

Educational Review Office (ERO) REPORT:

Sherwood School, Auckland - 10/03/2017

1 Context

Sherwood School, located in Browns Bay on Auckland's North Shore, provides education for students from Years 1 to 6. The school has been involved in a long-term building project. Staff, students and parents have remained positive during this process. The senior leadership team, made up of the principal and two deputy principals, is well established in the school, and is supported by teams led by learning leaders. The school has a history of positive ERO evaluations. The school is a member of the Long Bay Community of Learning | Kahui Ako.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes for all children defined by the school are to develop inquirers, thinkers, communicators, risk-takers who are knowledgeable, open-minded, caring, well-rounded, reflective, principled and resilient. Sherwood School and community aim to promote and encourage the values of appreciation, enthusiasm, cooperation, creativity, confidence, curiosity, integrity, empathy, tolerance, independence and respect.

The school's achievement information shows that in 2016 there has been improvement in the percentages of students achieving National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics and most learners achieve at or above National Standards in all three learning areas.

Nine percent of students identify as Māori. In 2016 Māori student achievement has improved in reading, writing and mathematics. Disparity between Māori and other children has reduced significantly in 2016.

A growing number of families and students join the school with English as an additional language. A slight decline in writing achievement is closely related to a significant increase in students who are learning English as another language. These children make good progress as they quickly acquire the English language.

Teachers use multiple sources of evidence to make judgements about how well students are achieving. Teachers work collaboratively in teams to ensure that judgements about levels of achievement are reliable. They establish and confirm teachers' overall judgements of children's achievement from across the curriculum. Writing samples are used with other schools to moderate teachers' and leaders' assessments.

Since the 2012 ERO evaluation, school leaders and teachers have:

- refined assessment practices and increased teachers' understanding about effective teaching practices to accelerate children's progress
- supported teachers to reflect on their practice
- engaged teachers in school-wide professional learning in teaching writing
- participated in a Ministry of Education professional development contract: Accelerating Learning in Mathematics (ALiM).

These developments have resulted in greater consistency of teaching practice across the school and shared understanding of the school's teaching expectations. Teachers are more confident to be innovative with their teaching approaches to accelerate the progress of children at risk of not achieving equitable outcomes. Most students are able to talk about their learning and what they need to do to be successful learners.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to Māori children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school responds well to Māori children whose learning needs acceleration.

Leaders and teachers identify Māori children who are at risk of not achieving equitable outcomes. Teachers' professional learning groups (PLGs), led by senior leaders, meet regularly to monitor and track targeted and priority children. They support each other in their endeavours to develop and trial new teaching and learning initiatives to improve outcomes for these children. The school's achievement information shows that in 2016 Māori children have made significant progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

How effectively does this school respond to other children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school responds well to other children whose learning needs accelerating. The strategies for accelerating the progress of Māori children have a positive influence on outcomes for all learners. Teachers have high expectations for the achievement and learning of all children.

Leaders and teachers work collaboratively to identify priority learners, and constantly focus on and monitor their progress. All staff share in decisions about deliberate and purposeful teaching and learning for children at risk of not achieving equitable outcomes.

Senior leaders are strong teaching models and demonstrate effective instructional leadership. They:

- continue to teach identified groups of children
- monitor data boards and keep the focus on target children and priority learners
- lead the change process in the school together with learning leaders to improve teaching practice.

Learning leaders collaborate with their teaching teams. They:

- involve themselves in professional learning related to the school's strategic goals, and trial ways to improve teaching practice
- develop teachers' capabilities by modelling good practice and supporting teachers in their classrooms
- include teacher aides in teaching teams to support the acceleration of children's progress and learning.

Key teachers and leaders are strong advocates of ALiM strategies, in particular of children learning mathematical knowledge and skills through problem solving. They have modelled this approach to staff to build teacher capability and confidence to teach using these approaches.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?

The school is effective at developing and enacting the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence.

Teachers develop positive and respectful relationships with children. The classroom learning environments support learners' development and independence. Teachers use their strengths and expertise to provide children with a variety of approaches and high quality experiences to engage them in their learning and allow learners to develop their talents.

Senior leaders have recently consulted with children, teachers, parents and board of trustees to review the relevance and responsiveness of the school's curriculum. This has included a review of the school's inquiry learning approach. Teachers are guided by the comprehensive documentation of the school curriculum to ensure there is consistency across the school. Leaders should continue to review and develop practices that promote child-led learning, with a view to increasing children's agency through building on their interests.

Leaders and teachers proactively engage with parents/whānau and the school community in a welcoming and inclusive school culture. Leaders use a variety of strategies to communicate and consult with parents. Reports to parents include comprehensive individual profiles of children's achievement.

Senior leaders and teachers draw on community resources and expertise to increase their capacity to improve children's achievement and enhance their wellbeing. Leaders should continue to develop the bicultural/*Treaty of Waitangi* strategic plan.

There is clear coherence between the school charter's goals and achievement processes in documentation and in practice. Teachers are driving their individual professional learning and reflection through a well-developed performance management system. The improvement focused system is based on promoting better teaching and learning for all children.

Senior leaders model relevant evaluation processes and these are practised by teachers. The school's ongoing review is increasingly evaluative, and good systems are in place for knowing and monitoring children's progress. Leaders are skilled at analysing and interpreting achievement data to inform their decision making and planning. As a result children's learning and wellbeing are very well supported.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

To further develop the school's capacity to provide and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children, senior leaders and teachers have identified relevant areas of future focus that include:

- promoting acceleration practices that have been identified as effective through professional learning initiatives
- continuing to report evaluatively to the board to assist its decision making and to clarify intended changes and improvements.

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

6 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014
- provision for international students.

7 Recommendation

ERO recommends that leaders and teachers continue to trial innovative practices to accelerate children's progress, and implement successful approaches across the curriculum and through the school.

Graham Randell

Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

10 March 2017

About the school

Location	Browns Bay, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1481	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	458	
Number of international students	1	
Gender composition	Boys 50% Girls 50%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	9%
	Pākehā	43%
	Chinese	28%
	Korean	7%
	African	5%
	British	3%
	other European	3%
	others	1%
Review team on site	November 2016	
Date of this report	10 March 2017	