



**Wilford School**  
**Petone, Lower Hutt**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Wilford School

This review is designed to support schools that were experiencing difficulties at the time of the last review. ERO provides ongoing evaluation over the course of one-to-two years as the school works to improve its overall performance and build its self-review capability.

This report answers key questions about the school's background and the context for the review. The report also provides an evaluation of how effectively the school is addressing areas identified for review and development and the quality of its practices and systems for sustaining performance and ongoing improvement.

## Findings

### 1 Background and Context

#### What is the background and context for this school's review?

Wilford School is a multicultural, full primary school situated in Petone, Lower Hutt. It caters for students in Years 1 to 8. At the time of this review, 33% of students identified as Māori and 11% as Pacific.

Ngā Puawai Whānau comprises two bilingual classes catering for students in Years 1 to 6. The board of trustees receives Level 2 Māori language programme funding to support the use of te reo Māori in these classes. Mathematics and guided reading are taught in te reo Māori and English in the senior Ngā Puawai class.

There have been several changes of personnel since the October 2013 ERO report. The new assistant principal started in term three, 2014. Two of the five members of the school leadership team are in acting positions for 2015. The leader of Ngā Puawai Whānau bilingual classrooms is on study leave for 2015. A new member of the whānau group was recently appointed to the board, to provide continuity, when the previous Ngā Puawai member resigned.

Since 2013, the board has initiated, sourced and funded leadership and curriculum revision support for the principal and teachers. In addition, the school has accessed Ministry of Education support through a Student Achievement Function Practitioner (SAF).

## 2 Review and Development

### How effectively is the school addressing its priorities for review and development?

#### Priorities identified for review and development

The October 2013 ERO report identified the following areas as being of concern or requiring review:

- student achievement, particularly boys, Māori and Pacific learners
- schoolwide understanding of, and assessment practices in relation to, the National Standards
- teachers' understanding of the impact of their practice or student achievement
- teacher appraisal
- review of the effectiveness of teaching and learning
- internal communication and consultation with the community
- schoolwide behaviour management practices
- curriculum development.

An action plan to address these key priorities was developed in response to the 2013 ERO report.

#### Progress

Some progress has been made in each of the priority areas identified in the previous ERO review. Progress relating to improving outcomes for students and school leadership now needs to advance more quickly.

Curriculum review and development have recently begun. Curriculum delivery for Years 7 and 8 students now includes a future focus. Leaders have yet to decide how to extend this approach across the school. ERO identifies, and school leaders agree, that continuing the current, planned review of curriculum is essential.

The school reported, at the end of 2014, that just over half of the students achieve at or above in relation to the National Standards in writing. Approximately two thirds of students achieve at this level in reading and mathematics. There is a disparity in how well Māori and Pacific students achieve in relation to other students in the school. How well Ngā Puawai Whānau students achieve in relation to mainstream Māori students and other students, is not clear. Mid-year 2015 student information indicates some likely progress. However, student achievement remains a concern.

The introduction of teacher professional inquiry in 2014 is leading to a growing understanding about how to use student achievement information to better inform teaching and learning. Leaders are developing more accurate systems to track and report student progress. Processes to track and report the progress of students identified as at risk of not achieving are in place. This includes learners who are included in school improvement targets. As a result, trustees should be better placed to monitor progress towards reaching annual achievement targets.

Assessment guidelines were developed and internal moderation of assessment in writing began in 2014. Further work in moderation and extending this to reading and mathematics is a next step.

Reports to parents about their child's progress were recently reviewed. These include some useful next steps to support individual learning. Reports require further development to meet requirements, including clear reference to the National Standards and consideration of Years 1 to 3 students' anniversary dates.

A strengthened appraisal process has been introduced. This has the potential to support improved teaching practices if consistently implemented.

Self review for improvement is not well understood or carried out by school leaders. Some curriculum review has taken place. It is not yet of sufficient depth to identify areas for development. The school should review the impact of special programmes to determine their effectiveness in lifting progress and achievement.

Communication has improved within the school and with the community. Since 2013, annual surveys to gauge whānau satisfaction with curriculum, student progress, communication, leadership and students' physical and emotional safety show a continuing satisfaction with the school.

