

ERO External Evaluation

Shotover Primary School, Queenstown

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for those students who need it. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

School Context

Shotover Primary School, on the outskirts of Queenstown, opened in 2015 with 88 students from Years 1 to 4. In 2016 students from Years 5 to 7 enrolled and in 2017 the first Year 8 students began. The new school is within a new housing development and now has 434 students. With the rapidly growing roll there have been ongoing staffing additions. This means ongoing changes in teaching teams, and adaptations to systems to ensure these retain usefulness and relevance with the growing roll.

The school was specifically designed to support learning and teaching in an open-plan learning environment. A building programme will continue for the next few years as the student roll is projected to grow.

The school states that its vision is 'To create a climate of possibilities'. The expected outcomes are for students to be competent, self-managing, collaborative, curious learners who are resilient and have a desire for ongoing learning. The 2016 strategic goals are to:

- build learning power
- forge a place to stand tall, *Tutangata Turangawaewae*
- build an awareness in students of self - Like me and respect you
- create a school at the heart of the community.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board, school-wide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- achievement in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to the National Standards
- progress in relation to school targets
- wellbeing through student voice.

Students come from a wide range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Since the New School Assurance Review in 2016, the school has increased its roll five-fold. The founding principal was appointed in 2014. A stable board governs the school. The community has provided significant funds for ongoing school development.

The school belongs to the Wakatipu Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – valued outcomes for students

1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

The school is achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for most students.

Most students achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. There is disparity for Māori students in reading and mathematics and for boys in writing.

There are systems and structures in place to identify students who need extra support to succeed. Teachers and leaders have regular meetings to discuss the progress of these students. This means their progress is closely monitored.

1.2 How effectively does this school respond to those Māori and other students whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The achievement data shows the school has had limited success in accelerating the progress of a group of Māori students who need extra support to succeed. The school is able to show that over 2017 acceleration for some of the other students has been achieved.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence?

The school leaders have effectively built a culture of ongoing improvement to pursue the school's vision, goals and targets for equity and excellence. Coaching of mentors (teachers) is an important aspect of professional learning to ensure a consistent approach to teaching in the open-plan learning environments (habitats). The leaders are effectively supporting mentors to take on leadership roles and to continually be challenged as learners and teachers. The way they go about this is strategic, deliberate and in keeping with the school's shared beliefs and principles. There is an unrelenting focus on achieving the valued outcomes for students. The school's beliefs, principles and practices clearly define how the vision should be implemented. These underpin all that happens at this school.

Organisational structures, processes and practices enable and sustain collaborative learning and decision making. These systems support:

- the identification and close monitoring of students with additional needs
- mentors (teachers) to work collaboratively within a team and to effectively teach in the open-plan learning environment
- a robust appraisal process that leads to improved practices
- the development of the useful strategic and annual plans with a focus on fully establishing the school within the local community.

A broad, localised curriculum, learning environments and teaching approaches strongly support students to become self-managing and engaged learners. Most curriculum areas are integrated to provide authentic contexts for learning. Teachers in each habitat (learning area) are given the

freedom to establish the teaching approaches they will use. These approaches are developed in line with current research and underpinned by the school's beliefs about conditions that best support learning.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence?

A Māori dimension should be included in all school documentation to guide school practice for integrating New Zealand's bicultural heritage. Guidelines need to ensure that te reo and tikanga Māori are well integrated into all curriculum areas and the wider life of the school.

Review processes need to be formalised to ensure robust evaluation of all aspects of school operations over time. Investigations need to ultimately refer back to the school's valued outcomes for students.

Leaders need to more clearly show rates of progress in school-wide achievement to inform reviews of effectiveness. A termly review, at board level, of progress in achievement for priority learners, particularly Māori students and boys whose achievement needs acceleration, would support teaching teams in their review of programmes and practices.

The leaders have identified and ERO agrees:

- that with future changes to teaching staff and the further addition of teachers, they need to continue to work on developing consistency in teaching expectations and practice
- that students need to know more about their learning and how well they are achieving.

3 Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board 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
- finance
- 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 and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- leadership that provides strategic direction
- well-developed structures and systems that support consistency of direction and efficient school operation
- a broad and localised curriculum that supports students to be motivated and self-managing.

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, development priorities are in:

- increasing cultural responsiveness across all areas
- strengthening evaluation practices to ensure a rigorous process is implemented.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

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



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Te Waipounamu - Southern Region

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About the school

Location	Queenstown
Ministry of Education profile number	586
School type	Full primary (Years 1-8)
School roll	434
Gender composition	Boys: 55% Girls: 45%
Ethnic composition	Māori: 10% Pākehā: 64% Pacific: 3% Other: 23%
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	December 2017
Date of this report	19 February 2018
Most recent ERO report	New School Assurance Review: February 2016