

Ridgeview School Education Review

- About The School
- The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation
- The Focus Of The Review
- Areas Of National Interest
- Board Assurance On Compliance Areas
- Recommendation
- Future Action
- Community Page

Disclaimer

Individual ERO school and early childhood centre reports are public information and may be copied or sent electronically. However, the Education Review Office can guarantee only the authenticity of original documents which have been obtained in hard copy directly from either the local ERO office or ERO Corporate Office in Wellington. Please consult your telephone book, or see the ERO web page, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>, for ERO office addresses.

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

About The School

Location	Paremoremo, North Shore City
Ministry of Education profile number	1443
School type	Contributing Primary (Year 1-6)
Decile rating[1]	10
Teaching staff: Roll generated entitlement Number of teachers	4.7 5
School roll	80
Gender composition	Boys 40, Girls 40
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 50, Māori 15, Samoan 3, Indian 2, Tongan 2, Chinese 1, Cook Island Māori 1, other 6
Review team on site	May 2009
Date of this report	23 June 2009
Previous ERO reports	Education Review, July 2006 Education Review, December 2004 Accountability Review, March 2001 Assurance Audit, December 1996 Effectiveness Review, November 1994 Assurance Audit, December 1992 Review, October 1991

The Education Review Office (ero) Evaluation

Ridgeview School caters for Year 1 to 6 students in the small semi-rural community of Paremoremo. Since the 2006 ERO report, the school has undergone significant changes in senior leadership and staffing. A new principal took up her position at the beginning of 2008, and a new deputy principal began in term 4, 2008. The three other teachers at the school have also taken up their positions in 2008 and 2009. While undergoing significant changes in educational direction, the school continues to remain committed to serving the best interests of its students.

Analysed achievement data show that the majority of students achieve at or above their expected age levels in reading and mathematics. Effective self-review processes enable the board to set appropriate achievement targets and to provide additional support for identified students. Teachers have been encouraged to use this data more effectively in planning programmes to meet individual student needs.

Students enjoy the increased opportunities they have to develop their leadership skills and to take part in a wider range of co-curricular activities. They are well engaged in class and are taking increasing responsibility for self management in learning and behaviour.

The new principal and staff have worked to develop a school culture with a focus on learning, rather than on behaviour management. The thoughtful and well-considered leadership of the principal provides a planned and measured response to school development. There is a strong focus on improving teacher knowledge and practice in order to improve student outcomes. The teaching practices observed by ERO in some classrooms are resulting in more focused teaching to meet identified student needs, and in students becoming more reflective about how they learn. The school should continue to work towards making the high quality practices observed in some classes more widespread and consolidated in general practice.

Teachers have made changes to programmes to ensure that all curriculum areas are covered and to provide more planned and directed teaching throughout the day. These efforts, and those made by the school to improve collaboration and consultation with staff, parents, students and the Māori community, are making it possible for all members of the school community to contribute to improving outcomes for students.

Significant progress has been made in developing the learning culture of the school. ERO and the board agree that the school should consolidate improvements in the learning culture by continuing to access school-wide professional learning for teachers, aimed at embedding good teaching practice and increasing student ownership of learning.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

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

The Focus Of The Review

Student Achievement Overall

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

Achievement data have been collated for several years using Progressive Achievement (PAT) tests in reading comprehension, reading vocabulary and mathematics. These data are well analysed, including analysis of ethnic and gender groups and the progress of cohorts of students over time. In 2009, the school has also assessed students using the Global Strategies Stages (GloSS) test and the Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning (AsTTle) test on finding information. The data obtained from these standardised assessment tools provide a good basis for teachers to make informed decisions in planning classroom programmes and for the board to set targets for improved student performance.

Many students in the school, including Māori students, are achieving at or above their chronological age in reading and mathematics. The principal has put programmes in place to improve the performance of cohorts of students who are not achieving quite as well as others, and in 2009 the board has set a target to improve the percentage of students achieving at or above expectations in mathematics from 72% to 88%.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of RidgeView School was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and selfreview information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at RidgeView School.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus area for the review:

- developing a learning culture.

ERO's findings in these areas are set out below.

Developing a learning culture

Background

The new principal and staff have worked to develop a school culture with a focus on learning rather than on behaviour management. Teachers have been encouraged to use student achievement data to plan and teach programmes that cater for identified student needs, and to use strategies that promote student ownership of their own learning. New opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills and to take part in a wider range of co-curricular activities have been introduced.

