

ERO External Evaluation

Otago Boys' High School, Dunedin

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

Otago Boys' High School is a state secondary school for boys in Dunedin. The school has a roll of 815 students in Years 9 - 13.

The school's vision is for 'our boys (to) become confident, resilient men with a sense of purpose - prepared to explore, and contribute to a changing world'. The vision is underpinned by the values of Respect (Manaaki), Excellence (Hiranga), Courage (Kaha), Honour (Hōnore) and Perseverance (Pakepake).

Key strategic goals are:

- our curriculum - measure and monitor the learning journey
- our teachers - professional development building and supporting teacher capability
- our community - maintain an inclusive school environment
- our resources - ensuring the alignment of the school vision, mission and values with those of the school
- our infrastructure - the best learning environment for staff and students.

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

- achievement of boys in Years 9 and 10 in relation to levels of the New Zealand Curriculum
- achievement in relation to the New Zealand Qualifications Framework
- engagement and wellbeing for success.

Since the previous ERO review there have been personnel changes at middle and senior leadership levels. The recently elected board is a mix of experienced and new trustees.

The off-site hostel, School House, has a roll of 136 students.

The school is part of a Ministry of Education funded wellbeing initiative.

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 effectively supporting most students to achieve the school's broad, valued equity and excellence outcomes. Most students achieve academically at or above expected New Zealand Curriculum and New Zealand Qualification Framework levels.

School learning information shows that over time:

- almost all students, including most Māori students, consistently achieved NCEA Level 1
- most students, including Māori students, consistently achieved at or near national expectations for achievement in NCEA Level 2
- a large majority of students consistently achieved NCEA Level 3, with significant improvement in 2018
- a majority of students achieved university entrance, with significant improvement in 2018
- most Year 9 and 10 students made expected progress in literacy and numeracy.

Assessment practices for students with additional needs are individualised and provide information about individual progress and achievement. The school actively addresses students' wellbeing.

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

The school can show that for the 2016 Year 9 cohort there was accelerated progress for Māori and Pacific students to achieve NCEA Level 1 in 2018. All students who need to make accelerated progress in their learning are identified, planned for and closely monitored schoolwide.

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?

Students are progressively leading their own learning, supported by a number of school-wide initiatives including learner capabilities, student feedback and voice, and wide-ranging opportunities for leadership. The focus on student leadership in learning, sport, culture and service provides opportunities for modelling tuakana teina, while showing respect for school traditions. Future focused initiatives are increasingly preparing students for success in and beyond school.

A broad local curriculum is focused on building literacy skills and enables students to follow their strengths and passions. A deliberate focus on student wellbeing, including 'Above the Hoops' and other positive behaviour initiatives, is contributing to a positive school culture, a stronger foundation for student learning, and a renewed focus on school values. Approaches to student learning and wellbeing are systematic and coherent.

The board of trustees and school leaders effectively serve the school and its community. Leaders collaboratively develop and pursue the school's vision, goals and targets for equity and excellence. They consistently model school values and high quality practice. Informed decisions for school improvement are research based and supported by strong data management, and knowing the needs and learning pathways of all students.

Leaders build high trust and learner-focused relationships with families, whānau, and other education providers to increase opportunities for students. Strategic recruitment practices are building capability and capacity schoolwide. Students participate, learn, progress and achieve in caring, collaborative and inclusive learning communities. Student learning, wellbeing, achievement and progress are the board's core concern.

2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

The school has identified, and ERO agrees, that next steps for schoolwide improvement are to continue to:

- strengthen the alignment of strategic priorities with professional reflection and classroom practices, including teaching as inquiry
- develop culturally responsive practices, including school-wide understanding and application of tikanga Māori and te reo Māori.

3 Other Matters

Provision for students in the school hostel

The school hostel, School House, accommodates up to 150 students. At the time of this review there were 136 students in residence, including 12 international students. This represents 16% of the school roll. The hostel is owned by the Otago Boys' High School Board of Trustees. The owner has attested that all requirements of the Hostel Regulations have been met. ERO's investigation confirms that there are sound processes to manage students' safety and support their learning.

Since the 2016 ERO review, a new director of boarding and other key staff have been appointed, and a parent governance committee has been established. More robust systems and practices for managing boarders' leave arrangements and homework time have been implemented. Hostel policies have been reviewed and are aligned with the policies of the school.

Boarders value the close relationships they form over their time together in the hostel. Older boys are mentors and role models for younger boys. A refurbished indoor recreation space provides opportunities for all age groups to socialise. Personal development programmes for boarders at each level are delivered over the course of the year.

Hostel students benefit from the close alignment of learning and wellbeing strategies with those in place in the school. Communication between school and hostel leaders, and whānau, supports boarders' participation in all aspects of school and boarding life.

As the school seeks to maintain valued traditions while providing a modern boarding experience, hostel management would benefit from the development of a strategic plan that defines the vision and expected culture of the hostel. Senior boarders require greater clarity about their roles and expectations and would benefit from further leadership experiences. Regular, anonymous surveys of boarders would help to inform decision making.

Provision for international students

Otago Boys' High School is a signatory to The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's processes for reviewing compliance against the code are robust, well documented and lead to change where needed.

At the time of this review, there were 35 international students attending the school.

The international students are engaged in a programme that is personalised to meet their learning goals. Individual progress and achievement for each student is carefully monitored and reported on. Students receive effective support for learning English, with teachers providing a variety of programmes that are focussed on meeting their future needs. Students are well integrated into the school community and participate in a range of activities beyond the classroom.

International students' pastoral support and accommodation arrangements are closely monitored by a caring and effective team of well-qualified staff. Students have a choice of either homestay accommodation or living at the school hostel.

4 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.

5 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Otago Boys' High School's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

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

6 Going forward

Key strengths of the school

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

- a leadership team that collaboratively develops and pursues the school's vision, goals and targets for equity and excellence
- a research based approach to teaching and learning which informs decisions for school improvement
- a supportive environment that allows students to progressively lead their own learning and follow their own individualised pathways.

Next steps

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

- closer alignment of strategic priorities with professional reflection and teaching as inquiry processes to strengthen classroom practices
- extending culturally responsive practices to improve schoolwide understanding and application of tikanga and te reo Māori.



Dr Lesley Patterson
Director Review and Improvement Services Southern
Southern Region
26 September 2019

About the school

Location	Dunedin										
Ministry of Education profile number	377										
School type	Secondary Years 9-13										
School roll	815										
Gender composition	Boys 100%										
Ethnic composition	<table> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NZ European/Pākehā</td> <td>67%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnicities</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </table>	Māori	13%	NZ European/Pākehā	67%	Pacific	7%	Asian	11%	Other ethnicities	2%
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Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes										
Provision of Māori medium education	No										
Review team on site	August 2018										
Date of this report	26 September 2019										
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review August 2016 Education Review December 2012 Education Review June 2009										