



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Holy Cross School (Miramar)**  
**Wellington**

**Education Review Office**

**External Evaluation**

# ERO External Evaluation

## Holy Cross School (Miramar)

### 1 Context

Holy Cross School, Miramar, provides education with Catholic values for approximately 200 students from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds. A significant number of students are new to New Zealand and English language learners. A bilingual tutor provides valuable support for Assyrian and Arabic speaking families and students.

Cultural diversity is valued and supported. Ongoing development of Ngā Pou in the school grounds represent cultural groups within the school and help promote a sense of belonging for students and their families.

School staffing includes a number who are long-serving, including the principal. Since the December 2012 ERO report a new senior leadership team has been put in place. The school has a very good reporting history with ERO.

### 2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are 'Celebrating diversity - Promoting excellence' through 'Letting your light shine'. This vision for learning and success is well articulated and effectively shared across the school community and promoted through Gospel values and Māori concepts.

The school's achievement information shows that approximately three-quarters of students are at or above in relation to the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Students make very good progress as they move through the school. Nearly all achieve against the National Standards by the time they reach Year 8. End of year 2015 data shows that Māori students continue to achieve well in mathematics and reading. Pacific student achievement shows ongoing improvement in each of the learning areas. Appropriate targets are set to promote the progress of students who require acceleration.

Teachers and leaders are more deeply inquiring into achievement information to develop a shared understanding of teacher judgements in relation to National Standards. Internal moderation of overall teacher judgements in each of the learning areas occurs through ongoing discussion and senior leader oversight. A focused, collaborative moderation process occurs at midyear and end-of-year reviews for all students at risk in their learning. Next steps are to clarify the processes for ensuring the dependability of all judgements made, and external moderation.

Since the previous ERO evaluation the school has focused on accelerating the literacy learning of students in their first three years of school through the use of an intensive oral language programme. External support for professional learning and development (PLD) of teachers and staff who provide early learning assistance is ongoing. Curriculum development in other areas of the school has involved a focus on authentic and meaningful contexts for learning through Garden to Table and the William Pike Challenge Awards. Other initiatives have included Accelerating Learning in Mathematics (ALIM) and Accelerating Learning in Literacy (ALL). Successful strategies from PLD have been shared and used across the school.

The introduction of a new system for managing assessment data has increased the school's capability to better monitor and analyse students' progress. Improved reporting and home learning approaches have strengthened parent and student learning partnerships.

### **3 Accelerating achievement**

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

Trustees, leaders and teachers know Māori students well. Their achievement and progress is promoted and regularly monitored. Teachers focus on providing supportive learning environments for Māori students and expect them to achieve well. They help students to make meaningful links to their language, culture and identity, and to confidently participate in learning opportunities. Whānau support is recognised and promoted as a key aspect in supporting their learning success. Most Māori students achieve well and their achievement as a group is regularly discussed with trustees and whānau Maōri.

Māori students at risk in their learning are clearly identified in data analysis and planning documents. Regular review by leaders and teachers helps to develop shared understanding of their progress and the effectiveness of strategies and interventions. There is evidence that their progress is being accelerated through curriculum interventions and teacher inquiries. The school recognises that refining their targets and measures of acceleration, will better support evaluation of the school's success in accelerating achievement for this group of learners.

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

Promoting learning for students at risk of poor educational outcomes is a clear focus for the school. The ALIM initiative designed for Pacific students has successfully accelerated learning for some. Aspects of this have been sustained and shared to promote further acceleration for students.

The school is using achievement information well to share and build in-depth knowledge and understanding of each student's learning progress, strengths and needs. Well-considered, deliberate actions support the learning and accelerate the progress of targeted students. Results are well monitored by teachers, leaders and trustees. A plan to more regularly review students' rates of progress in relation to targets, should be useful in identifying successful strategies for acceleration.

There is ongoing review of the use of assessment tools to ensure they are meaningful and relevant for students and teachers. Teachers are supported to make effective use of a good range of assessment tools to make judgements about student achievement and progress.

Very considered processes are in place for identifying and supporting students with additional learning needs. The teacher inquiry process is useful for implementing deliberate strategies to accelerate students' achievement and monitor success. Thought-provoking questions and ongoing professional discussions help teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of their practice.

