

ERO External Evaluation

St Albans Catholic School (Christchurch), Christchurch

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

St Albans Catholic School is a special character school catering for students in Years 1 to 6. The school has a roll of 102 students.

The school's vision is 'Together we excel, we live our faith and celebrate learning and life'. The school's virtues are 'compassion, humility, social justice, service and forgiveness'. The mission statement focuses on quality education, and developing the dispositions of 21st century learners and global citizens within the special character of the community.

In 2019, the school has annual achievement targets for students in religious education, writing, mathematics and science.

Since the April 2016 ERO review, there have been significant changes in school personnel. These changes include the appointment of a new principal, several changes in teaching staff, and new trustee appointments.

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

- reading, writing, mathematics
- religious education.

St Albans Catholic School is an active member of the Catholic Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning.

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?

The school is effective in achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for most of its students.

Achievement information for 2017 and 2018 shows a consistent pattern of achievement. Most students achieve at or above curriculum expectations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Most Māori students achieve at the expected curriculum levels for reading and writing, and the majority of Māori students achieve at the expected curriculum level in mathematics.

There is a small disparity for boys in writing which the school has identified and now needs to address.

The school's 2018 achievement information for religious education shows that students in Years 3 to 6 are making significant positive gains in their understanding of key concepts in this aspect of learning.

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

The school is more effective in accelerating the reading progress of students with additional learning needs. Achievement information for 2018 shows that approximately half of these students made accelerated progress in reading, and less than a third made accelerated progress in writing and mathematics.

Leaders and teachers now need to extend this progress to writing and mathematics for all students whose learning needs to be 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?

School leaders are building professional learning partnerships and connections within and beyond the school. Whānau involvement in their children's learning is actively valued and well supported. Leaders and teachers benefit from participation in the wider education community through the Kāhui Ako. These are helping to build collaborative teacher practice and a culture of critical reflection and inquiry that is focused on learner outcomes.

Leaders and teachers are responsive to students who require additional support for learning and wellbeing. In collaboration with parents, teachers identify and develop plans to address specific needs. Progress in relation to support plans is well monitored. The school provides support for the wellbeing and care of students. The principal actively sources appropriate assistance from specialist support agencies and external experts to meet the needs of students and whānau.

Learning environments are calm and purposeful. The school's virtues are evident in the classrooms and playground, in children's interactions with each other, and in the positive relationships between teachers and students. Students have opportunities to learn and participate in a broad range of academic, cultural and sporting activities. The science curriculum is well led and assists students to deepen their understanding of science concepts. Students are developing voice and agency in their learning. This is evident in their leadership of Mass, kapa haka and school assembly.

Bicultural practices are developing well. The school has recently undertaken consultation with Māori whānau to gather the views and aspirations they have for their child's learning. Led by the principal, teachers are building knowledge of te ao Māori and capability in te reo Māori.

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

The principal has identified, and ERO confirms, that the curriculum, including assessment practices, requires review and development. Curriculum documentation does not reflect current teaching and learning practices. Clear expectations for teaching and learning need to be identified and aligned to assessment practices. This is likely to assist consistency of teachers' expectations for learning and practices for assessment and planning.

The principal has identified, and ERO confirms, that current data management processes do not fully capture students' learning progress and sufficiency of progress. School leaders need to continue to develop their systems and processes for moderating, collating, analysing and reporting student progress and achievement information. This will assist leaders and teachers to identify those students whose learning requires acceleration, and regularly inform the board about their progress over time.

Internal evaluation was identified as an area for development in ERO's previous report. It remains as an ongoing area for improvement at all levels of the school. Leaders, trustees and teachers need to:

- build knowledge and capability in relation to internal evaluation
- adopt a framework to guide evaluative thinking and practice
- use internal evaluation strategically to identify those processes and practices that are most effective in supporting learning and achievement, including the effectiveness of governance
- scrutinise evaluative information, particularly in relation to achievement of strategic goals and the impact of interventions on student outcomes.

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 St Albans Catholic School (Christchurch)s performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

ERO’s Framework: [Overall Findings and Judgement Tool derived from School Evaluation Indicators: Effective Practice for Improvement and Learner Success](#) is available on ERO’s website.

5 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- consistently positive achievement trends in reading, writing and mathematics
- supportive relationships and collaborative learning partnerships between students and teachers, and with whānau
- approaches to teaching and learning in science that provide a positive model for other learning areas.

Next steps

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

- developing clear curriculum expectations that reflect current best practice and local context to guide teaching and learning
- developing assessment and data management practices that align with curriculum expectations, and clearly show and report the progress that all students are making over time
- developing robust internal evaluation practices that identify those programmes, interventions and initiatives which are most effective in supporting student learning and progress.

During the onsite stage of the review, ERO found that some aspects of the school's appraisal process did not meet Teaching Council requirements. Since that time, the school has provided further evidence to ERO that confirms compliance with appraisal process requirements.



Dr Lesley Patterson
Director Review and Improvement Services Te Tai Tini
Southern Region
27 November 2019

About the school

Location	Christchurch						
Ministry of Education profile number	3517						
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)						
School roll	102						
Gender composition	Boys 50%, Girls 50%						
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NZ European/Pākehā</td> <td>89%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnicity</td> <td>1%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	10%	NZ European/Pākehā	89%	Other ethnicity	1%
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NZ European/Pākehā	89%						
Other ethnicity	1%						
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes						
Provision of Māori medium education	No						
Review team on site	September 2019						
Date of this report	27 November 2019						
Most recent ERO report(s)	<table> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>April 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>December 2012</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education Review</td> <td>September 2008</td> </tr> </table>	Education Review	April 2016	Education Review	December 2012	Education Review	September 2008
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