



**Thames South School**  
**Thames**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Thames South School

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. 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. The report answers four key questions about the school.

## Findings

### 1 Context

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

Thames South School whakataukī of 'Kia tipu ai enei kakano, hei rakau nui' (may these tender seedlings grow into mighty trees) provides a shared sense of purpose for the school-wide community. Students are offered a number of educational pathways which include te reo Māori/English dual medium- Te Kowhai and Ngā Kāhui Whetu, Māori total immersion-Te Kawenga, Adventure learning and English medium. The school caters for students in Years 1 to 8.

The principles of whānau tangata (family and community), kotahitanga (holistic development), and ngā hononga (responsive relationships) are evident throughout the school and demonstrated by students, staff, parents and the wider school whānau. These principles ensure students benefit from highly effective partnerships, focused on the learning and holistic wellbeing of students and their whānau.

At the time of this ERO review the recently appointed principal had been at the school for three weeks.

Areas for development identified in the 2012 ERO report, include strengthening the presence of the bicultural dimensions in mainstream classrooms, and increasing teachers use of learning strategies and assessment. The special educational pathway programmes continue to be a feature of bicultural practices within the school. All teachers are continuing to progress ways to promote bicultural aspects within their classrooms. The school is reviewing and developing how assessment systems and processes inform teaching and learning strategies for teachers.

### 2 Learning

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

The school makes effective use of student achievement information to make positive changes to learners' progress and achievement.

A significant majority of students are achieving at or above national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers plan learning programmes in partnership with parents and whānau that

address students' learning needs and wellbeing. They continue to have regular professional development that is leading to students increased learning and engagement across the school.

School leaders and teachers use achievement information to report to parents about individual student achievement and progress. Parent teacher interviews, written reports, and regular hui keep parents well informed about their child's learning.

The board receives achievement information that informs their decisions on initiatives that support programmes for specific students learning needs. School leaders recognise the need to further analyse achievement information so that clear school trends and patterns can be identified. This approach is likely to further assist school trustees and leaders to evaluate the overall effectiveness of school-wide programmes.

### **3 Curriculum**

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

The school curriculum is responsive to the students learning needs. It clearly reflects the unique local context of Pare Hauraki and promotes:

- integration of curriculum areas
- authentic opportunities for ako and whanaungatanga
- mana aotūroa and mana reo.

Teachers use a range of teaching and learning strategies and continue to use formative assessment practices that promote, support and extend student learning. They work effectively together with parents, whānau and community to support students to make connections with their local and wider worlds.

Teachers are committed to providing meaningful learning opportunities for students. Good knowledge of their students, parents and whānau assists teachers to plan appropriate learning programmes. There is a commitment to student and whānau wellbeing. This approach leads to strong parent input into the curriculum.

Students have respectful tuakana-teina relationships leading to a strong sense of belonging within the school. They know their roles and responsibilities and play a significant part as members of the local community. Students work collaboratively to support each other in meeting common learning goals.

Students are highly engaged in their learning. They benefit from a wide range of opportunities that develop their identity, social and learning skills.

ERO and school leaders agree that it is timely for the school to evaluate the effectiveness of the current school curriculum.

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

Students are strongly affirmed in their culture, language and identity. Practices and protocols of tangata whenua, particularly kapa haka, waiata, whaikorero and karanga are a natural part of the daily life of the school. Students take pride in sharing their knowledge and understanding of te ao Māori and this is helping to further strengthen connections with parents, whānau and the wider community.

Students, parents and whānau have many opportunities to participate and celebrate cultural, sporting and academic achievements. Teachers, parents and whānau are actively involved in regular te reo Māori classes and other initiatives throughout the school. The school and its community recognise and actively promote Māori ways of being.

## **4 Sustainable Performance**

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

The following features contribute to the school being well placed to improve its performance.

- the board uses student achievement information to inform decisions about school direction and resourcing
- the new principal has strong leadership knowledge and experience
- school leaders make a significant contribution to a positive whānau school culture and teachers, are committed to providing an environment where students are supported to participate and experience success
- the school is highly effective in engaging the community in partnerships for learning and in the life of the school.

### **Areas for review and development:**

School leaders have identified the need to develop and implement effective self-review frameworks and processes. The school should use these frameworks and processes to:

- further build the capabilities of professional leaders to support effective teaching and learning practices across the school
- strengthen the performance management system to ensure best learning outcomes for students.

### **Provision for international students**

The school is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. No international students were enrolled at the time of the ERO review.

### **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**

The curriculum provides students with authentic opportunities to learn about themselves and the local environment. Parents and whānau actively participate in their children's learning and school programmes. Trustees are committed to improving student achievement and positive outcomes for all.

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



Dale Bailey  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern  
Northern Region

3 February 2015

## About the School

Location	Thames	
Ministry of Education profile number	2027	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	169	
Gender composition	Girls 54% Boys 46%	
Ethnic composition	Māori NZ European/Pākehā Other	65% 25% 10%
Special Features	Māori Immersion, Adventure Learning	
Review team on site	November 2014	
Date of this report	3 February 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	February 2012 February 2009 May 2006