



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Gulf Harbour School
Gulf Harbour, Whangaparaoa

Draft

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

Gulf Harbour School

1 Context

Gulf Harbour School, located on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula is an inclusive, welcoming school. Children experience an innovative approach to learning which has been developed over a number of years. They are confident, articulate learners. They learn through meaningful experiences that promote independence, collaborative skills and dispositions. Well considered approaches have led to increased productive partnerships with whānau Māori. The recently elected board includes a good balance of new and experienced trustees. Since the 2013 ERO review the school has experienced some change in the leadership team. This has included the appointment of two new deputy principals. The foundational principal is leaving and a new principal is to be appointed by the middle of 2017.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are the values of Bravery/*Toa*, Resilience/*Manahau*, Responsibility/*Kawenga* and Fun/*Koa*. Valued outcomes in this school community focus on learners:

- being assured in their purpose as independent, creative thinkers
- confidently having a voice to influence their learning
- knowing that they can make a difference.

The school's achievement information shows that most children achieve at or above the National Standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the past two to three years there has been little change in the percentages of children achieving National Standards. Māori student achievement in literacy shows a positive upward trend over the past three years. School leaders are aware of the need to accelerate the achievement of Māori children in mathematics.

Achievement data over the past two years show that the small number of Pacific children achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics. Asian children achieve well in reading and mathematics. School data also shows that girls and boys achievement in reading and mathematics is comparable.

Achievement information over the past three years indicates that most Year 8 children leave Gulf Harbour School achieving at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2015 all Year 8 children achieved at or above in reading.

School targets have consistently focused on increasing student achievement. An agreed next step is for the school to review charter targets to ensure they optimise the level of challenge for leaders and trustees. This could assist the school to bring about increased improvement for all children, especially those who need to make accelerated progress.

The school belongs to the Whangaparaoa Community of Learning which has a number of local schools working together to improve educational opportunity for students on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula.

Since ERO's 2013 evaluation the school has implemented a range of new initiatives focused on accelerating the achievement of all children. These initiatives include:

- further developing teaching and learning strategies to accelerate learning progress
- moderating writing with local schools to build consistency of judgements
- developing key learner competencies aligned to the school's curriculum.

These initiatives are at the early stages of implementation.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school is increasing its effectiveness in responding to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration. Professional development is clearly focused on strengthening teachers' and leaders' curriculum knowledge and assessment practices. Leaders and teachers are committed to extending successful acceleration strategies to reach all children who need to make accelerated progress. School leaders are focused on ensuring that the school's processes for moderation are fully understood and implemented so teacher judgements are more consistent.

Teachers have benefited from external professional development focused on strengthening their analysis and use of achievement information. They collaboratively plan classroom programmes that are based on children's strengths as well as their learning needs. Children requiring additional support participate in appropriate programmes and interventions to build their learning capability.

Leaders are beginning to build collective staff responsibility for accelerating student progress and achievement with a deliberate emphasis on promoting strategies to accelerate progress. Key strategies include increasing the learning centred relationships with parents and whānau, effective questioning and strengthening teachers' professional learning conversations to improve practice.

School leaders are improving systems and processes to scrutinise achievement information and identify students who are at risk of poor educational outcomes. Once identified, the progress of these children is closely monitored. Teachers work in partnership with children, whānau and families when setting individual learning goals.

Since ERO's 2013 review the school has increased its links with whānau Māori and strengthened teachers' bicultural competencies. These have been intentional strategies to further support Māori student success. Importantly, the school's increasing recognition of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori creates an environment that supports Māori children to succeed as Māori. To further extend these positive developments, school leaders could now work with whānau to develop a strategic plan to provide a more coordinated approach to raising success for Māori children. This planning should specify achievement targets for all Māori children needing to make accelerated progress and identify whānau and student aspirations for success as Māori.

Senior leaders and teachers have implemented new initiatives focused on improving outcomes for students. These initiatives include:

- refining reports to parents in relation to National Standards
- six weekly progress meetings to monitor students needing to make accelerated progress
- deepening teaching as inquiry approaches to further develop teacher knowledge and professional expertise.

Older students are becoming increasingly involved in guiding and monitoring their own learning. Teachers use a range of strategies to encourage students' understanding and ownership of their learning goals, progress and achievement. Extending these good practices to further develop student ownership of learning at all levels is an area of ongoing development in the school.

