

Grovetown School Education Review

- 1 Context
- 2 Learning
- 3 Curriculum
- 4 Sustainable Performance

About the School

Location	Blenheim	
Ministry of Education profile number	2851	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
Decile [1]	7	
School roll	45	
Gender composition	Male 28 Female 17	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	42
	Māori	1
	Chilean	1
	Dutch	1
Review team on site	November 2011	
Date of this report	20 February 2012	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	January 2009
	Education Review	April 2006
	Education Review	May 2003

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. 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.

[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 integrated 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.

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.

1 Context

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

Grovetown is a two-classroom, semi-rural school with a welcoming and inclusive culture. A high level of family involvement is apparent. Teachers know the students and their parents well and interactions are friendly and respectful. The school has a positive reporting history with ERO. A number of new trustees and two new teachers have joined the school this year. The board's vision of a community of lifelong learners who make a difference, underpins all areas of operation. The board, staff and parents have a shared commitment to school improvement.

2 Learning

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

Students speak confidently and enthusiastically about their learning and progress. They are often involved in goal setting and in discussing their next steps with teachers and peers. Students actively engage with activities showing high levels of interest and motivation. Teachers respect their ideas and seek their opinions to enhance the programme and many other aspects of school life.

Assessment practices need to be reviewed. Most students are achieving at the National Standard for reading, but writing and mathematics data are yet to be reliably referenced to the Standards. Better opportunities for teachers to discuss and moderate assessments would enhance overall teacher judgements about progress and achievement in relation to the Standards in these learning areas.

Students with special needs are well supported. Teachers and teacher aides work together to provide extra assistance, especially for children who are not meeting the level expected for their age and year level in reading and numeracy. As teachers develop opportunities for discussions about the achievement of specific groups of students, including high achievers, they are likely to gain additional information to help them adapt their teaching to cater for identified needs.

Parents receive some useful information about their child's progress and achievement. Students' strengths, next steps and how parents can help at home are included. Although parents receive two reports each year, only one has included information about children's progress and achievement in relation to the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers acknowledge they have yet to review the reporting process to ensure parents receive this information twice each year.

How well does the school promote Māori student success and success as Māori?

Few Māori students have attended Grovetown School over the past years. The school reports that these students make satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy. Key features that promote Māori student success are regular monitoring of individual students and developing positive relationships with students and their families.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning. Considerable thought has been given to developing the Grovetown School Curriculum through a high level of consultation with students, parents and staff. Curriculum documentation is well presented, easy to follow and gives clear guidance for programme planning, teaching and assessment. It is well aligned to the school's vision and all aspects of The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC).

The curriculum is designed to be responsive to the current needs and interests of students, and to local and international events. Through the programme, teachers promote core values such as responsibility, hauora, respect and enthusiasm and help students develop specific skills and attitudes linked to the key competencies in NZC. When deciding the teaching context and approach, emphasis is given to making learning activities relevant, challenging and meaningful for students.

Classrooms are learning focused. Teachers use a range of effective strategies to encourage thinking and problem solving. Students enjoy working together in small groups and the older ones willingly help younger members of the class. The new approach to homework also engages students and their families in authentic and worthwhile learning challenges.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The board is developing an effective governance model. The school's vision, values and goals are clearly articulated and well understood. Trustees are working with a consultant to develop the strategic plan and prepare useful annual plans to guide regular review of progress made towards the board's goals and annual achievement targets. Board members, including the principal, enjoy positive working relationships and are committed to improving outcomes for students.

Staff appraisal processes have been strengthened since the 2009 ERO review. The board employs a consultant to appraise the principal. A key feature is the constructive feedback about strengths and next steps. Provision is made for observation of teaching practice through guiding documents. It is agreed that further thought needs to be given to ensuring this aspect is formalised for all teachers, including the principal, as part of the appraisal process as the observations to date have been informal.

Well-considered guidelines for self review are developed. The main emphasis has been given to reviewing the strategic plan and developing the school's curriculum. As there are new trustees and staff it is now timely to gain shared understandings about the review process as outlined in school documents. This is likely to support good implementation of planned, in-depth reviews of all aspects of the school's operation over time.

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
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

School reports to parents go out at the end of terms one and three. As yet, parents have only received information about their child's progress and achievement in relation to the National Standards once. In order to meet requirements:

- the school board, with the principal and teaching staff must:
 - report in writing to parents on progress and achievement in relation to National Standards at least twice a year
 - use National Standards to report strengths, areas for improvement and actions for lifting achievement.
- [NAG 2A (a), (b)]

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

20 February 2012