

**Flaxmere College
Hastings**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Flaxmere College

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?

Flaxmere College, Te Kareti o Paharakeke, provides a whānau learning environment for 360 students in Years 7 to 13. Māori students comprise 78% of the roll and Pacific students 18%. Since the 2012 ERO review a Service Academy has been established and a Teen Parent Unit was opened in 2014.

The college is highly inclusive of students, whānau, kopu tangata and the wider community. Whanaungatanga, the core charter value, provides a strong foundation for sustaining and enhancing student inclusion, learning and development.

Te ao Māori and celebration of Pacific language and customs permeate the college environment and show how the cultures of students and the community are valued. Ako underpins affirming, reciprocal relationships between teachers, students, their peers and the wider community.

The motto, 'Success is the Only Option', articulates the collective school and community desire for students' purposeful learning through a responsive curriculum.

Students have developed shared aspirations and competencies to guide their success. FLAX stands for 'focus on learning, lead by example, act with respect and excel'. Student leadership contributes to the positive culture of the school. Sporting, cultural and academic leaders model pride in their identity and promote the college motto and values.

2 Learning

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

Improving students' educational success is at the heart of school decision-making. Leaders and teachers continue to strengthen their effectiveness in using assessment information to raise achievement levels.

Data is used to identify students needing support to meet the National Standards and curriculum level expectations. The 2014 and 2015 data shows that many students in Years 7 to 10 are working towards these. All stakeholders agree greater acceleration of achievement for these students in literacy and mathematics is necessary to allow choice in pathways as students move through the school.

To strengthen the quality of data the school has planned to:

- increase moderation of assessment at Years 7 and 8 for assisting reliability of National Standards judgements
- extend the range of tools used for assessment of Years 7 to 10 mathematics.

ERO's evaluation supports the school's self identified need to strengthen teachers' use of data to plan for individual needs and accelerate progress.

Achievement in the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEAs), Levels 1 and 2 improved in 2014. At Level 1, overall performance was above the national results. At Level 2, performance was similar. Leaders recognise that working to raise achievement at Level 3 and University Entrance, and increasing the numbers of students attaining endorsements to lift the quality of achievement, is necessary. The increasing retention of students in the senior school is likely to assist with improving numbers attaining leaver qualifications.

Annual charter targets and actions have been developed to support school priorities and improved achievement. Strengthening target setting to support deeper analysis of assessment information to identify what promoted or hindered student progress, is needed.

Families and whānau are well supported by regular information about the school's curriculum and student achievement. Teachers' comments in written reports highlight student learning, progress and achievement. Written reports for students in Years 7 and 8 should be reviewed to ensure they are clear for parents and support their understanding of achievement in relation to the National Standards.

Whānau conferencing was introduced in 2014 as an additional strategy for promoting student success. The timing of the conferences during the year is resulting in high levels of whānau participation. Students are increasingly taking the lead. Identifying learning goals and discussing these with whānau is helping to promote meaningful partnerships for fostering students' educational success.

Student mentoring supports individual understanding of achievement levels and promotes connections with, and inclusion in, school life. Close relationships with adult mentors encourage students to take responsibility and monitor their pathways.

3 Curriculum

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

The Flaxmere College curriculum is increasingly responsive in promoting and supporting student learning.

Te ao Māori and the uniqueness of Pacific cultures are present in all aspects of the vision, values and curriculum experiences. The college whakatauki: 'Tungia te ururua kia tupu, whākaritorito te tupu o te harakeke - Relinquish whatever hinders progress, to ensure success', is evident in ongoing changes to the curriculum. Developments place student success at the centre to all facets of decision-making.

Students experience meaningful and relevant learning opportunities linked to individual pathways. Credits gained contribute to NCEA qualifications. Students experience success across a range of

subject areas. Community partnerships developed with local industries, tertiary providers and Ngāti Kahungunu support students' learning and future pathways.

Teachers have comprehensive guidelines for teaching and learning. These have been collaboratively developed and are understood as the Flaxmere Way. School leaders implement performance management processes purposefully to build consistency of effective teaching practice across the school.

Professional learning groups support teachers to share strategies that improve the achievement of targeted learners. Teachers' reflections on practice are helping them to consider how well their strategies accelerate achievement.

Pastoral-care systems are effectively used to respond to individual student needs and foster wellbeing. Teachers, students and whānau work together to manage challenges and support student involvement at school.

Students with special education needs receive appropriate support and intervention. Staff and external agencies collaborate to address specific needs and foster achievement.

Improving student attendance is a key priority. Clear tracking and monitoring processes are in place. To support these, a target should be set to raise attendance.

Community engagement has been effectively encouraged. Partnerships have been developed with families/whānau through the kaumatua and kuia advisory group, Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated and Pacific community leaders. School leaders and trustees respond well to information gathered through consultation. Partnerships provide a range of views to bring to decision-making.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Flaxmere College is well placed to sustain and continue to improve its performance.

The principal leads effectively and maintains the focus on improving outcomes for students, the school and community. She is building sustainable curriculum practices. Senior leaders support achievement of the school vision. They facilitate improved practices to progress the strategic and annual priorities.

Performance management processes are comprehensive. Teachers receive specific feedback, identifying strengths and strategies to develop. Involvement in literacy professional learning and development has contributed to teachers' awareness and inclusion of literacy in their daily practice.

Self review informs ongoing improvement. Systems and practices support senior leaders to effectively plan, monitor and reflect on student outcomes. Use of research and indicators of best practice enable school personnel to compare their current practice and make informed changes. Building the review practice of curriculum leaders across the school should enable departments to more fully evaluate their performance in promoting students' educational success.

Trustees are committed to inclusive practices and improving student success. The charter, strategic and annual plans focus on key priorities. Trustees use reports on progress and outcomes to inform their decisions.

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 Flaxmere College curriculum is contributing to increased student retention and educational success. Students experience a highly inclusive environment that is responsive to their academic, social and cultural aspirations. The college is effectively led and governed to promote ongoing improvement and achievement of strategic priorities.

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



Joyce Gebbie
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

3 June 2015

About the School

Location	Hastings	
Ministry of Education profile number	134	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
School roll	360	
Gender composition	Female 52%, Male 48%	
Ethnic composition	Māori Pacific NZ European/Pākehā	78% 18% 4%
Special Features	Kowhai Satellite School Teen Parent Unit Service Academy	
Review team on site	March 2015	
Date of this report	3 June 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	May 2012 November 2010 June 2008