



St Peter's College (Palmerston North)
Palmerston North

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

St Peter's College (Palmerston North)

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?

St Peter's College is a state integrated secondary school in Palmerston North catering for students in Years 7 to 13. The roll of 550 students, of which 15% are Māori and 7% Pacific, is drawn from across the city and local area.

The curriculum is strongly underpinned by Catholic gospel values and there is a clear focus on the vision of developing: empowered, self-managing, lifelong learners. The Key Pillars of the vision guide the college's strategic direction and planning.

In 2015, the college began participation in the Ministry of Education's (MoE) Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) programme aimed at building on existing restorative practices. This is being implemented in 2016.

The college is part of an initiative to enhance provision for science. Since mid-2014, it has undertaken an ongoing programme to modernise classroom facilities and strengthen buildings.

The college has recently become part of a Community of Learning Catholic Schools' Cluster which is in the establishment stage.

2 Learning

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

Teachers and leaders at St Peter's College are further strengthening their use of achievement information to improve the effectiveness of their responses to the diverse learning needs of students.

An appropriate range of data is collected to determine achievement levels, consider progress and group students. Norm referenced, standardised data and teacher formative assessment supports the reliability of the information.

Teachers have increased access to data to inform their decisions about teaching and planning. As a result, leaders and teachers now closely monitor and track student achievement and progress. The school uses data to inform a range of programmes and strategies that provide additional support for students' achievement and wellbeing. Useful collaboration between teachers is building capability in using data to address and respond to students' learning needs.

Students experience high levels of success. Overall achievement levels have improved each year since the 2013 ERO review. Most students in Years 7 and 8 achieve at or above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. School data indicates that students in Years 9 and 10 continue to achieve well.

Results for 2015 show that most students achieved well in the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEAs) Levels 1, 2, and 3. Rates of achievement at the college are above those nationally and for similar schools. Virtually all students attained NCEA Level 1 literacy and numeracy requirements. The number of students achieving subject endorsement has improved. School leaders have determined that the next step is to increase the numbers gaining excellence endorsements and University Entrance. Several students gained New Zealand Scholarship awards.

Since 2013 the number of students leaving with Level 2 NCEA or better has increased. Leavers' achievement is similar for all groups, and the college has closed gaps that were previously evident. Māori and Pacific students achieve similar levels to their peers in the college. There is parity of outcomes for male and female students. Retention of students at the college is high.

3 Curriculum

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

The curriculum is effective in promoting learning and supporting students to achieve successful outcomes.

The school's clearly articulated and shared values provide a framework that gives students a broad range and depth of opportunities for participation and success. Students' strengths and interests are responded to effectively. Students can extend their achievement through a range of cultural and sporting activities.

Planned curriculum review started in 2014. The school is considering significant changes and aiming to design a curriculum framework that promotes future-focused, connected, lifelong learners who are supported by relevant pathways through and beyond school.

Teachers know students well and provide positive classroom environments for learning. Where effective practices were observed by ERO, teaching was well matched to students' needs. Considerate, respectful relationships were consistently evident. Students are supportive and inclusive of each other.

The college continues to strengthen the quality of teaching. The development of a philosophy for teaching and learning should establish shared principles for teaching. This should also assist the development of the teaching practices desired by the college and evaluation of their effectiveness.

There is a range of useful opportunities for families, students and teachers to discuss learners' progress and achievement. The Connect to Succeed (C2S) initiative promotes students' academic achievement and engagement in school life. Teachers are coaches and advocates for groups of students. The C2S coach acts as a focal point for building relationships that promote learning success. The programme facilitates valuable communication between home and school.

Students are assisted to select options and courses through well-considered and responsive careers education and advice. Good guidance structures support students and their families to make appropriate decisions. Implementation of the My Learning initiative in 2016 should promote clarity and consistency in relation to the teacher's role in the process.

Regular written reports and conferences provide parents with useful information about their child's learning. Reports for students in Years 7 and 8 show achievement and progress in relation to National Standards. Senior reports give detailed information about academic achievement, and suitably reflect involvement in the wider curriculum.

