



Belmont Intermediate School
Belmont, Auckland

Confirmed

Education Review Report

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Belmont Intermediate School

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?

Belmont Intermediate School, on Auckland's North Shore, caters for Year 7 and 8 students. Positive and supportive relationships between staff and students contribute to a school culture that is clearly focused on learning. Frequent communication between teachers and parents about children's wellbeing and progress support the school's culture.

The board of trustees uses a variety of means to gauge community aspirations. The school's charter reflects different groups' views well. There is a well-considered approach to development. For example, recent property development has resulted in flexible learning spaces that promote collaboration between students and easy access to resources. Spacious grounds and facilities cater for students' various academic, cultural and sporting endeavours.

The school's 2012 ERO report noted good quality teaching and learning, strong governance and leadership, and staff collaboration. These positive features continue to be evident. The board of trustees and school leaders have responded well to the areas for development noted in ERO's 2012 report.

2 Learning

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

The school uses achievement information effectively to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement.

Students engage very well in their learning and confidently seek assistance from teachers and their peers when required. They reflect on their learning and how they have achieved their personal goals. Increased opportunities for students to access achievement information enables them to discuss their progress with their parents and whānau.

Most students are achieving at and above the National Standards for reading, writing and mathematics. As a result of the school's concerted focus on raising boys' achievement, there has

been improved achievement for this group of learners during 2015. The school is well on track to meet the Government's 2017 National Standards targets for reading, writing and mathematics.

Teachers and senior leaders modify teaching and learning programmes to suit the requirements of individual students. This good practice helps students who achieve below National Standards to make accelerated progress.

The board of trustees supports senior leaders and teachers to raise achievement for all students. Specific and relevant targets are set by the board and school leaders for groups of learners who are underachieving. Included among these groups are students who have not reached their potential even though they may be achieving well in relation to the National Standards. Well analysed school assessment information helps trustees and school leaders to identify where to allocate additional staffing and resources to support students' learning requirements.

Six percent of the school population identifies as Māori. In 2014, most Māori students achieved at and above the National Standards and at levels similar to their non-Māori peers. Appropriate ongoing achievement information is used effectively to establish targets for Māori students who are not achieving at expected levels.

Pacific students represent two percent of the school roll. While small in number, ERO and the school share a concern that their overall achievement is lower than their non-Pacific peers. The board, senior leaders and teachers could use The Ministry of Education's *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017* as part of their planning to improve outcomes for Pacific learners. Initiatives to improve outcomes for Pacific learners would build on the already successful professional learning and development that has focused on culturally responsive teaching practices.

Students with special learning needs benefit from the school's focus on success for all learners. Their progress is well tracked through the use of individual education plans. Overall school achievement data includes students who attend the school's Learning Support Centre. Appropriate intervention programmes are implemented with parent/whānau involvement.

3 Curriculum

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

The school provides students with a relevant and responsive curriculum that is highly effective in promoting and supporting student engagement in learning, progress and achievement. Student feedback is valued and shapes what they study. The school's curriculum is well aligned to the principles of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (NZC).

The school's community is committed to ensuring that individual students are nurtured, and positively influenced by the strong, healthy community that they are part of.

The school has a well-developed, inclusive culture. Students are encouraged to be kind and generous in spirit. They support each other well in their learning and general development. The school's values promote trusting learning partnerships between teachers and students, and students and their peers. These values complement the school's core competencies and support students to engage in new educational experiences.

Students from the Learning Support Centre appreciate their interactions with peer buddies from mainstream classrooms. There are many and varied opportunities for students with special learning needs to be involved in the everyday life of the school.

The school's broad curriculum caters for the requirements of emerging adolescents. School leaders and teachers have developed a concept-based theme approach. This has increased opportunities for students to draw on their different experiences, capabilities and interests.

Student inquiry learning is an important dimension of the curriculum. Inquiry programmes intellectually challenge students to apply their new understandings to real life situations. They have varied opportunities to develop their literacy and mathematical capabilities in different areas of the curriculum.