Teachers at the school have been involved in a Ministry of Education Health and Well-Being contract, which is soon to finish. In 2009 they have embarked upon an Assessment for Learning professional learning contract with a focus on writing. The school engaged a contractor to deliver the first year of the Numeracy Project professional development in 2005 and resources to support this were purchased. However, the training was not completed, and the programme has not been consistently delivered in recent years. In 2009, all students have been assessed in numeracy and teachers are using these data to make decisions about the teaching of numeracy. The board is particularly interested in promoting developments in the area of numeracy and in the development of a sustainable organisational culture.

Student progress and achievement

Student achievement, based on the use of standardised assessment tools, is reported above. Results show that the majority of students are achieving at or above expected levels in reading and mathematics. The progress of individual students is monitored and data obtained are used by the principal and board to set targets for improved achievement. Analysed information is also used to address the specific needs of those children at risk of not achieving. Increased opportunities have also been made available for students to achieve in co-curricular areas.

Areas of good performance

Thoughtful considered leadership. The principal has a depth of knowledge about good teaching practice and developing a culture of learning. She has displayed a thoughtful and measured approach to school development by:

- · being responsive to the school's current ways of operating;
- · working on many fronts simultaneously, including strategic planning, communicating through school newsletters, and modelling respectful and supportive ways of operating;
- · aligning management and teacher professional goals with school development goals;
- · finding ways to build partnerships with the community; and

- keeping a consistent focus on learning rather than on behaviour management.

The principal is ably supported by the deputy principal in the implementation of a planned and responsive approach to the development of a learning culture.

Focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school has a strong focus on improving teacher knowledge and practice in order to improve student outcomes. This is being achieved through:

- professional learning opportunities for teachers;
- detailed feedback given to teachers from lesson observations as part of the performance management programme;
- school-wide analysis of achievement data;
- an emphasis on using data to inform planning; and
- teachers talking about what good teaching looks like in practice.

This focus is leading to improved teacher knowledge of good practice.

Extending learning opportunities. Staff have made changes to programmes and introduced further opportunities for students to achieve. These developments have included:

- ensuring that all essential learning areas in the curriculum are covered;
- providing extra opportunities for students to compete in interschool competitions and to take part in activities such as chess lessons and future problem solving;
- forming a student leadership group in which students of all ages have the chance to participate and to be consulted about school operations;
- introducing cross-grouping in numeracy to create more focused learning opportunities in smaller groups; and
- making changes to daily and weekly timetables so that there is more focused teaching throughout the day.

These developments have resulted in students having more involvement in their learning and contribute to a good overall level of student engagement in learning.

Collaboration and consultation. Members of the school community all have the opportunity to contribute to improving outcomes for students. This collaboration is facilitated by:

- · whole-staff discussion and development of programmes;
- · effective use of communication channels, including principal reports to the board and school newsletters to parents;
- · a collaborative approach to consultation with the Māori community;
- · consulting with students, including the use of a communication box, to address their concerns;
- · ongoing review and evaluation of the school's strategic plan; and
- · introducing a restorative approach to behaviour management.

These efforts are developing a shared ownership in the change of culture.

Introduction of formative assessment practices. Teachers are progressively introducing and consolidating the use of good teaching practices. High quality teaching was observed in some classes. In these classes, ERO observed good examples of formative assessment practices including:

- · use of learning intentions and success criteria so that students understand what they are learning and know if they have been successful;
- · differentiated planning for groups of students, based on needs identified through assessment;
- · good questioning by teachers to encourage deeper thinking by students;
- · direct acts of teaching to individuals and small groups;
- · use of materials and discussion of strategies in the teaching of numeracy; and
- · students reflecting on their learning.

The teaching practices observed in these classrooms are resulting in more focused teaching to meet identified student needs, and in students becoming more reflective about how they learn.

Areas for improvement

Developing teaching strategies. The school should continue to work towards making the high quality practices observed in some classes more widespread and consolidated. This can be facilitated by:

- · looking for further opportunities to share best practice;
- · further implementing formative assessment practices in reading, writing and numeracy;

- · ensuring that data are used effectively to plan and teach lessons to groups of students with identified needs or gaps in their learning;
- · developing teacher expertise in giving feedback to students;
- · encouraging students to have more input in forming their own success criteria; and
- · strengthening teachers' personal reflection on the effectiveness of their teaching.

