



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Otumoetai College  
Tauranga**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Otumoetai College

The purpose of ERO's reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. An ERO school report answers the question "How effectively is this school's curriculum promoting student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?" Under that overarching question ERO reports on the quality of education and learning outcomes for children and for specific groups of children including Māori students, Pacific students and students with special needs. ERO also reports on the quality of the school's systems for sustaining and continuing improvements. The report answers four key questions about the school.

## Findings

### 1 Context

#### What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?

Otumoetai College is a large co-educational state secondary school originally established in 1965. It caters for students in Years 9 to 13 who come from the surrounding suburbs and rural areas of Tauranga. The roll of 1928 includes students from increasingly diverse backgrounds and there are 77 International fee paying students. About 20% of the students are Māori, most of whom affiliate to local iwi, Ngai te Rangi, Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāti Pukenga.

Since the 2013 ERO review, the principal and the chairperson of the board of trustees have remained the same. The principal provides strong leadership underpinned by caring relationships with students, staff and parents. He continues to be supported by capable pastoral, curriculum and administrative leaders. The school has responded to the areas for review and development in the 2013 ERO report. Leaders have introduced initiatives to strengthen culturally responsive relationships, established a closer relationship with local iwi, and focused on raising achievement for learners at risk of underachievement.

The school's vision, *Hangā he hāpori whakapai ākongā, mutunga kore whai pūkenga, mōhiotanga mō ngā ahurea katoa kia eke panuku, eke tangaroa*, is to create a united community of resilient lifelong learners where knowledge, social skills and a culture of care are valued, and where all learners achieve their potential. Clear values of kotahitanga, whanaungatanga, whakaohoho i a tātou, tū maia, and noho ao support this vision and provide students and staff with expectations and guidelines for learning and behaviour.

Students benefit from access to generous facilities that cater for all learning areas, including the Whare Wananga, Okohanga, and a recently refurbished technology block. At the time of this ERO review, the school was involved in ongoing negotiations with the Ministry of Education (MoE) about further refurbishments.

Since 2013, student achievement and engagement levels have improved, and the use of strategic goals and targets, and self-review processes, have been strengthened. Teachers are engaging in a MOE funded professional learning and development initiative, Kia Eke Panuku, to build their knowledge and skills in culturally responsive and relational practices.

The school has a close relationship with the neighbouring Intermediate school and, together with six primary schools and the wharekura, form part of a Community of Learning (CoL).

## 2 Learning

### **How well does this school use achievement information to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement?**

The school gathers and uses a wide range of information about student engagement, wellbeing and achievement to inform decisions about programmes, initiatives, resourcing and goal setting. School leaders use achievement information from nationally referenced assessments in literacy and mathematics to identify the learning needs of students requiring extra support and to inform teachers across all curriculum areas.

School data shows that students in Years 9 and 10 are achieving at similar levels to their peers in the national group. Leaders report to the board about annual trends and patterns of student achievement, identify where there is disparity, and recommend actions to raise achievement. The school is beginning to explore the use of data to measure the effectiveness of teaching practices.

In Years 11 to 13, student achievement in the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) is tracked and monitored throughout the year to help identify students at risk of underachieving. This process is supported by a senior mentoring programme (GROW) and a range of other programmes and initiatives within curriculum areas. Heads of faculties and departments analyse student achievement in NCEA and adjust programmes in response to student needs.

Students enjoy considerable success, regionally, nationally and internationally, in a wide range of subjects, events, and activities. Overall trends and patterns since 2013 in NCEA show improving student achievement in relation to national goals and other similar schools, including for Māori. Results in 2015 indicated that the school has achieved the government target of 85% of students leaving school with Level 2 NCEA. However, there is still disparity between the achievement of Māori and non-Māori. Reducing this disparity continues to be an ongoing priority.

ERO and school leaders agreed that in order to further raise achievement, especially for students at risk of underachieving, and as the school engages with the CoL, it would be timely to review the use of assessment information and reporting in Years 9 and 10 to include:

- the use of diagnostic information, including Year 8 data and learning progressions, to better identify student learning needs and their next steps in learning
- the setting of more specific targets and goals focused on accelerating learning, especially for Māori and boys, and evaluating and acknowledging their success.

## 3 Curriculum

### **How effectively does this school's curriculum promote and support student learning?**

The school's curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning for most students. Curriculum design, guidelines, expectations and pathways are increasingly responsive to the aspirations of students, parents and whānau. Students have opportunities to choose from a wide range of academic and vocationally orientated pathways. Teachers adapt programmes of learning so that students can pursue their subjects of choice to higher levels.

Teachers are knowledgeable, experienced and committed to the learning and progress of students. They have high expectations for learning and behaviour, and carefully explain the purpose of the learning. In each curriculum area, students engage in meaningful, real-life learning contexts, including the increasing use of Māori themes and perspectives. A range of digital technologies

effectively enhances learning opportunities for students at all levels. Positive classroom environments reflect school values, cultural contexts and student learning.