An appropriate strategic goal is in place to accelerate the progress of learners from the time they start at Holy Cross School. Leaders are working to improve how they measure the impact of planned actions on accelerating students' progress. More clearly defining rates of progress for each learning area and the expected outcomes in relation to targets, should enable the school to better measure shifts made for individuals and groups of learners.

## 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?**

Holy Cross School is very well placed to promote equity and excellence and continue to sustain improvement. Trustees, leaders and teachers have high aspirations for students' successful engagement and achievements. There is shared understanding of school direction, values and priorities for students and their families. These are well articulated and respectfully enacted through reflective, improvement-focused approaches.

Student learning, wellbeing and achievement is a core focus for trustees. They are very supportive of school endeavours and resource in a considered way to support priorities for development and improvement. They show a good understanding of school initiatives and successes.

There is well-considered curriculum provision for all students. Cohesive links to the school values and vision, and across learning areas, help students to make meaningful connections to build their understanding and promote learning.

Students demonstrate a sense of belonging and confidence in participating in the life of the school. Learning environments foster respectful interactions and promote their participation, risk-taking and confidence. Collaboration is encouraged and supported.

Classrooms are calm, orderly and settled. Teachers are responsive to students, providing authentic, meaningful contexts for learning and strategies that effectively build their understanding. Students have clarity about the focus and purposes of their learning.

Cultural knowledge, values and connections are embraced. The school acknowledges *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as central to school practices. The importance of *te ao* and *tikanga* Māori is recognised and promoted. Families are empowered to contribute to the school's capacity to deliver a rich, meaningful and culturally-responsive curriculum.

The school actively seeks and fosters engagement of families in learning and the life of the school. They are respected and valued partners in learning and decision-making. Parents' views and aspirations are sought and acted on. Useful information about curriculum and learning is regularly shared to promote purposeful interactions with parents to support and promote their children's learning. Transitions into and from school are well supported through clear communications about aspirations and expectations, respectful interactions and an ongoing commitment to student wellbeing and success.

Leaders provide and model clear expectations and practices aligned to their vision for learning and improvement. They effectively build a sense of community through:

- fostering high levels of relational trust and promoting collaborative practices and collective responsibility
- implementing robust systems for communicating, taking and reviewing action
- having a considered approach to innovation and a strategic approach to building leadership capacity
- valuing and celebrating cultural diversity.

Teacher development is effectively supported through targeted professional development, regular sharing and modelling of practice and the appraisal process.

Robust reflection, inquiry and ongoing response to information gathered contributes to ongoing development. Analysis of student information informs decision-making at all levels. Leaders and trustees understand the value of evidence in decision-making and internal evaluation. Continuing to develop a schoolwide framework for evaluating the impact of actions and initiatives on student outcomes is a next step.

## **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
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

The school has high expectations for the learning success of all students and works to promote equitable and excellent outcomes. An ongoing focus on connecting meaningfully with families to help them respond effectively to support and accelerate their children's learning is in place. Collaborative practices and good communication support a cohesive approach to improvement.

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

### **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.

## **7 Provision for international students**

The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 (the Code) was introduced on July 1st 2016. The school is aware of the need to update its policies and procedures to meet the new code requirements by December 1st 2016.

No international students were enrolled at the time of the ERO review.

The school is making good progress in aligning its policies and procedures to meet requirements for the 2016 Code.

## **7 Recommendation**

The school should build on its effective relationships and culturally responsive practices to continue to accelerate the learning of students at risk of poor educational outcomes. Refining the approach to internal evaluation should support better evaluation of the impact of initiatives on student outcomes.



Joyce Gebbie  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

31 October 2016

## About the school

Location	Wellington	
Ministry of Education profile number	2904	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	199	
Number of international students	0	
Gender composition	Female 58%, Male 42%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	12%
	Samoan	20%
	Pākehā	18%
	Middle Eastern	17%
	Indian	12%
	Other Pacific	7%
	Other European	4%
	Asian	7%
	African	3%
Review team on site	August 2016	
Date of this report	31 October 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	December 2012
	Education Review	October 2009
	Education Review	October 2006