

Otumoetai Intermediate Education Review

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1 Context

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

Otumoetai Intermediate is located in Tauranga and caters for students in Years 7 and 8. At the time of this ERO review, the roll was 767, 19% of whom identified as Māori. There were 18 international students.

In 2011 the school reaffirmed its vision and values through extensive review and consultation with its community. As a result of this review, the board of trustees have developed key strategic goals and outcomes that underpin and guide all aspects of school operation. Key priorities for the school community are addressing the unique development and needs of emerging adolescents, and building students as actively involved learners, within a global community.

The 2010 ERO report identified that the school was providing high-quality education for students. The report noted that there was visionary and innovative leadership, high-quality teaching was prevalent across the school, and there were high levels of student achievement. These good practices have been sustained and built on. In 2014, the school received the supreme award in the Prime Minister's Education Excellence Awards. The school's three awards acknowledge outstanding examples of excellence in student engagement, teaching and learning, and school governance.

Since the 2010 ERO review, there has been consistency of leadership and staffing, and governance continues to be provided by dedicated and skilled trustees. Teachers have engaged in high level, personalised professional learning to further develop and enhance their practice. Other significant developments include the establishment of learning academies, targeted literacy and numeracy programmes, and increased use of personal electronic devices by students to support their learning.

2 Learning

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

The school uses achievement information very well to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement.

School leaders and teachers have developed highly effective processes for tracking and monitoring the individual progress and achievement of students. These processes allow them to respond quickly to student needs and plan appropriate deliberate teaching and interventions to improve and accelerate student learning. Teachers use achievement information to review the effectiveness of their practice and to make adjustments to their teaching as needed. ERO observed examples of students using personal information to set learning goals and monitor their own progress. The board of trustees is well informed about student achievement and uses the information to make informed decisions about ongoing improvement, target setting and resourcing.

Parents are well informed about their children's learning, progress and achievement. There are many opportunities for students, their teachers and parents to share and celebrate student success, set goals and discuss how learning can be supported in the home.

ERO observed high levels of student engagement in purposeful learning. In classrooms where formative assessment practice is strongly evident, students are well supported to co-construct success criteria with teachers and to use the criteria to monitor their learning and progress. Teachers provide specific feedback in relation to criteria and next learning steps. Peer and self assessment are also encouraged. Leaders and teachers have identified that the next step is to develop consistency across the school, where all students have a deeper understanding of themselves as actively involved learners.

The school reported at the end of 2013 that the significant majority of students, including Māori, were achieving at and above National Standards and well above national comparisons in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is able to show that a large proportion of students who were below the standards when they entered the school achieve or exceed the standards by the end of Year 8. Students' diverse needs and abilities are accurately identified and catered for through highly responsive programmes and interventions, including an extensive gifted and talented programme. Students also experience a high level of success at local and national cultural, academic and sports events and activities.

3 Curriculum

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

Otumoetai Intermediate's curriculum is highly effective in promoting and supporting student learning. It is purposefully designed for emerging adolescents, after consultation with parents and whānau, and reflects the values, principles and key competencies of The New Zealand Curriculum. Relevant contexts for learning support students to develop a wide range of skills and competencies to participate in a global community.

The school is meeting its priority to provide high-quality reading, writing and mathematics programmes. Student learning is further enriched through information and communication technology, specialist programmes, languages, parent expertise to support extension programmes, and environmental education. There are extensive opportunities for extra-curricular activities, including sports, arts and student leadership.

Respectful and reciprocal relationships between teachers and students are a feature of the school. Teachers are responsive to all students and set high expectations for learning and behaviour. The deputy principal responsible for pastoral care effectively leads and coordinates the school's strategic goal to provide a positive physical, emotional and social environment. Students are encouraged to work cooperatively, be positive role models, and develop positive citizenship skills.

High-quality teaching has been sustained since the 2010 ERO review. The central focus of the school, effectively led by the knowledgeable deputy principal responsible for curriculum and learning, is to raise student achievement through the continuous improvement of teaching practice. There is a well-planned and structured approach to teachers' individualised learning and improvement for students, aimed at achieving excellence in classroom teaching. Team leaders play a pivotal role in supporting, modelling and embedding agreed, quality expectations. Effective use is made of goal setting, critical reflection, student and peer feedback, educational mentors, and research to inform and support the ongoing development of best practice.

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

The school continues to provide a range of opportunities for Māori students to succeed and excel in their learning. The proportion of Māori students achieving at and above National Standards in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics was above national and regional comparisons, but below that of other students in the school. Leaders carefully track and monitor the progress and achievement of Māori students and provide appropriate intervention, extension and support. They are highly committed to making a difference for Māori learners and this is evidenced by improving levels of achievement over time.

Students celebrate their learning with parents and whānau at the end of each term, and their culture and heritage is acknowledged and affirmed through activities such as pōwhiri, kapa haka and use of pepeha.

Guidance of a lead teacher and recent teacher professional development have focused on building teacher knowledge, confidence and competence in accelerating the learning of Māori students. School leaders acknowledge the need to continue to imbed a Māori dimension into classroom programmes.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Otumoetai Intermediate is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance because:

- the principal continues to provide high levels of visionary and innovative leadership that promotes a strong sense of ownership of the school's purpose and direction for ongoing improvement
- the senior leaders provide highly effective leadership for staff, students and the community with a strong focus on improving teacher practice
- the board of trustees, in collaboration with the community, has developed and effectively implemented a clearly articulated vision and philosophy for ongoing strategic improvement
- high levels of student achievement have been maintained over time
- there is a school-wide culture of rigorous self review and critical reflection, which contributes effectively to sustaining the school's positive performance and continuous improvement
- the school enjoys high levels of support, commitment and endorsement from within its school community
- all reasonable steps have been taken to provide a safe and inclusive environment.

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.

At the time of this ERO review there were 18 international students attending the school.

The school provides a high level of provision of pastoral care, quality education, student involvement and integration into the school community. There are good monitoring systems to ensure the effective provision of education and support for international students.

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.

Conclusion

Otumoetai Intermediate provides high-quality, inclusive education within a well-designed curriculum. Students achieve very well and carefully designed programmes respond to identified student needs and abilities. Respectful and reciprocal relationships among staff and students foster settled, purposeful classrooms where students benefit from highly effective teaching and learning practices.

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

Dale Bailey
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Northern Region

24 October 2014

School Statistics

Location	Tauranga	
Ministry of Education profile number	1878	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
School roll	767	
Number of international students	18	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	64%
	Māori	19%
	Asian	4%
	Pacific	1%
	Other	12%
Review team on site	August 2014	
Date of this report	24 October 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2010
	Education Review	August 2007
	Education Review	August 2004