Students with additional needs are well catered for and supported to successfully integrate into mainstream classes. The college's culture supports students' wellbeing. Good pastoral care systems and initiatives provide a range of information that is appropriately used to inform internal evaluation.

The college responds purposefully to Pacific students' language culture and identity. The Pacifica Plan includes clear, expected outcomes to support students' success. Teachers effectively track, monitor and respond to the learning needs of individuals. The Pacific student group benefits from strong teacher leadership.

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

The college is continuing to increase educational success for Māori students. Their achievement has improved and they can access a wide range of cultural experiences and leadership. They benefit from strong teacher leadership of the Māori student group. Leaders know the students well.

The college's strategic plan makes success for Māori and Pacific students a priority. Actions for improvement have been successfully implemented. The recent development of the school Pou expresses the aspiration for Māori students to experience success and achieve equitable outcomes in a cultural context. Further implementation of the plan should support curriculum development and underpin the evaluation of Māori success.

Continuing to build staff capability to meet the needs of Māori students should support sustainable development and improvement. Ongoing curriculum review should contribute to strengthening the pathway through the school for students' te reo Māori learning.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

St Peter's College is well placed to sustain and continue to improve its performance

Processes and systems to support aspects of self review are established and purposeful. Teachers and leaders gather and distribute student achievement information to identify specific groups of students and plan strategies to improve learning. Teaching as inquiry is well established. It is useful, evidence based and focused on improving teacher practice to lift student outcomes. Inquiries are aligned with college priorities and appraisal.

Teachers and leaders use of review and evaluation needs to be strengthened. More consistent use of internal evaluation to measure the quality and impact of actions should provide better insight into what makes the greatest difference to or limits students' learning, engagement, progress and achievement.

As the college proceeds with its curriculum review and development there are opportunities for senior leaders to continue to build knowledge and capacity for effective internal evaluation and inquiry. Strengthening this practice should extend the college's capacity to sustain successful practice and further improve its performance.

Teacher professional learning is well resourced and reflects the college's strategic goals. Performance management is meaningful, improvement-focused, systematic and evidence based. Appraisal is robust and well monitored. Teachers' Practising Certificate endorsement is supported by a clear process.

Leadership is well structured and distributed across the college. It promotes ongoing curriculum development. Leaders build trust, and effective participation and collaboration.

The board is well informed and works in close partnership with senior leaders. Trustees bring a range of strengths to their roles. They continue to develop understanding of their governance and stewardship roles and responsibilities, and focus on improved outcomes for students.

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. Regular annual review considers the effectiveness of the college's provision and areas to strengthen. At the time of this ERO review, there were 14 international students attending.

The college provides appropriate pastoral support for international students. There is a structure for leadership of international students and clear, well-understood responsibilities among key staff. Homestays are carefully selected and well monitored.

Appropriate assessment practices support allocation of, and involvement in second language education. Clear processes respond to students' individual aspirations and support their academic and social development. Students are well supported to involve themselves in extracurricular activities and integrate into the wider community.

Regular conferencing and communication with international students and their parents supports and responds to needs. Reporting to the board is appropriate and regular.

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.

Some support staff have not had their police check renewed within the last three years. Any person who has unsupervised access to children at the school should be police vetted, and the police vet renewed every three years.

[Education Act 1989 Sections 78C to 78CD].

Conclusion

Students at St Peter's College experience high levels of success through a curriculum that effectively promotes strong values and involvement in a broad range of cultural and sporting activities. The college's culture supports students' wellbeing. The college is further strengthening its systems and processes to sustain and continue to improve its performance.

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



Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

31 May 2016

About the School

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| Location | Palmerston North | |
| Ministry of Education profile number | 204 | |
| School type | Secondary (Years 7 to 13) | |
| School roll | 550 | |
| Number of international students | 14 | |
| Gender composition | Female 56%, Male 44% | |
| Ethnic composition | Māori Pākehā Pacific | 15% 78% 7% |
| Special features | Special Character Catholic | |
| Review team on site | March 2016 | |
| Date of this report | 31 May 2016 | |
| Most recent ERO report(s) | Education Review Education Review Education Review | May 2013 December 2009 November 2006 |