Students with diverse learning needs are very well catered for by dedicated and specialist teachers. Their learning is supported by a range of effective strategies such as hands-on activities, collaborative group work, and cooperative learning. The use of computer technologies supports students' independence and self-directed learning. Students who require extension in their learning are able to do so through the Advanced Learning programmes and classes.

Students benefit from a well-organised, inclusive and caring school culture. A range of initiatives are in place to improve rates of attendance and engagement, promote positive relationships between teachers and students, and reduce disparity in achievement. These include:

- restorative practices and culturally responsive pedagogies
- student-led mentoring and extended form times to support student wellbeing
- designated classes to address particular learning needs, especially in literacy
- Poutama whānau class
- employment of extra personnel to support students at risk of underachieving.

In addition, students are very well supported by effective health, counselling and vocational advice and guidance services. These are provided by dedicated personnel both within the school and through external agencies. Comprehensive pastoral and academic support is provided by deans, Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), youth worker, specialist teachers, senior leaders and staff.

The school has a coherent and strategic approach to building the professional capability of teachers and there is a well-established teaching as inquiry process. Shadow coaching and mentoring for staff has become a vehicle for embedding culturally responsive and relational pedagogies. Aspects of teacher appraisal have been reviewed in line with the requirements of the Education Council.

A next step for professional learning and appraisal is ensuring a strategic approach and adequate resourcing for building the capability of teachers in reducing disparity for Māori learners.

### **How effectively does the school promote educational success for Māori, as Māori?**

The 2013 ERO report identified that the disparity between the achievement levels of Māori and non-Māori was still an area of concern. While there have been some positive trends in Māori engagement and achievement, disparity still remains. The school is responding to this challenge in a range of ways including:

- the introduction of Kia Eke Panuku, an initiative which seeks to improve teaching practice by focusing on relationships of care and connectedness, power sharing with students, ensuring that Māori culture and language is highly visible, and utilising the concept of ako in learning relationships
- strengthening of Māori performing arts
- increasing the presence of tikanga Māori such as pōwhiri, waiata and karakia
- celebrations of success through the Māori awards evening
- strengthening of the relationship with local iwi and co-option of Māori representation on the board.

These measures are beginning to have a positive impact on the attendance, engagement and achievement of Māori students. Areas for improvement include:

- continuing to identify and effectively responding to Māori students whose progress needs accelerating and applying strategies to raise their achievement
- developing clear understandings within each faculty and department about effective and culturally responsive pedagogy and strengthening teacher accountability in these areas
- systematically embedding greater Māori content in the curriculum
- increasing the use of te reo and tikanga Māori throughout the school
- increasing the capacity of the Māori department to provide a wider range of courses that allow students to further enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Māori world.

## **4 Sustainable Performance**

### **How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance?**

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance. This is because:

- the board of trustees effectively serves and represents the school community in its stewardship role
- trustees contribute valuable expertise, knowledge and skills and are committed to equitable outcomes, culturally responsive relationships, and ongoing school improvement
- the principal and senior leaders work collaboratively in leading initiatives that promote successful outcomes for students within a positive school culture
- middle leaders and teachers are increasingly responsive to the strengths and needs of all learners
- students are well supported by high quality pastoral care provisions and are encouraged to experience success in a wide range of academic, sporting, cultural and vocational pursuits
- evidence-based self review, including the use of student voice, is being used throughout the school to guide future direction and decision making
- the school has valuable and extensive links with local and regional community organisations, has increased the ways that it communicates with parents and whānau, and has established a memorandum of understanding with local iwi.

At the time of this ERO review, the board was in the process of consultation with the community to review and redevelop the school's strategic goals and direction. This process, along with participation on the Otumoetai CoL should provide the school with the opportunity to further respond to achievement challenges for students at risk of not achieving, in particular Māori students.

Further building capability in evaluation, self review and critical inquiry will help sustain ongoing improvement across the school.

### **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.

At the time of this ERO review there were 79 international students attending the school, including two exchange students.

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

### **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:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- financial management
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- processes for appointing staff
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

### **Conclusion**

Otumoetai College is a large, well-established secondary school providing comprehensive educational opportunities for students from a wide variety of backgrounds. The school has a positive and welcoming school culture in which teachers encourage students to participate and succeed at all levels. The school has strong links with the community including local iwi.

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



Lynda Pura-Watson  
Deputy Chief Review Officer

26 October 2016

## About the School

Location	Tauranga	
Ministry of Education profile number	120	
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)	
School roll	1928	
Number of international students	79	
Gender composition	Girls 56% Boys 44%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	53%
	Māori	20%
	Other European	6%
	Asian	5%
	Chinese	2%
	Indian	1%
	Pacific	1%
	Other	12%
Review team on site	August 2016	
Date of this report	26 October 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	October 2013
	Education Review	July 2009
	Education Review	June 2006