

# Hutt Intermediate Education Review

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## About the School

Location	Lower Hutt	
Ministry of Education profile number	2863	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
School roll	645	
Gender composition	Male 52% Female 48%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	66%
	Māori	16%
	Pacific	4%
	Other ethnic groups	14%
Review team on site	March 2013	
Date of this report	13 May 2013	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	November 2009
	Education Review	December 2006
	Education Review	October 2003

## The Purpose of an ERO Report

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.

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# 1 Context

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

Hutt Intermediate is situated in the Lower Hutt suburb of Woburn. It has a growing roll of Years 7 and 8 students from a range of contributing primary schools and from increasingly diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Since the November 2009 ERO report, the senior leadership team, comprising the principal and three senior leaders, has been involved in leading significant initiatives and developments. These changes centre on the school's vision, expectations for student achievement, leadership, organisational learning and school improvement. At the time of the ERO review, many teachers were new to the school and some of these are beginning teachers.

Communications with contributing schools and local secondary schools by senior leaders and staff support smooth transitions into Year 7 and Year 9. Expectations for learning and development are promoted through the shared values of excellence, resilience and respect in a supportive learning atmosphere. Positive relationships and pride in the school are evident.

## 2 Learning

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

Overall, students are well engaged in their learning.

School leaders use nationally referenced assessment data and National Standards information to review performance twice a year. This information is appropriately analysed to report schoolwide achievement in literacy and mathematics, identify priority learners and set targets for accelerating their progress and achievement.

The school's information, at the end of 2012, shows that the majority of students achieve at or above in relation to the National Standards for reading, writing and mathematics. It indicates that Māori and Pacific students are over represented in the achievement bands below expectations when compared with their peers. These groups are included in the board's improvement targets.

Teachers use information to guide teaching and learning. Parents receive two written reports on their child's progress and achievement each year. While the mid-year report predicts how a student may be achieving in relation to the National Standards, by the end of the year, final reports do not clearly indicate progress against these Standards or how parents can help at home. Professional development is being undertaken to help teachers improve their knowledge of assessment practices, including working with the Standards.

An inclusive culture is evident. Good provision is made for students with high learning and behavioural needs. They are supported by teacher-aides and their progress is well monitored. Students who are gifted and talented participate in a range of programmes and activities to extend their learning.

Senior leaders have identified variations in progress made by priority learners and monitoring and assessment practices across the school. The school's next steps for development include:

- strengthening schoolwide processes for robust moderation of teacher judgements
- continuing to support teachers to gain a shared understanding about how to form overall judgements in relation to the National Standards
- continuing to identify targeted students within classrooms and teaching deliberately to accelerate their progress
- clarifying expectations for an accelerated rate of progress

- providing trustees with regular progress and achievement reports for students identified in the board's annual targets
- reporting student progress and achievement in relation to National Standards to parents, at least twice a year, in plain language that includes ways to help at home.

### 3 Curriculum

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

The school provides a broad-based curriculum for students' holistic development. They experience a wide range of programmes across the eight learning areas as defined in The New Zealand Curriculum. A strong focus on raising achievement in mathematics and literacy is evident.

Teachers work and learn collaboratively. They are beginning to reflect on their practice so they can be more responsive to the needs of priority learners. Beginning teachers are well supported to develop their professional skills and knowledge.

For some students, engagement as self-managing learners is promoted through shared expectations, an inquiry approach and use of e-learning tools. Leaders have identified the need to develop the assessment policy and procedures to provide clearer guidelines for improving classroom practice and enhancing learning and achievement for all students. Leaders also need to ensure that curriculum review is carried out to determine how effectively programmes and teaching respond to students' needs and interests.

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

Students have opportunities to affirm their identity and are supported to succeed as Māori. Their iwi affiliations are known to the school. Provision and opportunities have increased for leadership development and performing arts, especially through the Tamariki O Ngā Tupuna student liaison group. Students with language abilities are encouraged to support their peers and teachers' learning of te reo Māori.

Consultation and partnerships with whānau and community have progressed since the previous ERO report. Annual meetings, surveys and local marae visits encourage dialogue and the sharing of aspirations. It is timely that trustees and senior leaders develop an action plan to reflect the measures and strategies necessary for promoting Māori educational success and extending cultural competencies across the school.

## 4 Sustainable Performance

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

Consolidation and refinement are needed in several aspects of operation for the school to be better placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The vision, values and strategic direction are evident in school planning and operation. The school is refining and developing its capacity to embed initiatives to improve leadership, professional learning and practices to improve outcomes for students. It is timely for leaders to evaluate the impact of these initiatives on staff capability and student success.

Senior leaders and teachers are promoting professional learning through planned development opportunities and initiation of individual coaching and mentoring. Teachers and leaders are developing their ability to use student information to evaluate their own practice and improve effectiveness in raising achievement, especially for priority learners. Senior leaders need to ensure that teachers are well supported and consistency is promoted.

A recent review of performance management policies and procedures has led to clearer guidelines and expectations for staff appointments, appraisal processes and links to overall school performance improvement. Procedures have recently been extended to include criteria from Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners, to appropriately strengthen teachers' cultural competencies.

An experienced trustee chairs an outgoing board which is representative of the school's diverse community. In future, to improve knowledge and confidence in governance roles and responsibilities, all trustees should be equipped with up-to-date guidelines and regular training. This should include development of shared expectations and processes for self review of how well school priorities and charter goals have been met.

Next steps to improve the use of resources and maximise the impact of strategies for school improvement include:

- continuing to strengthen performance development processes to give greater focus to improving students' progress and achievement.

### 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.

During the review it was found that reporting to parents did not meet the national requirements.

In order to meet legislative requirements the board of trustees, through the principal and staff, must:

- report to students and their parents on the students' progress and achievement in relation to National Standards. Reporting to parents in plain language in writing must be at least twice a year.

[National Administration Guidelines 2A(a)]

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Joyce Gebbie  
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