers implement a broad and responsive curriculum and use a variety of teaching strategies to engage and motivate students. They use assessment tools and practices that provide meaningful evidence of children's achievement. Children access the curriculum and engage in rich learning experiences through the use of well integrated digital tools and technologies.

Teachers monitor and track student progress well. They use evidence to reflect on the impact of their teaching and improve their practice, to promote positive outcomes for children. Teachers access relevant expertise to build capability for ongoing improvement and innovation. School leaders support teachers to implement teaching strategies that respond to the learning needs and strengths of individuals, and groups of children.

Positive and purposeful community partnerships and relationships are highly valued. Children's learning at home is actively promoted. Leaders and teachers use multiple ways to communicate and build relationships with parents and whānau. The school offers whānau access to opportunities that enable them to further support their children's learning.

Leadership is highly effective. Leaders have high, clear and equitable expectations for student learning, achievement, progress and behaviour. Leaders are strategic and purposeful in their planning and coordination of strategies and interventions that promote accelerated learning. They work collaboratively with the school community, parents, whānau and staff to support the future direction of the school.

The board provides strong stewardship. Trustees actively represent and serve the school community. Trustees and staff share a strong commitment to the school and they work well together. Trustees are well informed and have a good understanding of student achievement information. They prioritise initiatives that make a difference for children's wellbeing and achievement.

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

The school has very good capacity to accelerate learning for students. The following are areas for continued development to build and sustain equity and excellence for all students. Leaders, teachers and trustees plan to:

- further broaden the school's curriculum through an ongoing focus on science, art and technology

- strengthen internal evaluation to sustain improvement by developing a robust framework to guide their current evaluation systems and processes.

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 Children’s Act 2014.

4 ERO’s Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO’s overall evaluation judgement of Holy Cross School (Papatoetoe) performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Strong

[ERO’s Framework: Overall School Performance is available on ERO’s website.](#)

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- a positive school culture that responds to students’ needs, promotes their wellbeing and supports their learning success
- a culture of collaboration among leaders, teachers, parents and whānau, that fosters high expectations for teaching, learning and achievement throughout the school
- effective leadership that promotes equity and excellence for all learners.

Next steps

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

- extending internal evaluation frameworks, to support ongoing innovation and improvement
- embedding key initiatives to accelerate learning and achieve equitable outcomes for all students
- continuing to broaden the school curriculum to enhance learning opportunities for all students.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Tanner'.

Steve Tanner
Director Review and Improvement Services Northern
Northern Region
25 June 2019

About the school

Location	Papatoetoe, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	1315
School type	Full Primary Years 1-8
School roll	554
Gender composition	Girls 56% Boys 44%
Ethnic composition	Māori 7% NZ European/Pākehā 4% Samoan 45% Tongan 19% Indian 6% Middle Eastern 5% Cook Island Māori 4% Filipino 4% other ethnic groups 6%
Review team on site	April 2019
Date of this report	14 June 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review November 2014 Education Review August 2011 Education Review June 2008