

Woodford House
Havelock North

Confirmed

Education Review
Report

Education Review Report: Woodford House

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. ERO's reports are intended to be clear, concise, constructive and evaluative. 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.

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

Findings

1 Context

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

Woodford House is an integrated girls' school offering weekly and full boarding for students in Years 7 to 13. The school marked 100 years on the present site in 2011 and many curriculum areas linked their programmes to this celebration. Guiding principles are based on Christian values. Because of the high proportion of boarders, the school intake is more diverse than that of its local community. It has a small roll, 294 at the time of this review, and this enables a 'family feel' when welcoming new students. There is a strong commitment to high achievement and the all-round development of young women to be independent participants in life-long learning. The school programmes reflect the maxim of challenging the future, embracing the present, and cherishing the past. Many of the present students are descendents of pupils who were at the school in 1911 which gives a sense of connection and belonging.

2 Learning

How well are students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Student achievement is consistently high. NCEA results show achievement is well above decile 9 schools and on a par with decile 10 girls' schools. Merit and excellent endorsements, while good, remain a priority for ongoing improvement.

Student data for Years 7 to 10 shows good progress in literacy and numeracy and reports on progress in relation to National Standards in years 7 and 8. A next step is to more rigorously track cohorts through Years 7 to 10 to accelerate progress of individual and groups of students.

Students are highly motivated and engaged in their learning. Relationships with teachers are respectful and natural. As a consequence of this, students are able to freely ask questions and articulate thinking.

Students take ownership of their own learning in many areas. Co-operative learning, along with self and peer assessment, is strong, as is the setting of learning goals.

The holistic development of students is a priority for the school. In addition to the focus on academic progress, students are encouraged to participate in at least two sports activities as well as the wide range of other co-curricular experiences offered. Further, the school ethos, based on Christian values, promotes caring and service to others, and easy alignment with the key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

How well are Māori students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Maori students achieve well, at the same level as their non-Māori peers.

Seamless integration of te reo Māori is evident in the chapel service and in the intermediate classrooms. Strong links forged with local iwi and marae give support for protocols being introduced and the tutoring of the kapa haka group. Māori families are consulted about aspirations for their children. Ka Hikitia is considered by all departments in planning programmes of learning to promote success for Māori. Departments must also comment and reflect on the achievement of their Māori students. Te reo Māori is increasingly used in appropriate ways. These strategies help give Māori students a sense of belonging.

3 Curriculum

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

The curriculum is designed to cater for diverse needs and was developed through lengthy consultation with all stakeholders. A wide range of subjects are offered, including multi-level study and the school continues to seek further subject options. Development of *The New Zealand Curriculum* is continuing. Key competencies have been a focus of professional development and are targeted appropriately in each unit plan. The language around these is used extensively by teachers with students and consistently reported on by teachers, itinerant music teachers and boarding staff.

Teacher-student relationships are highly respectful. This is reflected in the interactions of students with each other.

Leadership opportunities for students are extensive. The school has developed a structured plan for nurturing, developing and emerging leadership. This enables students to serve progressively through all levels of the school. Prefects are appointed in a large number of areas of responsibility and Year 12 boarders have a leadership role in all the boarding houses, training for when they are the senior role models in the school.

School policy is inclusive and student support networks are strong with good communication pathways. As a result of self review, a co-ordinator has been appointed to have oversight of students with diverse learning needs and abilities. The school should continue to develop a rigorous and comprehensive register for students with diverse needs and special abilities.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Trustees have a good understanding of their governance role and a clear vision for the positioning of the school. Strategic planning is a strength. The board is generous with the provision of professional development for staff and have ensured the school is equipped with the most up-to-date information communication technologies for use by teachers and students.

The principal and senior managers are a strong, cohesive team. They are very student focused, being aware of every student's needs. They provide vision and plan for the future. While proud of the successes of their students, they implement effective systems for review and analysis to ensure ongoing improvement. There are clear lines of devolved responsibility for monitoring curriculum, academic progress and pastoral care. This denotes a culture of building capability.

School leaders have a sound understanding of the value and purpose of evidence-based review methodology. This is now permeating through the school by means of the structures put in place. These include department annual reviews and goal setting, the links required in the performance management process for staff, and the three year review plan structure now in place by the board.

Professional development has focused on teaching as inquiry as an aspect of implementing *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Many teachers are already routinely seeking student feedback, and keeping reflective diaries. Teachers inquiring into the effectiveness of their teaching by close scrutiny of student achievement data should continue to develop. There is a need for shared understanding from all staff about the importance of literacy and numeracy data to inform teaching and to fully differentiate learning experiences in the classroom.

The intermediate area has addressed concerns raised in the 2008 review, and development of the programmes is ongoing. The new teaching team are enthusiastic, supportive of each other and hard working. The focus has been on literacy and numeracy. They have implemented National Standards and are well on the way with the ongoing development of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. The model used for the development of a progressive science curriculum for Years 7 to 10, in conjunction with the head of science, provides a good example of cohesive and well-linked planning.

There is effective communication with parents and whānau. As well as twice yearly formal reports and parent/teacher interviews, frequent grading reports are sent out to inform parents about progress. These include student self-grading and teacher assessment on relevant key competencies, and indicative grades for assessments completed to date. Information meetings, often with stimulating speakers, are held at the beginning or end of each term and provide an important networking time for parents.

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. At the time of this review there were no international students attending the school.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough.

Provision for students in the school hostel

The school hostels, Morea (Years 7/8 and 12), Woodford (Years 9 and 12), Nelson (Years 10 and 12), Richards (Years 11 and 12), and Holland (Year 13), accommodate 59% of the school roll (174 students) and has boarding capacity for 205. It is owned by Woodford House and managed by the Board of Proprietors. Students may be weekly or full boarders. Each Hostel has a House Matron and all hostels are overseen by the Boarding Manager.

The high proportion of boarders impacts on all aspects of school organisation. Student well-being and education are successfully supported by:

- a well-considered programme and initiatives for transitioning boarders to the school
- promoting the development of independence and self management in young women
- sound and effective lines of communication between school, houses and home
- a pastoral care network which monitors all aspects of the holistic development of students
- providing a family atmosphere reflecting the special character of the school
- on-site health centre (offering nurse, doctor, guidance counsellor, orthodontist and physiotherapist)
- encouragement to fully participate in the wide range of activities offered by the school, in particular sports involvement
- a structured programme to nurture and build leadership
- a Christian ethos of caring and service
- extensive access to on-site school resources
- mandated preparation time to embed the homework habit
- inculcating a sense of belonging through awareness of the school history.

Girls spoken with were appreciative of the friendships they formed.

Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of the school completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. 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 students' achievement:

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

The board must ensure that the school's swimming pool water quality meets the requirements set out in paragraph 32.4 of the Ministry of Education's 'Health and Safety Code of Practice for State and State Integrated Schools'.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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



Kathleen Atkins
National Manager Review Services
Central Region

9 September 2011

About the School

Location	Havelock North	
Ministry of Education profile number	225	
School type	Integrated Girls' Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
Decile ¹	9	
School roll	294	
Gender composition	Female 100%	
Ethnic composition	New Zealand European/Pākehā	93%
	Māori	2%
	Other ethnic groups	5%
Special Features	Day and boarding	
Review team on site	June 2011	
Date of this report	9 September 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	June 2005
	Education Review	August 2002
	Accountability Review	October 1998

¹ School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrate schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides