

ERO External Evaluation

Longburn School, Palmerston North

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for students. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

School Context

Longburn School, for students in Years 1 to 8, is located on the southern outskirts of Palmerston North. Of the 122 students enrolled, 37% are Māori.

Shared school values are articulated in the 'LongbuRn School RiPpLe Effect', promoting 'Respectful, Responsible Positive Learners'.

Strategic goals to 2021 aim to:

- provide a safe and stimulating child-centered learning environment, fostering positive, strong relationships and well-being
- provide a variety of rich learning experiences supported by effective teaching, fostering high levels of personal achievement whilst cultivating the individual's passion
- develop and nurture, within our learners, the skills, knowledge and cultural capital to enable them to be successful in our ever-changing world, operating as independent lifelong learners.

Leaders and teachers regularly report to the board, schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- progress and achievement for students in Years 1 to 8
- attendance.

Several teachers are new to the school over the previous 12 months. Schoolwide professional learning and development (PLD) has been undertaken in using the *Progress and Consistency Tool (PaCT)* to support assessment practice in 2019 with further work planned for all staff in 2020.

The school is member of the Te Oro Karaka Rua Kāhui Ako.

Evaluation Findings

1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

Embedding assessment systems and processes, and continuing to build teacher practice aligned to school expectations, are ongoing developments to achieve equity and excellence for all students.

In 2019, many students achieved at or above curriculum expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, with over a third of learners exceeding expectations in reading. Trends from 2017, show the school has significantly increased achievement in writing, especially for boys and Māori boys, supporting equity for these learners when compared to other groups. Similar outcomes have been achieved in reading and mathematics over the same period with most students achieving curriculum expectations by the end of Year 8. To further promote equity for all students, targets have been established for 2020 aligned to those learners requiring their learning and progress accelerated.

The school reports high levels of attendance for most students.

1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

The school provides a wide range of well-considered actions and initiatives to respond to Māori and other children whose learning and achievement need acceleration. In 2019, teachers accelerated the progress of some targeted students in reading, writing and mathematics. Ongoing development to assessment processes and teacher practice is planned to further strengthen the school's response to Māori and other students who need their progress accelerated.

2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Students follow their interests and passions through a wide range of authentic learning opportunities. Learners' skills, competencies and capabilities are fostered through their active participation and self-directed learning. Core curriculum priorities in literacy, mathematics and other areas of learning are comprehensively documented. Students regularly access digital learning technologies to support their learning. Classroom conditions and strategies used by teachers, guide students in their decisions that reflect their individual learning goals.

Staff and trustees collaboratively pursue the school's vision and valued outcomes for students and their community. Trustees demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Strategic and annual planning reflect relevant priorities to promote ongoing development. Staff are highly collaborative, sharing strategies that inform their response to the learning and engagement needs of students. PLD for staff is suitably matched to relevant priorities. Systems and processes used to monitor teacher practice and inquire into the school's curriculum are comprehensive.

Students identified with additional and complex learning needs receive appropriate support. Regular tracking, monitoring and collaborative review of student progress supports a timely response to learners. Staff know students and their families well. Board resourcing of additional programmes and teacher aide support is suitably matched to the specific needs of students.

Inclusive environments purposefully foster the engagement of student, families and whānau in school life. Daily interactions reflect the shared school values and promote positive relationships between staff, students and their peers. The language, culture and identity of Māori students are integral to student learning experiences delivered through relevant contexts. Student leaders contribute well in promoting the positive culture of the school. Parents, families and whānau are provided with appropriate information to encourage learning partnerships. Students share and celebrate their learning and achievements with families and community.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Leaders and teachers have implemented a range of curriculum initiatives designed to promote self direction and encourage student decision making in relation to their learning. It is timely for the school to collectively strengthen their knowledge and use of evaluation. Undertaking systematic evaluation should enable, teachers, leaders and trustees to determine how well curriculum initiatives and actions impact on priority learners and further promotes equity and excellence for all students.

The school is seeking to further develop the collective capability of teachers and build leadership roles to support curriculum delivery and coordinate special needs processes. Sharing strategies between teachers and continued participation in PLD for staff and leaders should enhance their capacity and support sustainability of the school's valued outcomes.

Teachers have participated in initial PLD to support their understanding of assessment for teaching, learning, moderation and to promote students' self-directed learning. Staff should continue to review and refine their assessment practices and processes to further strengthen their collective capability and support positive outcomes for students.

3 Board Assurance on Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board 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
- finance
- 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 and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Children's Act 2014.

4 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Longburn School's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- providing a well-considered response to learners with additional and complex learning needs that supports their learning and engagement
- inclusive school and classroom environments that foster positive student involvement at school
- well considered curriculum developments that encourage the active involvement of students in learning
- staff and trustees collaboratively pursuing the school's valued outcomes that promotes purposeful outcomes for students and the school community.

Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in:

- continued involvement in PLD to further strengthen assessment practice to support teaching, learning, moderation and students to self-direct their learning
- strengthening the collective capability of staff and build leadership roles to further promote equity and excellence for students and sustain the school's valued outcomes
- building evaluation capability and practice to determine the impact of curriculum changes on students experiencing disparity in their achievement or engagement.



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About the school

[The Education Counts website provides further information about the school's student population, student engagement and student achievement.](#)