Current teacher professional development as part of the Assessment for Learning contract should serve to enhance progress in this area. Improvements should result in lifting student achievement and in students having more ownership of their own learning.

Consolidating the learning culture. The school has made significant progress in establishing a learning culture. To develop and consolidate this process the school should:

- · embed expectations by developing explicit indicators of what they look like in practice;
- · continue to develop a shared understanding of the learning culture amongst all members of the school community;
- · continue to develop and refine student skills in managing behaviour and relationships;
- · consider making more use of restorative practices; and
- · continue current work on incorporating key competencies into the school curriculum.

Strengthening community support. The principal and board have endeavoured to engage the community in changing the learning culture to improve outcomes for students. While there are parents and whānau who support this shift, it is important to continue this process so that all parents can support the change for the benefit of their children's achievement. This should also serve to develop the sustainability of the school culture when there are future staff changes.

Areas Of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of RidgeView School ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

Success for Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the extent to which the school was familiar with the Māori Education Strategy - Ka Hikitia: Managing for Success and progress made since the last review in promoting success at school for Māori students. Approximately 20% of the students at the school identify as Māori.

The school reports it has discussed the document but not yet made changes in the light of it.

Areas of progress

Whole-school approach to te reo Māori me ōna tikanga. Since 2008, a Māori liaison person has begun to work with all teachers and students as a large group to provide a collective sense of learning and understanding of things Māori and to increase knowledge of te reo Māori. This includes whole-school kapa haka and waiata lessons and a collaborative venture to create an interesting foyer display of local history and artefacts. The board and management team is also supported by a Māori liaison person who advises and supports the school from a Māori perspective.

Monitoring student achievement. The school has improved the analysis of achievement data for Māori students so that the principal and trustees can monitor progress and have the information needed to determine whether support or extension programmes are needed. Literacy and numeracy reports show that the achievement of Māori students on standardised tests is equivalent to that of their non-Māori peers.

Engaging with the Māori community. The board has strengthened its processes for consultation with the parents and whānau of Māori students. This engagement is facilitated by Māori liaison persons. The principal reports on the achievements of Māori children at hui, and opportunities are provided for parents and whānau to discuss possible programmes that reflect Māori perspectives.

Areas for further improvement

Self review. Board policies document responsibility for fulfilling the intent of the Treaty of Waitangi, but school practices and programmes do not fully reflect this intent. The principal has identified the need for continued programme and teacher development to ensure that students experience Māori perspectives in their curriculum and have opportunities to grow in their appreciation and understanding of te reo and tikanga Māori.

It would be useful for trustees and staff to continue to strengthen engagement with whānau to support and improve outcomes for Māori students. The Māori Education Strategy Ka Hikitia: Managing for Success provides a useful tool to assist self review of policies and practices aimed at fully developing the potential of Māori students.

The Achievement of Pacific Students: Progress

In this review ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of its Pacific students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement.

Six students in the school identify as Pacific, and the small number of Pacific students does not enable accurate conclusions to be drawn about the Pacific group against nationally normed assessment information. However, the school appropriately monitors the achievement of Pacific students at an individual level and provides programmes to support their needs. Some Pacific students have received extra learning support and/or extension programmes. Pacific students who were spoken to by ERO during the course of this review reported that they appreciated the increasing range of learning experiences that were being provided for them. They would also like to have more opportunities to share and celebrate their cultures at school.

The Teaching of Reading and Writing in Years 1 and 2

As part of this review ERO looked at how well teachers assess, plan and teach reading and writing to students in Years 1 and 2, and how well the school promotes high levels of student achievement in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2.

Areas of good performance

Data collection. Teachers undertake appropriate assessments of children on their entry to school and when they turn six years old. Teachers generally keep good records of children's progress and achievement in reading and reflect on and evaluate this progress. Teachers are beginning to monitor children's skill development in writing. The assessment data that teachers collect are sufficient to enable them to plan programmes based on children's strengths and needs.

