



Education Review Office
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Te Poi School
Te Poi near Matamata

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

Te Poi School

1 Context

Te Poi is a rural primary school located near the Waikato town of Matamata which provides education for children from Year 1 to 6. It has a current roll of 73, and 19 of these children are Māori. The board and principal are well established in their roles, and providing continuity of stewardship and leadership for the school community. There has been significant roll growth in the last three years, which has led to the appointment of two additional teachers. The school is a member of a recently established Community of Learners (CoL).

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are about developing thinking learners in a respectful environment for learning. The wellbeing of the learner is a shared priority. The aim is to prepare children well for positive and productive citizenship as they progress through the school.

The school's achievement information shows that from 2013 to 2015, most Māori students achieved expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's achievement information for all children shows consistently high levels of achievement, with the majority at and above the National Standard in all three areas. In 2015 the proportion of children achieving the National Standard in mathematics and writing was above the national comparison, and reading comparable.

Moderation practice to ensure that teachers' overall judgements in relation to National Standards is continuing to develop as the assessment capability of recently appointed teachers is built and strengthened.

Since the last ERO evaluation the school has placed priority on the provision of equitable learning outcomes for children in the following ways:

- Additional teacher time to reduce class and group size has been funded.
- Relevant and ongoing professional learning and development for teachers in writing and mathematics has been provided.
- The learning needs of at risk children are promptly identified and a targeted response made in classroom programmes, and in the provision of additional learning support.
- Children are supported to access additional curriculum experiences and learning opportunities which includes on-line tuition in te reo Māori.
- Teachers are building partnerships with parents that are enabling them to support their children's learning at home.
- Effective leadership of the change during a time of rapid roll growth.

3 Accelerating achievement

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

The school responds promptly to Māori children whose progress needs acceleration, and is working with teachers to improve the effectiveness of this response for all Māori children. The principal works collaboratively with the board to develop targets and action plans to raise and accelerate the achievement and progress of these children. Children who are at risk are identified through achievement data analysis. In 2015 and 2016 Māori children below the National Standard in mathematics have been targeted. Of the 18 Māori children at the school in 2015, some made expected progress, but a significant number are still working below the expected standard.

Similarly, the board set a target in 2015 to raise the achievement of Māori children who were underachieving in writing. This led to a positive shift by the end of the year, with most Māori children now working at and above the standard.

In consultation with teachers, the principal now needs to more closely scrutinise the data for Māori children to identify those making accelerated progress and why. This process should enrich the reflective dialogue that teachers have as part of the teaching as inquiry process, and lead to more explicit identification of strategies that make the biggest difference for at risk learners. The integration of *Tātaiako, Cultural Competencies for Teachers and Māori Learners* should now be introduced as part of continuing professional learning for teachers.

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

The school responds effectively to other children whose progress needs to be accelerated. In response to the 2014 data in writing, the achievement of boys in writing became a target in the 2015 annual plan. The action plan to lift achievement of all children in writing was robust, and by the end of the year, teachers' overall judgements indicated that there had been a significant shift, particularly for boys, with 28 of the 33 achieving at and above the National Standard.

Some useful analysis of the teaching practices that contributed to this shift has been done, and these are being integrated into expectations for the teaching of writing in all classes. The principal recognises the need for careful evaluation of teaching practices, and to explicitly document these. This is necessary to ensure sustainability of best practice to raise and accelerate progress and achievement.

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?

The school's curriculum is responsive and continues to evolve in response to the emerging needs, abilities and interests of children. Priority is placed on the language, culture and identity of Māori children. Teachers plan programmes that are specifically designed to meet identified learning needs of children, and which value their cultural heritage. With the support of experienced and knowledgeable staff, teachers increasingly using deliberate teaching strategies in reading, writing and mathematics. This considered approach is enabling children to experience success in their learning, and leading to higher levels of engagement of Māori and boys in particular.

Leadership and governance is well informed and there is clear direction for continuing school improvement. The principal is proactive in her role as professional advisor to the board. Reports to the board are evaluative and informative, assisting trustees to make informed decisions about curriculum and personnel resourcing to support learning and teaching. There is a shared and strategic approach to the provision of equitable learning opportunities for all children, and a targeted approach to accelerating the progress of children who are underachieving.

The principal is leading collaboratively to build the capability of a growing teaching team that includes experienced teachers and those new to the profession. Well-documented induction and appraisal processes provide sufficient support and challenge for teachers to teach effectively. The performance goals of the principal and teachers are linked well to achievement targets and professional learning and development. This clear alignment between the annual achievement targets, and expectations for teaching practice are contributing to a strong focus on raising the achievement children who are at risk of not achieving the expected standard.

The culture for learning is reflective and there are well-developed systems for ongoing evaluation of learning and teaching. Through careful monitoring, teachers have noticed that junior boys are taking much longer than girls to reach the expected National Standard in reading. In 2016, the achievement of this group is being targeted, and progress carefully tracked and reported the parents of identified children, and the board. This work by teachers is raising awareness, and leading to a planned approach to early interventions to accelerate progress of boys in reading in their first two years at school.

The process of teaching as inquiry, where teachers reflect on and share effective strategies to raise the achievement of at risk learners is developing. This process could be enhanced through stronger alignment of school-wide targets with teachers' inquiries, such as strategies to accelerate progress for Māori in mathematics, and junior boys in reading.

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 strong working relationship between the principal and board, and collaborative leadership are contributing to a collective and well-understood vision for learning amongst teachers and increasingly with parents. Developing and embedding agreed best practice for a teaching team, which is newly formed, and likely to grow, is an ongoing leadership priority for the principal. At the core of this work must be building effective teaching practice to plan, assess and teach effectively to raise and accelerate the learning and progress of all children, and in particular Māori and boys who are underachieving.

A positive response to the increasing numbers of Māori children attending the school is evident. Whānau are becoming more involved, and are working alongside the principal and trustees to integrate Māori protocols and values into the daily life of the school. The board and staff are demonstrating a strong commitment to strengthening the culture, language and identity of Māori through the school's charter, curriculum and relationships in the school.

Internal evaluation is well developed, but can be enhanced by:

- further scrutiny of achievement information and inquiry outcomes to identify and sustain effective teaching practices
- specific alignment of targeted groups (junior boys reading, Māori children in mathematics), and teacher inquiries.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

6 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

7 Recommendations

The school should continue to strategically manage change and development in response to increasing numbers of children being enrolled. In addition, consideration should also be given to strengthening the leadership capability across the staff, particularly in curriculum development and review.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynda Pura-Watson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lynda Pura-Watson
Deputy Chief Review Officer

16 November 2016

About the school

Location	Te Poi near Matamata	
Ministry of Education profile number	2014	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	73	
Gender composition	Boys 37 Girls 36	
Ethnic composition	Māori Pākehā Other	19 49 5
Review team on site	August 2016	
Date of this report	16 November 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	May 2013 October 2011 September 2008