Leaders and trustees recognise that the key next steps to raise the achievement of children whose learning needs to be accelerated are to:

- refine school-wide targets to more clearly focus on achieving equity for all children
- develop greater coherence and clarity between improvement plans and actions to enable and sustain improvement
- evaluate whether decisions are improving outcomes for children.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?

The school's vision, values and organisational processes support the curriculum and help to promote equity and excellence. There is a warm and inclusive culture for children, staff, whānau and families. School conditions to support children's learning and nurture their wellbeing are effective.

The school's integrated curriculum supports children to become self-managing, confident learners. It provides children with very good opportunities to learn about and experience innovation and real world investigation using collaborative learning approaches. Children take good advantage of the various co-curricular opportunities in sports, culture and leadership. New entrant children experience a developmental approach to learning that supports them to build positive relationships with teachers and each other.

School leaders recognise that it is now timely to review the school curriculum. The school has an appropriate focus on developing a more connected, culturally responsive curriculum that reflects the school community and further promotes children's ownership of learning. It could be helpful to use the principles of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and access external expertise to support and guide the review.

The board is comprised of new and experienced trustees. They bring complementary skills and expertise to their roles. Trustees scrutinise achievement information and resources are allocated strategically to meet children's and staff learning needs. Trustees have used the New Zealand School Trustees' Association tool *Hautū: Māori Cultural Responsiveness Self Review tool for Board of Trustees*, to build their culturally responsive understandings and make informed decisions about Māori student success.

Senior leaders recognise the value of building a culture of inquiry to improve teachers' professional capability and create positive changes for children. Increasing teacher's evaluative thinking could strengthen the new teaching as inquiry approach and further develop effective practice for accelerating learning. Some teachers' performance appraisals are well-linked to the new *Practising Teacher Criteria* (PTCs). Senior leaders could now consider aligning the appraisal evidence more closely to the PTCs and access external support to further develop a more robust appraisal system.

There are positive, learning centred relationships between home and school. Parents value the proactive communication they have with their child's teacher and with the school generally. The

school provides a variety of opportunities for whānau and families to engage in curriculum activities to support children's learning.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- need approaches that effectively meet the needs of each child
- need to ensure the school is well placed to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it.

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance. The leadership team foster a school culture of relational trust where staff collaborate and are open to making changes to improve outcomes for children.

School leaders and trustees agree that the next steps in school development include:

- reviewing and refreshing the Gulf Harbour Curriculum and expectations for teaching and learning, as part of building greater coherence and clarity across Years 1 to 8
- strengthening the documentation aligned the school-wide approach to embed and help sustain initiatives to enhance equity and excellence for all children
- building teachers' capability to accelerate progress and increase student ownership of their learning.

To ensure that the new initiatives are consolidated, school leaders and trustees should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of new practices and the impact they have on accelerating student progress and teacher development.

Action: The board, principal and teachers should participate in an internal evaluation workshop. They should use this workshop, the *Internal Evaluation: Good Practice* exemplars and the *School Evaluation Indicators* to address the findings of this evaluation and develop more targeted planning that includes a significant focus on building teacher capability to accelerate learning and achievement.

As part of this review ERO will continue to monitor the school's planning and the progress the school makes.

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

Provision for international students

The *Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016* (the Code) was introduced on July 2016. The school is aware of the need to update its policies and procedures to meet the new code requirements by December 1st 2016. The school has not yet started to align its policies and procedures to meet requirements for the 2016 Code.

At the time of the review there was 1 short-term stay international student attending the school.

6 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the *Vulnerable Children Act 2014*
- provision for international students.

To improve practice, the board of trustees must develop policies, practices and procedures on surrender and retention of property and searches of students by the principal.

7 Recommendation

ERO recommends that the school continues to increase the evaluative capacity of trustees, leaders and teachers to monitor and report on how well new school initiatives are positively impacting on students who need to make accelerated progress.

Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

About the school

Location	Gulf Harbour, Whangaparaoa	
Ministry of Education profile number	6920	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	409	
Number of international students	1	
Gender composition	Girls 51%, Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	9%
	Pākehā	56%
	South African	8%
	Asian	6%
	Chinese	3%
	Pacific	2%
	other European	16%
Review team on site	August 2016	
Date of this report		
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	March 2013
	Education Review	January 2010
	Education Review	October 2006