

Silverstream School Education Review

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1 Context

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

Silverstream School is a Years 1 to 6 primary school in Silverstream, Upper Hutt.

For the past two years the school has been involved, with a group of local schools, in a professional learning initiative for teachers, students and their families known as a Learning and Change Network. Through this work the school has identified a vision for improved teaching and learning that is future-focused, empowers students and based on strong partnerships with families. Work has begun to review and redevelop the school's curriculum in line with these priorities and The New Zealand Curriculum.

In 2012 two deputy principals were appointed. The school's organisational structure changed in 2013, with three teaching teams becoming two, Ako Iti and Ako Nui.

The school is undergoing a significant building project to redevelop the administration area, staffroom and resource rooms. Staff are managing the changes well and classroom programmes have not been disrupted.

The school has a positive reporting history with ERO and has responded well to recommendations in the December 2011 ERO report.

2 Learning

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

Teachers and leaders use student achievement information well to:

- track and monitor student progress
- identify students who require additional support or extension
- group students for instruction
- clearly report to parents and whānau about their children's achievement and progress
- report to the board about achievement in relation to the National Standards.

Some teachers use assessment information well to decide about learning programmes and target their teaching practice. However, this is an area that ERO and leaders agree requires continued focus to better promote learning.

The school's reported achievement information shows that most students achieve at and above in relation to the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has appropriately identified writing as a priority area for development.

Most Māori students achieve at and above in relation to the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Recent developments include review of assessment tools, established processes for judgements against National Standards in mathematics and the development of writing assessment criteria. Senior leaders have introduced an appropriate framework for teachers to inquire into their practice. They provide a good level of guidance to middle managers and teachers, including regular collaborative discussion about target students.

In order to strengthen the extent to which assessment information is used effectively to promote accelerated progress, teachers need to:

- improve how they analyse assessment information to identify students' specific next learning steps and targeted teaching strategies
- strengthen their understanding of the teacher-inquiry process and use data to evaluate the impact of their teaching
- continue to engage in moderation processes and further develop curriculum knowledge

required for in-depth assessment analysis and robust overall teacher judgements.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum effectively promotes student learning. Leaders, trustees and teachers have a clear vision for curriculum development to enhance learner outcomes and prepare students for 21st century learning.

Leaders and trustees have begun a consultative process of reviewing the curriculum to better reflect key priorities. ERO affirms this development as it should provide a clear direction and cohesive framework, including documented expectations for teaching, planning and assessment. Through this review there is an opportunity to strengthen the extent to which the curriculum promotes students' language, culture and identity, particularly for Māori.

ERO observed teaching and learning in most classrooms and found:

- students well engaged in their learning activities
- relationships, between students and with adults, were generally positive and respectful
- digital technology used well in some classes to support learning and provide students with choices about how they learn.

There is a deliberate, planned approach to improving the use of digital technology to support effective learning across the school.

Leaders and ERO agree that teachers need to strengthen teaching strategies that support students to have increased ownership of their learning. This should include ways to help students better understand their specific next learning steps. The school's priority focus of empowering learners is appropriate and is likely to promote increased and deeper student engagement in learning.

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

Recent actions taken by the school to raise the profile of te ao Māori and promote success for Maori students include:

- developing links with the local marae
- consultation and social events to improve the involvement of whānau in the school
- employment of a kapa haka tutor
- development of a Māori language resource for teachers.

These initiatives provide a positive platform to further promote success for Māori learners. Teachers, leaders and trustees should work with whānau to further explore what success as Māori means at Silverstream School and develop plans to achieve desired outcomes. This should include:

- teachers' continued engagement in professional development to increase their knowledge, confidence and capability to effectively integrate te ao Māori through the curriculum and environment
- improved opportunities for students to experience a high quality, progressive te reo Māori programme, including review and development of the Māori language progression resource.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The experienced principal promotes a shared leadership model and leads a strong, improvement-focused leadership team who have a clear vision for school direction.

Systems and processes for change and improvement, including teachers' appraisal, are well considered and clearly developed. Leaders have indicated the need to continue to differentiate the level of support provided to staff to achieve the school vision.

The board is made up of new and experienced trustees who demonstrate commitment to school improvement. They are well informed about student achievement and school operations. Strategic planning is well considered and provides a clear direction for the school.

Strong engagement with parents, families and the community is a feature of the school. Parents and whānau are informed, consulted and involved in school life. Teachers and leaders are now focused on strengthening partnerships with families to support students' learning. ERO affirms this direction and encourages teachers and leaders to explore how the reciprocal nature of these partnerships can be developed further.

A next step to enhance school improvement is for evaluative inquiry to be strengthened at teacher, leadership and board levels. This includes further developing the collection and reporting of information to evaluate the impact of strategies and initiatives and inform decision-making.

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 school's curriculum promotes positive outcomes for students. Leaders have developed a clear vision for teaching and learning and they are well supported by a board committed to improvement. A range of new initiatives is likely to enhance achievement and engagement.

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

Joyce Gebbie
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Central Region

12 November 2014

School Statistics

Location	Silverstream	
Ministry of Education profile number	2990	
School type	Contributing Primary (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	487	
Gender composition	Boys 52%, Girls 48%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	14%
	NZ European/Pākehā	74%
	Asian	7%
	Pacific	3%
	Other ethnic groups	2%
Review team on site	September 2014	
Date of this report	12 November 2014	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	December 2011
	Education Review	December 2008
	Education Review	February 2006