



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Rimu School**  
**Invercargill**

**Education Review Office**

**External Evaluation**

# ERO External Evaluation

## Rimu School

### 1 Context

This school is a rural school where children learn in five multi-level classes. The school has a growing roll and is attended by children from diverse backgrounds. There is an enrolment scheme in place.

At the time of this evaluation, the principal was about to leave and the board was in the process of appointing a new principal. There is a mix of experienced and beginning teachers. An experienced board governs the school.

In recent years the school has participated in the Ministry of Education's Accelerating Learning in Mathematics professional development programme.

### 2 Equity and excellence

The school's vision is 'enriching education with country values'. It aims to provide the highest standard of education for students by providing enriching experiences which create connected, confident, life-long learners striving for their personal best.

The school's achievement information shows that from 2013 to 2015 most children achieved at or above the National Standards in reading. The proportion of children achieving National Standards in writing has varied. At the end of 2015, 75% of children were at or above the National Standards in writing. A smaller percentage of children achieved at or above the National Standards in mathematics. The percentage of Māori children achieving at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics reflects the same trends.

The school has continued to strengthen its moderation processes to support reliable teacher judgements about children's achievement. The school has reviewed and strengthened its guidelines for teaching writing and the way it makes judgements about children's achievement levels in writing. The focus of professional development for teachers is the teaching of writing.

Since the 2013 ERO evaluation, the school has made very good progress in the areas identified for development. These include:

- students being more involved in setting goals for their learning and knowing about their progress and achievement
- the completion of the school's curriculum guidelines and development of ongoing and formal review processes
- good processes for ensuring the school's high expectations for assessment, planning and teaching are being implemented
- more useful long and short-term board planning which is regularly monitored and reported against.

In addition there has been considerable development in positive relationships and communication with parents, whānau and community.

### **3 Accelerating achievement**

#### **How effectively does this school respond to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?**

This school effectively responds to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration.

Teachers make good use of a wide range of assessment tools and practices to get to know children's learning needs and identify those needing extra support. They use learning information to plan specific teaching to accelerate children's progress and achievement. Teachers work collaboratively with external specialists to develop their capability to respond to individual children's learning needs. Leaders and teachers regularly review and monitor how children are progressing. A next step is to ensure teachers make good use of information about children's progress to critically evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

Parents/whānau are well informed about how teachers plan to support their child's learning and are actively involved in reinforcing learning at home. Children, teachers and parents/whānau together set specific learning goals for children and regularly discuss children's progress towards these.

Teachers actively engage children in their learning by:

- linking learning to authentic contexts and experiences
- making the purpose of learning clear
- providing children with criteria for assessing their own and other's learning.

In addition to the verbal feedback they receive, children would benefit from more regular, specific written feedback about what they are doing well and their next learning steps.

Leaders and teachers analyse school achievement information and use it to identify:

- groups of children needing additional support
- aspects of the curriculum that need to be focused on to further lift children's engagement and achievement.

Trustees fund a range of additional learning support for those children who are at risk of not achieving the National Standards.

### **4 School conditions**

#### **How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence?**

This school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices effectively develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and targets for equity and excellence.

Children's learning benefits from an inclusive, caring environment. Positive, respectful relationships are highly evident at all levels of the school. This reflects the work the school community has done to identify its 'country values' and integrate these in all aspects of school life.

Children experience a well-designed curriculum that makes good use of the local environment and expertise in the community. The curriculum has a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, and encouraging children to care for the environment. The principal, with teachers, has developed comprehensive, high quality guidelines for teaching and learning at the school. They now need to ensure that planned, regular curriculum reviews focus on 'how well' the curriculum design and delivery support children's learning.

Parents of Māori and Pacific children spoken to by ERO expressed high levels of satisfaction with the teaching and support for their children. They value the way teachers respond to the individual needs of their children. Parents are welcomed and included in the school. Children experience aspects of te reo and te ao Māori in learning activities. The school needs to continue to strengthen the teaching of te reo Māori and integration of Māori perspectives across the curriculum.

Teachers participate in well-planned, relevant professional development that is clearly linked to school goals and children's needs. Appraisal processes effectively foster teachers' professional practice. Beginning teachers receive high quality mentoring. Teachers collaborate effectively to:

- build shared understandings of effective practice
- provide continuity of learning through the levels of the school
- share responsibility for all children's success in learning.

Leadership has high expectations for quality teaching and learning, and student outcomes. Leadership ensures effective planning. Teachers are empowered to use their strengths and develop their leadership capability. The principal has intentionally worked alongside a senior teacher to plan for the sustainability of these.

The principal and board make good use of feedback from students and families/whānau to inform improvement.

The board receives regular reports on children's achievement and uses these to make strategic resourcing decisions. These reports need to consistently identify the rate of progress children are making and whether or not this meets expectations. This will help trustees to better know what is working and for whom.

The board has very good policies, procedures and guidelines in place to ensure sustainable, effective governance.

## **5 Going forward**

### **How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?**

This school is well placed to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it.

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

This school has many effective practices to accelerate the learning of children who need to do so. With the upcoming change of school leadership, the board recognises the need to ensure these practices are sustained.

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

## 6 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 the following:

- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

## 7 Recommendation

ERO recommends that the school implement the next steps identified in this report, which are to:

- report on the rate of progress children are making in their learning
- ensure internal evaluations are more evaluative than descriptive
- continue to develop the rigour and quality of teachers' investigations into the effectiveness of their teaching
- continue to strengthen teachers' capability to teach aspects of te reo and tikanga Māori.



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Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern

14 November 2016

## About the school

Location	Invercargill	
Ministry of Education profile number	4006	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	117	
Gender composition	Girls: 48% Boys: 52%	
Ethnic composition	Māori Pākehā Samoan Other	27% 61% 3% 9%
Review team on site	September 2016	
Date of this report	14 November 2016	
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review Education Review Education Review	August 2013 March 2010 December 2006