Clarifying the purpose of learning. Teachers clearly display class learning intentions and expectations for learning in reading and writing. Teachers frequently refer to these during lessons and, as a result, students have a good understanding of their learning for that lesson and are beginning to understand what their writing level is. There are some good examples of teachers using effective classroom management strategies that result in environments that are conducive to learning and in which students are willing to take risks in their learning.

Lesson delivery. Teachers have benefited from extensive professional development in literacy in their previous schools. Teachers give clear instructions so children know what is expected, and question and conference with children effectively to support their writing and reading. Reading lessons include smooth transitions as different groups of children move to the teacher for instruction and teachers use a variety of appropriate teaching approaches and engage in deliberate acts of teaching. As a result, literacy lessons are well implemented and children are generally well engaged in their learning.

Area for improvement

Professional learning and development. This year teachers have begun school-wide professional development on assessment in writing. Staff members are in the early stages of establishing school-wide assessment processes in writing and have begun to moderate student writing against asTTle levels. It would be useful for teachers to collaboratively develop school-wide expectations for reading and writing and to make the links between assessment data and programme planning more transparent. Teachers should consider ways to feature and celebrate children's successful writing more in the school environment.

Implementing the New Zealand Curriculum in 2010

Progress to date

In preparing for teaching the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) in 2010 the school has:

- developed teacher understanding of the principles of the NZC;
- aligned school vision and values with those of the NZC;

- · worked on incorporating these values into the school curriculum;
- · looked closely at key competencies and begun planning to incorporate key competencies in school planning for learning areas; and
- · begun consultation with the community.

Next steps

The school has decided that its priorities for preparation over the next three to six months are to:

- · consult more fully with the community;
- · further incorporate key competencies into the school curriculum;
- · look more closely at the learning areas and decide on any changes to be made; and
- · align the school's new strategic plan with the NZC.

Board Assurance On Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of RidgeView 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; and
- 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; and
- attendance.

ERO's investigations did not identify any areas of concern.

Recommendation

ERO and the board agree that the principal, teachers and board should consolidate improvements in the learning culture by continuing to:

- access school-wide professional learning;
- embed good teaching practice;
- increase student ownership of their learning; and
- strengthen community support.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

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

Elizabeth Ellis

Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

23 June 2009

23 June 2009

To the Parents and Community of RidgeView School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on RidgeView School.

Community Page

Ridgeview School caters for Year 1 to 6 students in the small semi-rural community of Paremoremo. Since the 2006 ERO report, the school has undergone significant changes in senior leadership and staffing. A new principal took up her position at the beginning of 2008, and a new deputy principal began in term 4, 2008. The three other teachers at the school have also taken up their positions in 2008 and 2009. While undergoing significant changes in educational direction, the school continues to remain committed to serving the best interests of its students.

Analysed achievement data show that the majority of students achieve at or above their expected age levels in reading and mathematics. Effective self-review processes enable the board to set appropriate achievement targets and to provide additional support for identified students. Teachers have been encouraged to use this data more effectively in planning programmes to meet individual student needs.

Students enjoy the increased opportunities they have to develop their leadership skills and to take part in a wider range of co-curricular activities. They are well engaged in class and are taking increasing responsibility for self management in learning and behaviour.

The new principal and staff have worked to develop a school culture with a focus on learning, rather than on behaviour management. The thoughtful and well-considered leadership of the principal provides a planned and measured response to school development. There is a strong focus on improving teacher knowledge and practice in order to improve student outcomes. The teaching practices observed by ERO in some classrooms are resulting in more focused teaching to meet identified student needs, and in students becoming more reflective about how they learn. The school should continue to work towards making the high quality practices observed in some classes more widespread and consolidated in general practice.

Teachers have made changes to programmes to ensure that all curriculum areas are covered and to provide more planned and directed teaching throughout the day. These efforts, and those made by the school to improve collaboration and consultation with staff, parents, students and the Māori community, are making it possible for all members of the school community to contribute to improving outcomes for students.

Significant progress has been made in developing the learning culture of the school. ERO and the board agree that the school should consolidate improvements in the learning culture by continuing to access school-wide professional learning for teachers, aimed at embedding good teaching practice and increasing student ownership of learning.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

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

Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

Elizabeth Ellis

Area Manager

for Chief Review Officer

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT REVIEWS

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the Government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting is based on three review strands.

- School Specific Priorities - the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- Areas of National Interest - information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- Compliance with Legal Requirements - assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

[1] Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.