

ERO External Evaluation

Halswell Residential College, 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

Halswell Residential College (HRC) is a specialist residential school located in Christchurch. It has a roll of 17 students (aged 7 years to 17 years) who need significant programme adaptation and whose educational, social and emotional needs cannot be met in their local environment. The school has a maximum roll of 32 students.

Since the 2014 ERO review the residential houses have been rebuilt on the original school site. The new build includes four residential whare that each cater to the needs of up to eight students, and have new playgrounds. In 2017 the college became a co-educational facility.

HRC is part of a programme of national provision of intensive support for children and young people with complex educational needs requiring significant adaptation of the curriculum. Students are currently referred to the school as part of the Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS). They are resident there for up to two years, with most staying significantly less than that length of time.

A Ministry-appointed Board was established in 2014. The board governs Halswell Residential College and Westbridge Residential School in Auckland.

The school's vision is for students to 'be the best they can be' (whakarangatirahia). The school's mission supports students to:

- maximise their learning, strengths and potential and to develop pro-social behaviours
- enhance their cultural identity and self-efficacy
- successfully transition back to their whānau, school and community.

The foundations for achieving this vision are the key values of whakaute (respect), manaakitanga (care), whanaungatanga (partnerships), pono (honesty), taha wairua and taha tinana (wellbeing and positive identity) and taha hinengaro (nurturing mental wellbeing).

The school's 'philosophy of care' outlines how all staff and students will contribute to the wellbeing and learning of each student through 'being a learner, being safe and showing respect'. The school's current strategic priorities are aligned with providing positive culturally responsive environments where 'living is learning'. The school works in partnership with the Ministry of Education, parents and whānau.

The school has made good progress in areas identified for improvement in the 2014 ERO report, including having a strategic focus on financial viability. As the new Direct Referral Pathway to residential schools is implemented, the school is considering ways to provide equitable access to the high quality education and care that Halswell Residential College currently provides for students who are referred as part of the Intensive Wraparound Service.

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

- progress/achievement in relation to school and individual student targets
- engagement and wellbeing for success
- achievement in literacy and mathematics
- whole school improvement trends
- outcomes related to engagement, wellbeing and safety for success
- transition into and out of the school.

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?

All students are effectively supported to achieve personal equity and excellence. Almost all students are achieving the school's valued equity and excellence outcomes. The key competencies, especially managing self, participating and contributing are key drivers of the curriculum.

The school gathers a wide range of useful data to record students' progress and achievement. The data is well analysed and used to inform relevant and appropriate next steps for each student. Students are included in assessments and know their goals, progress and achievements. This approach is clearly building their confidence as learners.

Other priorities for learning include developing the skills and dispositions for wider community participation, as well as home living, designed to increase students' independence. School information from Individual Education Plans (IEPs), home living and community participation assessments (ABAS), and their relation to valued learning and wellbeing outcomes, shows that almost all students made expected progress over time.

School information for 2018 shows that most students met or exceeded targets in literacy and numeracy.

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

The school is very effective in its response to those students whose learning and achievement need acceleration.

The school's learning information shows that most target students have made accelerated progress in their learning. Leaders, teachers and residential staff provide well considered individualised plans and programmes to address the specific needs of students. They regularly evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches to monitor the sufficiency of students' participation and progress. Strong emphasis is placed on professional development to support teaching practices that will better target learning acceleration.

All students' learning, progress and achievement requires and receives additional support. This includes:

- extensive collaborative planning which includes parents'/whānau and specialist services' input
- increased resourcing
- targeted and regular professional reflection and review.

This support enables students to engage meaningfully in their personalised learning in order to make accelerated progress.

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?

The school's processes and practices are highly effective in enabling the achievement of equity and excellence.

There is strong professional leadership across the school. Leaders have created a high trust, caring culture that enables innovation and improvement. Positive relationships and a culture of collaboration within the school and with the wider school community provide high levels of care and rich learning opportunities for students.

Leaders regularly analyse student achievement data, and use in-depth internal evaluations of teaching and learning approaches within the 24/7 curriculum, to make informed decisions. These decisions are clearly based on supporting teachers and residential staff to continue to provide the high quality, effective practices that are essential to the wellbeing and success of students at HRC.

