

# Diamond Harbour School Education Review

- 1 Context
- 2 Learning
- 3 Curriculum
- 4 Sustainable Performance
- School Statistics

# 1 Context

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

Diamond Harbour School is located in a semirural district. It has strong links with, and enjoys significant support from, its community. Leaders and teachers make very good use of the local environment and people to enhance students' learning.

Over the last three years the school's roll has grown and there have been changes in staff. It has successfully retained its whānau-like environment over this time. Students learn in seven multilevel classes.

A new kindergarten has been built within the school grounds. Close relationships between the school and the kindergarten help children to transition easily to school.

Ongoing links with other local schools extend the learning opportunities for students, and increasingly for teachers.

Since the school's 2012 ERO report, the board, school leaders and staff have successfully retained and built on the strengths noted at that time. They have made very good progress towards addressing the areas identified for improvement including those related to teaching and learning.

## 2 Learning

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

The school makes very good use of achievement information to help improve learning opportunities for students.

Teachers know students and families very well. They gather and analyse a wide range of student achievement information. This knowledge helps them to make accurate judgements about students' achievement and progress.

Effective use of achievement information is most evident in the way the principal and teachers:

- identify and regularly monitor student progress, particularly those most at risk of not achieving success
- increasingly provide feedback to students that affirms their progress and clarifies their next learning steps
- provide informative reports to parents about their child's achievement and collaboratively develop their children's learning goals
- establish clear targets for raising student achievement and often respond to assessment findings by modifying teaching programmes, groupings and practices.

The school provides a significant variety of well organised, taught and evaluated additional support, as well as interesting enrichment opportunities for students.

Leaders regularly analyse a range of easily accessible achievement information in literacy and mathematics. They use this information to provide regular, detailed reports to the board. Trustees consider these reports carefully and make well-informed decisions about how best to support learners.

### 3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum promotes and supports student learning very well. It is most successful in promoting student achievement in reading and mathematics where over 85% of students achieve at or above the national standards. Student progress over time is most evident in written language.

Students display a positive attitude to learning, think critically and actively support one another. Older students in particular are developing the skills associated with becoming increasingly independent learners. Many students experience success in sporting and cultural events.

The school's curriculum guidelines continue to be updated in ways that provide useful guidance for teachers, with clear links to the New Zealand Curriculum. Associated documents clarify expectations around student learning and teaching practices.

Students take part in a rich, varied and well planned range of learning experiences. These provide students with very good opportunities to achieve success across the curriculum, including environmental studies. Programmes include a good mix of activities both within, and beyond the school. Students appreciate the variety of learning opportunities they are able to take part in.

Teachers make learning meaningful for students. Programmes are often well integrated, build on students' previous learning, and take into account their interests. Activities also relate to students' everyday lives. The board funds tutors to help students achieve success in areas such as sport and music.

Teachers make consistent use of a variety of teaching practices that are successfully engaging students and fostering their learning. For instance:

- teaching is purposeful and activities are often challenging
- programmes, including group and individual teaching, take into account the range of student strengths and needs within classes
- teachers' questioning and promptings help to extend students' thinking, and problem solving skills
- teachers are supporting students to learn how to learn and to help them to use digital technologies effectively.

The school provides students with a supportive, inclusive, learning-focused environment. The active promotion of the school's values helps to create an environment in which positive and respectful relationships, and significant levels of peer-to-peer support exist. School practices help to foster students' sense of wellbeing and belonging.

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

Māori students are being well supported to achieve success. They achieve at similar levels to their peers in literacy and mathematics. The positive, inclusive school environment helps to affirm students' culture, identity and language.

Leaders, teachers and the board are incorporating increasing levels of te reo and tikanga Māori into teaching programmes and school practices. This is particularly evident in the values the school promotes. Students have regular opportunities to participate in cultural activities, including kapa haka and visits to local marae.

The board is completing a useful action plan to help support and further develop practices that support Māori success and promote bicultural understandings.

## 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. A strong sense of partnerships exists between the board, leaders and staff with them actively working towards achieving shared goals.

The principal and deputy principal work together to provide strong professional leadership. They have high expectations, and a strong focus on raising student achievement, through promoting school improvement.

Leadership and management structures provide a very good framework for the school's operation. Good use is made of staff strengths. Leadership practices promote teamwork, collaboration and a positive school culture.

Leaders' reflective practices, self review and active seeking of advice and ideas lead to well-considered innovations. Targeted professional development and support is extending staff capability and enhancing the quality of education students receive.

The board performs its stewardship role, and serves its community, very well. Trustees bring a good range of skills and experiences to their roles. They provide clear direction and actively support initiatives designed to improve teaching and learning. For instance, they provide additional staffing, update and extend school resources, and ensure professional development is well funded.

Trustees are well informed through an increasing range of self reviews, detailed reports by the principal and rigorous board discussions. These practices promote informed decision making and ongoing improvement

The board, leaders and staff, promote strong school/community relationships that result in the school and students being very well supported.

The board has good systems in place to help it meet statutory requirements.

Areas for review and development

ERO agrees with the priorities the board and leaders have identified for school improvement. These include:

- exploring further ways of raising student achievement in written language

- building on practices that promote learning focused partnerships with parents
- embedding and building on initiatives around inquiry learning and teaching as inquiry.

The board and school leaders should also consider refining aspects of their planning, and self-review practices to enhance their usefulness.

### 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 take part in a rich, varied and well planned range of experiences that successfully promotes their learning. The school provides students with a supportive, inclusive, learning-focused environment. Effective governance and leadership means that the school is in a strong position to sustain and continue to improve the quality of education it provides for students.

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

Chris Rowe  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern (Acting)

17 September 2015

## School Statistics

Location	Diamond Harbour, Banks Peninsula	
Ministry of Education profile number	3327	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	151	
Gender composition	Girls 45%; Boys 55%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	77%
	Māori	4%
	Samoan	1%
	Other European	17%
	Asian	1%
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	17 September 2015	
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review	September 2012
	Education Review	December 2008
	Education Review	December 2005