Comparison and analysis of findings from the teacher workplace surveys undertaken in 2013 and 2015, demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction and confidence in the school. Areas covered in the survey include: the working environment; satisfaction with the school; leadership; professional development; and school organisation.

A committed Ngā Puawai Whānau Group, comprising parents and school staff, has undertaken significant work to support bilingual education at the school. This includes developing a strategic plan that emphasises the significance of te reo Māori and a graduate profile for students. The board should continue to build on this positive platform for accelerating Māori student success through an integrated schoolwide approach.

Behaviour management programmes have been reviewed, expectations clarified and the school's values revisited. These values are becoming embedded in school life. Students who demonstrate these values are acknowledged through rewards and celebratory comments in newsletters.

### **3 Sustainable performance and self review**

#### **How well placed is the school to sustain and continue to improve and review its performance?**

Wilford School continues to make progress in improving and reviewing its performance.

The board has made some progress in promoting a positive school culture in relation to its vision for learners.

Professional leadership by the principal continues to require improvement. The principal's external appraisal identifies key areas for improving leadership practice in relation to student engagement and achievement. The board now needs to act urgently to support the principal to achieve the changes required.

The distribution of responsibilities between senior leaders is not equitable and requires attention to aid school improvement.

The board regularly seeks information through self-review processes. Analysis of this data indicates what is working well and what requires further attention or improvement. The next step is to plan the actions required for improvement, monitor implementation of these changes and evaluate the impact. This should contribute to better informed decisions to improve student outcomes through the school charter and the supporting action plans.

Key governance decisions about the future of Ngā Puawai Whānau structure and level of te reo Māori language programmes are pending. The outcomes of these decisions will impact on the school curriculum, strategic planning and learning opportunities provided for students. The board has recently clarified the future of bilingual education provisions for students and their whānau.

### **Key next steps**

In order to improve positive outcomes for all students, the board and school leaders should:

- continue to develop effective use of assessment and data at all levels to inform planning, monitoring and reporting student achievement and evaluating the impact of programmes, interventions, school targets and planned actions
- implement robust evaluation processes to identify development priorities and guide school improvement
- improve the effectiveness of school leadership.

### **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.

In October 2013, ERO identified the following areas of non-compliance:

- appraisal
- police vetting of non teaching staff
- health, safety and hazard checks
- provisions for international students.

These have been addressed.

During the course of the review ERO identified an area of non-compliance. The board must:

- ensure that parents receive at least two plain-language written reports a year about their child's progress and achievement, in relation to National Standards, in reading, writing and mathematics.

*[National Administration Guideline 2A(b)]*

In order to improve current practice, the board of trustees should ensure minutes of in-committee board meetings are properly kept.

#### **4 Recommendations**

**Recommendations, including any to other agencies for ongoing or additional support.**

ERO recommends that the board accelerates the pace of improvements in relation to:

- addressing the findings outlined in the principal appraisal for professional growth and leadership
- improving student achievement, particularly for Māori students
- finalising its direction for the provision of bilingual education, Ngā Puawai.

#### **Conclusion**

Some progress has been made since 2013. Improving professional leadership in relation to student achievement remains a priority for improvement. Curriculum development and review has started and systems have improved for tracking and monitoring student progress. Trustees have responded to whānau aspirations for Ngā Puawai Whānau bilingual education provision.

ERO intends to carry out another review over the course of one-to-two years.



Joyce Gebbie  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

25 November 2015

## About the School

|                                      |   |              |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Location                             | Petone, Lower Hutt                                  |              |
| Ministry of Education profile number | 3072  |              |
| School type                          | Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)                         |              |
| School roll                          | 296   |              |
| Number of international students     | 1   |              |
| Gender composition                   | Male 58%, Female 42%                                |              |
| Ethnic composition                   | Māori   | 31%          |
|                                      | Pākehā  | 49%          |
|                                      | Samoan  | 6%           |
|                                      | Other ethnic groups                                 | 14%          |
| Special Features                     | 2 Ngā Puawai Whānau bilingual classes (Year 1 to 6) |              |
| Review team on site                  | August 2015   |              |
| Date of this report                  | 25 November 2015                                    |              |
| Most recent ERO report(s)            | Education Review                                    | October 2013 |
|                                      | Education Review                                    | March 2009   |
|                                      | Education Review                                    | May 2006     |