The school's 24/7 curriculum is very responsive to students' strengths, culture, needs, and interests. Students benefit from a highly differentiated and adaptive curriculum. They have extensive opportunities to participate and succeed in the school and wider community. The curriculum is specifically designed to balance academic learning and living skills, and to significantly enhance students' social and emotional competencies. The school curriculum and vision are both focused on supporting students to independently reintegrate into their community.

The school has well-embedded culturally responsive practices woven into the 24/7 curriculum. Te reo and tikanga Māori, including core concepts such as manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, wairua and tuakana-teina, are a natural part of life at the school. School-based assessment information shows that these approaches are highly effective in enhancing students' learning, engagement and sense of belonging.

Cohesive and coherent schoolwide systems and processes have ensured consistency of practices for students and from all staff. Teachers and students are well supported in living and learning by highly skilled support staff who are a vital part of the collaborative care model. Teachers and residential

staff benefit from deep and focused professional development clearly aligned with school priorities and the specific needs of students. Highly effective and adaptive teaching practices are increasing student ownership of their learning, with positive outcomes.

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

School leaders have identified, and ERO agrees, that the school should continue to draw on existing identified strengths to pursue excellence in innovation. In particular, using the research and recommendations from the Principal's sabbatical report, and the indicators for student success identified in partnership with the Ministry of Education (IWS).

The school should also continue its focus on ways to meaningfully measure these new developments.

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 Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Provision for students in the school hostel

All the students are accommodated in four houses. The houses are licensed as the school hostel by the Ministry of Education. The board has attested in a *Hostel Assurance Statement* that it meets minimum standards as specified in the hostel regulations.

The residential houses were rebuilt in 2017. The houses are referred to as whare within the school. These whare are purpose-built to house eight students each. Each student has their own room. They are specifically designed to have a home-like environment and to provide for the safety and wellbeing of students.

One of the whare is focused on kaupapa and tikanga Māori. Whare Tauawa provides a rich bicultural environment that supports students' language, culture and identity within the whare. Tuakana/Teina relationships support the self-management of students and provide leadership opportunities.

The houses are appropriately staffed and well-managed. Residential staff develop supportive relationships with students as they work closely with them individually and in groups. Staff organise a range of opportunities for learning within the house such as home and living skills. Staff plan with and for students to engage in recreational activities. They support students to participate in their interests or sports within the wider community. Most students are in regular contact with their family or whānau.

Staff focus on supporting students to learn new ways of communicating, behaving and interacting. Regular professional learning and development builds staff capability to understand and support the young people in their care and to develop their own practice. Students are effectively supported to develop self-management and social and communication skills that are important for their successful return to their own communities.

Residential staff contribute significantly to high quality student information that the school collects about each young person's growth and development. Residential staff, along with other school staff, work closely with IWS to bring together appropriate plans and approaches for individual students. They are aware of the challenges for the students in independently using the skills they have learned when they are in the wider community.

4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- strong leadership that has established a high trust collaborative school culture that places the wellbeing and success of all students at the centre
- rich curriculum that is responsive to students' strengths, culture, needs and interests
- coherent systems which support processes that enhance student safety and wellbeing
- effective communication systems which strengthen the partnership with families/whānau and specialist agencies in realising shared valued outcomes for students
- a reflective environment that promotes capability and capacity building for ongoing improvement.

Next steps

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

- further developing and implementing the new curriculum, including differentiated assessments.

ERO's next external evaluation process and timing

ERO is likely to carry out the next external evaluation in four-to-five years.



Alan Wynyard
Director Review & Improvement Services
Te Waipounamu - Southern Region

31 January 2019

About the school

Location	Christchurch
Ministry of Education profile number	522
School type	Special School
School roll	17
Gender composition	Boys 13 ; Girls 4
Ethnic composition	Māori 7 Pākehā 9 Pacific 1
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	1
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	November 2018
Date of this report	31 January 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review August 2014 Education Review September 2008 Education Review May 2005