

## ERO External Evaluation

### St Joseph's Catholic School (Takapuna), Auckland

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 Joseph's Catholic School (Takapuna) is a state integrated school for students from Years 1 to 6. The school has experienced significant roll growth since the 2014 ERO review. The current roll of 411 includes an increasing number of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The school has a long history of providing Catholic education on Auckland's North Shore. The Mercy values of Aroha (Compassion), Pono (Truth), Tika (Justice), Manaakitanga (Hospitality) Tapu (Respect) and the school motto of Care, Courtesy, Cooperation and Courage underpin school operations. Valued student outcomes include Mahira (curiosity), Auaha (creativity), Takoha (contribution), and Whakaaro nui (critical thinking).

Since the 2014 ERO review there have been changes in the school that include:

- a new board chair and the appointment of a new principal and three senior leaders
- the establishment of new innovative learning environments where students and teachers work collaboratively
- the enhancement of outdoor learning environments that promote learning outside the classroom
- strengthening curriculum links with neighbouring Rosmini College, allowing shared spaces for sports, performing arts and culture
- students accessing the adjacent St John the Baptist Art Studio to support the curriculum and the school's special character focus.

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

- overall achievement in literacy and numeracy
- attendance and engagement
- health and safety.

The 2014 ERO report commented positively on the school's leadership, professional learning community and internal evaluation. These remain features of the school. The board responded positively to the areas for improvement identified in the 2014 report.

St Joseph's Catholic School is a member of the North Shore Catholic Schools Community of Learning | 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?**

The school is successful in achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for students. Achievement information indicates that since 2015, most students have achieved expected curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

Students progress well in relation to the school's valued outcomes. They develop social skills and interact positively with each other and with adults. They show persistence and resilience in their learning.

Students achieve well in physical pursuits and confidently participate in the performing arts. The school's Samoan Cultural Group, theatre productions, and education outside the classroom feature in this success.

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

The school successfully accelerates learning for Māori and other students who need this. The small number of Māori and Pacific students are closely monitored and supported to achieve and progress in their learning. They participate fully in the school culture and opportunities for leadership.

Students with additional learning needs are provided with in-class support to achieve and progress in their learning. Parents are consulted to establish consistency in teaching strategies. These students participate well in the positive culture of the school.

The school is strongly inclusive of students who are learning English as an additional language. Their home languages and cultural diversity are recognised and celebrated. These approaches support their participation in all aspects of school life.

### **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?**

Leadership, stewardship and a growing culture of professional reflection and inquiry, are key school conditions that are helping the school to achieve equity and excellence for students.

Strong leadership is evident in the school. Leaders build collective capacity, promote individual teachers' growth, and participate in professional learning alongside teachers. They work collaboratively to promote a secure and orderly environment that supports students' wellbeing and ownership of their learning. Leaders maintain high levels of relational trust across the school.

The board of trustees is focused on students' wellbeing, progress and achievement, and on supporting the future direction and vision of the school. Trustees have strong links to the school, community and parish. They are inclusive and responsive to local and community needs. They have a good understanding of the school's progress towards strategic goals and continue to build their own stewardship capability.

Teachers and students set challenging and appropriate expectations for learning. Students are involved in decisions about an increasingly meaningful and authentic curriculum. Programmes promote confidence, collaboration, leadership, independence and the joy of learning. The school's special character is well integrated throughout the curriculum. There are good opportunities for student leadership within the curriculum and in co-curricular activities.

Parents and whānau are actively involved and have many opportunities to contribute to and participate in many aspects of school life. Home learning partnerships are active and meaningful. Effective communication and consultation support and strengthen learning-centred relationships with parents and whānau.

Leaders and teachers are well qualified and have relevant knowledge of curriculum, assessment and effective teaching strategies. Teachers work collaboratively to plan the curriculum and design engaging activities. Together they assess and evaluate the effectiveness of learning programmes.

Coherent organisational conditions promote evaluation, inquiry and knowledge building. Leaders and teachers know children and whānau well. They are highly adaptive and flexible in identifying and implementing practices that work for students' learning in the class, school and community.

## 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 relevant priorities for further development in curriculum design and internal evaluation. The school has the capacity to use evaluation effectively to guide and monitor these developments.

### **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.

### 3 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of St Joseph's Catholic School (Takapuna) performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

**Strong**

[ERO's Framework: Overall School Performance is available on ERO's website.](#)

### 4 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- collaborative and distributed leadership
- teacher capability and collective responsibility for student wellbeing and achievement
- a responsive curriculum that supports the development of learner competencies and skills
- an inclusive school culture and learning focused partnerships with parents, whānau and Church communities.

Next steps

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

- continuing to enhance a challenging, responsive, meaningful curriculum
- strengthening te reo and tikanga Māori in the curriculum
- enhancing internal evaluation with the use of indicators of effective practice.



Steve Tanner  
Director Review and Improvement Services Northern  
Northern Region  
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## About the school

Location	Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	1498
School type	State Integrated
School roll	411
Gender composition	Girls 53% Boys 47%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 44% Filipino 21% Indian 10% Chinese 5% Korean 4% other ethnic groups 16%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	No
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	June 2019
Date of this report	17 July 2019
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review May 2014 Education Review August 2009 Education Review August 2006