Student engagement in learning is enhanced by skilled teachers who provide students with opportunities to:

- set goals and plan learning pathways to reach these goals
- seek and value peer feedback about their work and contributions
- choose what they study.

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

The school promotes educational success for Māori, as Māori well.

The school has strong processes to support its bicultural development. The board and school leaders have successfully used the Government's Māori Education Strategy: *Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success 2013 – 2017* to review ways Māori students and whānau can be best supported to experience educational success as Māori.

Māori are acknowledged and respected as tangata whenua. Māori kawa is observed at school assemblies and important school events. Professional links with the adjoining secondary school have helped teachers promote te Āo Māori.

Māori students hear and see their culture through waiata and mihi. A well planned te reo Māori programme for all students is part of the school's curriculum. Senior leaders and teachers are committed to increasing their knowledge and use of te reo Māori as part of supporting the school's ongoing bicultural development.

The school's strengths in this area help to create a sound platform for Māori students to transition through the educational system as confident learners, grounded in their language, culture and identity.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance. Decision-making is focused on what is best for students.

Regular self review is used by the board and school leaders to identify ways to improve outcomes for students. Curriculum areas are effectively reviewed and recommendations implemented. Effective leadership and governance is promoting consistency across the school's systems and processes. The board's commitment to providing a safe emotional environment for staff and students is apparent in practical measures such as the funding of a part-time counsellor.

The board provides strong clear direction through its consultatively developed strategic planning. Stewardship is evident in the way trustees advocate for strong partnerships between the school and community. Since the 2012 ERO review there has been a drive to develop parent partnerships that are focused on students' learning. The board continues to explore ways to communicate effectively with all parents, including parent groups that have historically been more reticent in expressing their views.

The principal's capable and future-focused leadership helps guide the school's positive direction. He is supported by a senior leadership team that works effectively to implement the school's strategic direction. Considered and well led change management has had a significant, positive influence on student learning by promoting a learner-focused culture. Collaborative decision-making is informed by evidence and reflects current teaching and learning theory.

Teachers and students have varied leadership roles and opportunities. Staff members are valued as professionals and appreciate the school's supportive culture. Most teachers know that their ideas and contributions to school direction are valued and acted on. They are well supported by meaningful appraisal and being involved in different professional learning groups. Teachers use a variety of sources of information, including achievement data to reflect on how they can modify their practice to cater for the diverse learners in their classrooms.

Participation in external networks provides school leaders and teachers with a way to check and refine ideas, and moderate student assessment. Trustees seek training and are receptive to new ideas about how board operations might be refined and enhanced. The board and senior leadership team value the complementary nature of internal and external evaluation. These features contribute positively to the school's continuing improvement.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* (the Code) established under *section 238F of the Education Act 1989*. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

At the time of this review there were twelve international students attending the school. They are well cared for and experience high quality programmes that promote their learning and wellbeing. International students are integrated successfully into the school community. They participate and feature in school cultural and sporting activities.

The school's monitoring system for international students is effectively administered. Parents are informed regularly about how well their children are achieving and progressing. The board receives regular reports on the quality of care for international students. To build on this good practice, the school has identified that collated progress and achievement information could be reported more regularly to the board.

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

Students experience high quality education and they benefit from a broad curriculum that supports their different interests and capabilities. Effective teaching practices cater for diverse students' learning requirements. Positive, supportive interactions and school values contribute to their wellbeing. Parent partnerships in learning are promoted. School governance and leadership is future-focused.

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



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

10 December 2015

About the School

Location	Belmont, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1225	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
School roll	550	
Number of international students	12	
Gender composition	Boys 54% Girls 46%	
Ethnic composition	Māori Pākehā Asian Pacific	6% 79% 13% 2%
Special Features	Learning Support Centre for students with high learning needs	
Review team on site	October 2015	
Date of this report	10 December 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	September 2012 June 2008 May 2004