

Kea Street Specialist School Education Review

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About the School

Location	Rotorua	
Ministry of Education profile number	1772	
School type	Specialist School (Years 1 - 15)	
Decile [1]	2	
School roll	49	
Gender composition	Boys 30 Girls 19	
Ethnic composition	NZ Māori	31
	NZ European/Pākehā	15
	Indian	1
	Other European	1
	Samoan	1
Special Features	Five Satellite Classes	
Review team on site	August 2011	
Date of this report	21 October 2011	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	October 2008
	Education Review	November 2005
	Education Review	June 2002

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.

[1]

School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides

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1 Context

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

Kea Street Specialist School provides education for students with intellectual and physical disabilities from the greater Rotorua and Taupo area. It caters for students between the ages of five and 21 years both at the Kea Street base school in the western area of Rotorua, and at satellite classes located at Mountview School in Taupo, Kaitao Intermediate School, Malfroy School, and Western Heights Primary School in Rotorua. In 2010 an additional satellite class was established at Owhata School. Currently 49 students are enrolled, of whom 31 are Māori.

Since the previous review, a new principal has been appointed and there has been a significant change of teaching staff. The principal has a strong focus on school improvement. She has quickly gained the trust and support of the board, staff, and community. The roll in the base school and satellite classes has grown from 34 to 49 students. Under the guidance of the new principal, the school has addressed the areas identified for improvement in the last ERO review.

2 Learning

How well are students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Student engagement is well supported by the positive learning culture that is being established in the school. Teachers know students very well and show high levels of empathy for their individual learning and care needs. They place strong emphasis on providing a safe physical and emotional environment, where students' individuality is respected.

Student achievement and progress are the focus of individual education plans (IEPs), which are developed in consultation with parents. Together with recently devised and improved assessment profiles, these plans identify learning pathways for each student. They include relevant expectations from The New Zealand Curriculum and the Central Regional Specialist School's Curriculum frameworks.

Teachers need to strengthen the links between information from IEPs and assessment profiles and their class and individual planning. This should better enable them to focus their teaching more closely on the identified goals for each student.

School leaders should consider collating information about student progress against their IEP goals to demonstrate and celebrate school-wide student achievement and to inform decision-making.

How well does the school promote Māori student success and success as Māori?

There is a high proportion of Māori students in the school, and Māori culture is increasingly promoted and valued in class programmes and school-wide events. Recently, an acknowledged Māori leader has agreed to act as the school's kaumātua, providing strong links to the local Māori community. This recognition and inclusion of Māori perspectives is contributing to a sense of belonging for students and their whānau.

3 Curriculum

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

Dedicated and committed teachers provide programmes that are responsive to each student's needs and potential. Teachers are supported by experienced and knowledgeable teacher aides and specialists such as occupational therapists, orientation and mobility therapists, speech language therapists and physiotherapists. They use a wide range of effective teaching strategies to engage students' interests and participation. Life skills and sensory experiences are integrated in daily routines and learning activities. Students have regular opportunities to interact with the wider community through activities such as gymnastics, swimming and horse riding for the disabled. Students' responsiveness to music and dance is harnessed to develop their physical, expressive and communication skills. This approach is supported by programmes provided by specialist art and dance teachers. Teachers and teacher aides integrate care and learning in authentic activities. Their consistency, predictability and high levels of patience, persistence and empathy, are evident in all classrooms, contributing to students' learning and well-being.

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 board, led by an experienced chairperson, governs the school effectively. Trustees have had extensive training about their roles and responsibilities. They bring a variety of skills and knowledge of special education and community resources. Trustees are supportive of the principal and staff.

The principal has a focus on developing a strong learning culture in the school. With the support of the two deputy principals, staff and trustees she has introduced new approaches to planning, assessment and reporting that reflect best practice.

The next step for the board and principal is to strengthen the school's strategic plan by identifying agreed key areas for development, including responsibilities and timeframes. This will assist the school to manage the pace of change while maintaining staff and community commitment and ownership.

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

- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

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21 October 2011