

**Greta Valley School**  
**Amberley, North Canterbury**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Greta Valley 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?**

Greta Valley School is a small, rural school in North Canterbury set in attractive and well-maintained grounds.

Students learn in two mixed-aged classes. The small roll allows the school staff to know all students and their families well. There is a strong focus on fostering student wellbeing and creating a positive and inclusive school culture.

Positive relationships exist among students, staff, the board and parents. The board and staff provide appropriate care and support for students. Positive partnerships with families and the local community are fostered.

The board, leaders and staff have made progress in addressing the recommendations from the December 2011 ERO report. Teachers have had professional development to broaden the ways they extend and challenge students' learning. They have continued to strengthen their reflective practices.

There have been some changes in staff since the 2011 ERO review, including the principal.

### 2 Learning

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

Student achievement information is used well to support individual learner's engagement, progress and achievement.

The school's 2013 achievement information shows that most students achieve at or above the National Standards. School leaders use this information to set appropriate and specific charter targets for all students. This helps trustees and teaching staff focus on lifting student achievement levels.

Teachers use thorough processes for identifying, responding to and tracking the progress of students most at risk of not achieving in reading, writing and mathematics. The board makes good provision for additional resourcing to help students become more successful with their learning. Teachers and the experienced teacher aide work effectively together to support groups and individual students. Teachers plan appropriate programmes to meet the varying abilities and needs of all students.

ERO observed students who were interested and actively participating in their learning. They were supportive of one another in their learning and play. Senior students have many opportunities to develop and use their leadership skills.

The principal and teachers have sound processes in place to support students' positive transition into school.

Students' progress and learning is regularly shared with parents in a number of formal and informal ways. Parents are provided with an end-of-year report that shows how well students are achieving against the National Standards. Teachers should now review these reports to ensure that they give clear information about student progress and achievement, next steps for learning and how parents can help at home.

The principal and teachers have identified, and ERO agrees, that priority should also be given to strengthening teachers' knowledge of and extending the quality and use of achievement information.

### **3 Curriculum**

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

The school's curriculum is well designed and useful in promoting and supporting students' learning and engagement.

The school's values and vision are clearly evident in the environment. They are used to help students become independent learners and develop skills to interact successfully with others. Teachers make regular use of the school's 'Skills for Success' guidelines in their planning to reinforce students' understanding.

Students are provided with a broad range of interesting and varied learning experiences, within and beyond the school. They have access to a wide variety of resources, and technologies, to help engage them in learning. Teachers use the local community and environment to make learning meaningful for students.

The principal and teachers have close contact with a number of other schools in the area. This provides students with many opportunities to work with a wider group of students. Teachers are able to share their expertise and ideas. Regular use of external agencies assists teachers to provide targeted learning programmes.

The principal and teachers work collaboratively. Good use is made of their individual strengths. They are highly reflective and consider different ways to improve learning outcomes for students.

The principal and teachers have identified, and ERO agrees, that it is timely to review aspects of the school's curriculum. This includes:

- extending teaching and learning expectations for some learning areas
- providing the board with student achievement and progress in other learning areas beyond literacy and mathematics.

The board is aware of the need to consult the school community about the school's values and vision. It plans to do this as part of its strategic review in 2014.

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

The school actively promotes educational successes for Māori as Māori.

The school's 2014 achievement information shows that Māori students are achieving at similar rates to their peers, particularly in reading and mathematics.

Teachers provide opportunities for all students to learn te reo and tikanga Māori. The recent school community visit to a marae supported the development of understandings of te ao Māori.

The board and school staff are highly committed to the ongoing strengthening of bicultural perspectives and practices. They have made plans for external training with local schools to increase teachers' knowledge of, and confidence in using, te reo and tikanga Māori.

The board has provided opportunities for consultation with the Māori community. Trustees are aware that they need to consider a range of ways to successfully include all Māori families in this process.

## **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.

The principal and board provide effective leadership and governance. They are developing useful systems to support ongoing school improvements. The board and principal communicate effectively and work well together.

Trustees are proactive in supporting positive outcomes for students. They provide specific resourcing to promote student learning and are highly focused on improvement.

The board has a useful range of experience and expertise. Trustees are knowledgeable about the operation of the school. They are well supported to develop a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They participate in ongoing governance training. The board has introduced some worthwhile self-review processes to monitor the effectiveness of school and board operation.

The board is aware of the need to plan for succession to sustain the effective governance and management of the school.

The school is well supported by its community. The board, principal and teachers use a range of effective ways communicate with parents, whānau and the community. Trustees are actively involved in the life of the school.

The board and principal have identified that the current strategic plan is due to be reviewed. They are considering the best ways to consult with the community as part of this process.

Since the on-site stage of the review, the principal has developed a process for appraisal and attestation that includes the Registered Teachers Criteria. He has also developed a process for regularly appraising support staff.

### **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**

The school's achievement information is used well at an individual level, to support learner engagement, progress and achievement. The curriculum is well designed and useful in promoting and supporting students' learning and wellbeing. Māori students are well supported to experience success as Māori. The principal and board provide effective leadership and governance.

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



Graham Randell  
National Manager Review Services  
Southern Region

14 October 2014

## About the School

Location	Amberley, North Canterbury	
Ministry of Education profile number	3359	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	36	
Gender composition	Boys 21 Girls 15	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā Māori Samoan	28 7 1
Review team on site	August 2014	
Date of this report	14 October 2014	
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review Education Review Education Review	December 2011 September 2008 October 2005