

Milson School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Palmerston North	
Ministry of Education profile number	2400	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
Decile [<u>1</u>]	5	
School roll	313	
Gender composition	Female 45% Male 55%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	64%
	Māori	31%
	Pacific	3%
	Other ethnic groups	2%
Review team on site	May 2011	
Date of this report	8 July 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	June 2008
	Education Review	February 2005
	Accountability Review	December 2001

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 integrate 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?

Milson School is an urban contributing school located in Palmerston North. At the time of the review the school had a roll of 314 students, with 31% who identify as Māori. Staff provide a welcoming environment for parents and children. Students are transitioned effectively to support their positive inclusion in school life. Relationships between teachers, students and their peers are affirming and reflect shared school values. Before and after school care programmes are run independently on the school site.

Appropriate resourcing, including the provision of outdoor equipment, reflects the school's priorities and the interests of students. Information and communication technologies and the school library are features within the school.

2 Learning

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

Teachers collect and analyse a useful range of assessment information to determine achievement levels, show progress and decide on learning objectives. Comparative data reported in 2010 identified students in their first year of school made useful progress. Reported standardised data in reading and mathematics for students in Years 4 to 6 shows many achieve at or above age expectations.

School leaders separate and report standardised assessment information for Pacific students. Achievement levels are similar to overall school data. Inquiry learning is used to introduce themes acknowledging Pacific culture. School leaders acknowledge and ERO's external evaluation confirms the need to develop consultation processes to determine the aspirations Pacific parents have for their children. Using consultation to inform the school's curriculum should enable staff to review the impact of their curriculum on Pacific student engagement and achievement.

National Standards data was initially collated at the end of 2010. School leaders identified concerns in relation to the achievement of some cohorts. In response, a range of initiatives has been implemented in 2011. Actions include:

- developing and introducing mathematics and literacy matrices to support assessment moderation and promote student engagement in the learning process;
- extending monitoring processes for individuals in targeted classroom programmes as part of inquiry teaching; and
- introducing a process for teachers to share their practice to develop consistency across the school.

Supporting teachers' pedagogical knowledge, targeting identified gaps in learning and applying processes to increase monitoring of progress has the potential to impact positively on student achievement.

Written reports to parents in 2010 indicate achievement against National Standards. Identified next steps provide the opportunity for parents to support their child's ongoing progress. Information gathered from parents as part of ongoing review has contributed to changes in the report format for 2011.

Students with special or complex needs receive appropriate intervention. Teacher aides contribute purposefully to individual progress, inclusion and achievement. External specialist

support is accessed as required. Regular monitoring effectively determines progress.

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

Collated school-wide numeracy and literacy data shows Māori students achieve below age expectations and when compared with other groups in the school. The principal and trustees acknowledge the need to improve consultation with whānau and promote Māori achievement. A consultancy group has been established and school leaders have developed strategic goals, accompanied by a Māori Achievement Statement. To strengthen current planning, clearly defined actions should be included to enable monitored implementation and greater review of agreed outcomes. To improve current practice school leaders and teachers should:

- determine teachers' capability to effectively implement te reo me nga tikanga Māori in classroom practice;
- develop and plan to increase teachers' pedagogical understanding of successful strategies to support improvement in Māori achievement;
- closely monitor the progress of Māori students in classroom target groups to determine the most effective strategies to support Māori learners;
- identify improved methods to collate consultation with whānau; and
- develop indicators to identify the cultural achievement of students through their involvement in the school curriculum.

Setting measurable outcomes to inform self review should enable school personnel to determine the impact of the school curriculum on Māori students and improve achievement.

3 Curriculum

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

Milson School's curriculum has been designed in response to community consultation. Key competencies are incorporated through agreed values. Curriculum integration is included through a model for inquiry learning. The introduction of thinking skills and identifying strategies that promote independent learning provides the opportunity for students to independently follow their interests. To review the effectiveness of the school's curriculum, information has been gathered on parental expectations for students at the end of Year 6. Staff are planning to determine the academic, social and cultural competencies that students will acquire through participation in the Milson School Curriculum. Developing clear outcomes should enable staff, trustees and the community to show the impact of their priorities on student achievement, progress and engagement.

School leaders have a clear understanding of the effectiveness of current teaching and learning within the school. Comprehensive documentation identifies agreed best practice strategies. Performance management is supported by observation and focused on improvement. Newly developed processes to share practice across the school has potential to support teachers in meeting agreed expectations. Developing a framework to support the successful implementation of this initiative is required. Establishing processes for teachers to critically reflect on their own practice, observe and critique their colleagues and receive mentoring should promote consistent standards of teaching and improve the achievement, engagement and progress of students.

Participation in relevant professional learning and development (PLD) suitably supports the school curriculum priorities. External facilitation, regular observation and modelling of effective practice assists teachers to better meet agreed curriculum expectations. Processes to review the impact of PLD against student progress and achievement require strengthening. School leaders and teachers should use classroom data to determine the strategies that have the greatest impact on student progress and achievement and share these across the school.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Senior leaders purposefully implement the school's strategic direction. Identified key management targets reflect a clear understanding of development areas required to build community partnership, support teaching initiatives and improve achievement. Senior leaders need to work actively to continue to support emerging leadership in syndicates and across the school. Determining individual capability and reviewing expectations for distributed leadership positions should further support sustainable practice.

Trustees continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of effective governance. They work collaboratively with the principal and respond to requests for resourcing aligned to their planned goals. Regularly reported achievement information supports their decision making.

School self-review processes have determined key priorities to promote ongoing school review and development. Planned strategic goals align to the school's curriculum priorities. Determining expected outcomes for newly implemented initiatives should enable senior leaders, trustees and teachers to improve the robustness of current self-review processes.

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.

The principal and trustees acknowledge the need to improve consultation with whānau and promote Māori achievement. The board of trustees must:

- in consultation with the school's Māori community, develop and make known to the school's community policies, plans and targets for improving the achievement of Māori students.

[National Administration Guidelines – Section 1 (e)]

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Kathleen Atkins
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8 July 2011