

Christchurch Boys' High School
Christchurch

Confirmed

Education Review Report

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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?

Christchurch Boys' High School has a long history of providing education for boys that balances academic achievement against wider success in service to the community, as well as sporting and cultural pursuits. The rich traditions in boys' education are highly valued and supported across the whole school community, including past and present students, staff members and parents.

Groups such as the Old Boys, PTA and whānau group make significant contributions to the life of the school.

Students value the strong sense of belonging and pride they feel towards the school. They value their success as individuals and the wide range of success the school as a whole can claim.

The challenges related to building damage that occurred as a result of the Canterbury earthquakes are being positively managed by the school.

A new headmaster has been appointed and new senior leadership team established since the ERO review in 2012. As a result the school is being reinvigorated in the way trustees, staff members and students work together on current developments and plan future directions.

Trustees and leaders have responded effectively to the areas identified for improvement in the previous ERO review.

Leaders are involved with a range of schools in a local learning cluster to improve learning and achievement outcomes for students.

2 Learning

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

The school is making improved and more effective use of student learning and achievement information.

Recent developments in the use of learning information to improve outcomes for students include:

- more effective use of the system for managing and responding to learning information
- better tracking of student achievement and progress over time
- more effective ways to identify and monitor the progress of students who need extra learning support
- earlier reporting to the board about student progress so that monitoring of timely interventions can inform the board about progress in responding to student need.

Student achievement results show very positive trends over the last three years. For example:

- the percentage of school leavers with NCEA Level 2 or better has been consistently higher than the government's 2017 target of 85% and in 2014 had lifted to over 92%
- achievement is highest at NCEA Levels 2 and 3 where results are better than comparable national averages
- students achieve to very high levels in numeracy and literacy, and in gaining certificates at Levels 1 and 2.

School leaders noted a drop in NCEA Level 1 for 2014 and this had led to improved tracking and mentoring to help students achieve their learning goals. An ongoing focus across the school is to raise the quality of NCEA achievement by increasing the number of Merit and Excellence endorsements students achieve. Leaders have carried out a deeper analysis of the link between student potential and endorsements. In response they are exploring a school-wide framework to strengthen students' thinking skills and the writing skills needed for higher level answers in NCEA assessments.

Parents are kept well informed about students' learning attitudes and work habits through a weekly report home. This approach is valued by boys who see their efforts and attitudes to achieve personal excellence noticed and celebrated.

Participation in a wide range of co-curricular activities is high and well linked to the school's aim to support boys' all-round achievement. A high percentage of boys who begin at Year 9 remain at the school throughout their secondary education. Useful information is gathered about student destinations beyond school.

The school has identified, and ERO agrees, the next steps for further improvement are to:

- clarify and document guidelines and expectations for assessment practices
- strengthen the quality and consistency of assessment practices across the school and complete the process for junior assessment development
- report achievement information about Years 9 and 10 to the board.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum effectively promotes and supports students' learning.

Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and strive for academic and personal excellence.

The school provides appropriate opportunities and challenges for students to extend their individual talents and abilities in a range of areas. Student successes, whether academic, sporting, cultural, or in service to the community, are celebrated widely in the school.

The programme offered for second language learners uses effective strategies to meet the individual learning needs of diverse students.

The system to support student wellbeing is well organised and effective. An efficient pastoral team keeps teachers informed about what they need to know to support an individual student's learning. Students have ready access to appropriate guidance and support for their wellbeing. Parents and whānau are informed and involved in matters concerning their sons. Students benefit from career information systems that give them access to up-to-date information.

The senior leadership team maintains a focus on teachers developing relationships with students that support the development of students' personal skills and attributes for learning and achievement. The leadership team is extending the definition of curriculum to include this deliberate recognition of what needs to be done to help students develop personal skills and attributes.

Senior leaders have begun reviewing the curriculum and guidelines for curriculum delivery. ERO endorses this focus on curriculum review because of the potential to:

- build collaborative leadership capability across the school
- create a unique, aligned and cohesive curriculum, well linked to the values, principles and key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum
- provide appropriate pathways for individual students
- design and deliver a curriculum that identifies valued outcomes, such as a profile of both the successful learner and effective teaching at this school
- better align the junior curriculum with the senior curriculum
- further develop and extend the effective use of digital technologies for learning across the school.

The school has obtained some very useful information from external agencies that is contributing to developments in these areas.

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

The school is effectively promoting success for Māori students. Whānau Māori value the traditions and history of the school and what the school provides for their sons. The school has made good progress in strengthening what is done to support success as Māori.

The school's whānau group:

- provides strong support for the school
- is regularly consulted about planning and priorities for the development of Māori language, culture and identity
- values the consistent support from senior leaders.

The new teacher of Māori is:

- contributing to increased opportunities for Māori students to be involved in cultural activities and performances
- improving the way te reo Māori is taught in the school
- providing good support for Māori students.

Next steps for improvement are to:

- increase the visibility of te ao Māori in the school environment
- support teachers to continue to strengthen their understanding and use of culturally responsive practices
- review and report to the board against goals and priorities for ongoing improvement.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The board is well placed to sustain what is going well and improve its performance where the need is identified. Trustees bring a range of appropriate skills and expertise to their stewardship role for the future of the school.

The board has carried out extensive consultation with the community, students and staff to establish the strategic direction of the school. A newly developed overall plan for the future of the school is being implemented by the board to address the learning needs of boys in the twenty-first century.

Trustees are well informed about a wide range of aspects of school operations. The school is benefiting from recent, significant improvements in the management of finances. The board has good practices for gathering information about staff wellbeing.

The community, students and staff express confidence in the:

- role and direction of the board
- headmaster's vision for the school
- work of the senior leadership team.

Staff, students and the community value the open and direct communication that they have with the headmaster and other senior leaders.

A well-planned and documented programme of development for beginning teachers includes:

- regular meetings
- ongoing reflection on teaching and learning
- professional support for their practice and wellbeing.

The headmaster and senior leaders are leading purposefully. They have:

- used external expertise to identify needs and evaluate progress in a range of areas that have an impact on student learning and wellbeing
- improved the effectiveness of internal evaluation, departmental reporting to the board, and aspects of curriculum planning.

Next steps include strengthening the following.

Evaluation. Expectations and procedures for reports to the board about school operations and initiatives should include:

- clear lines of accountability
- the requirement to evaluate the impact of operations and initiatives on improving outcomes for students.

Strategic alignment. Trustees and leaders should continue to:

- align school goals, department goals, and expectations for teaching practice
- ensure that professional learning and development (PLD) addresses school priorities and contributes to ongoing improvement in teaching.

Appraisal. The school's appraisal process has been updated to better support teachers to improve their practice to help students learn. Further work needs to be done to strengthen the appraisal system. This should include:

- clarifying school-wide expectations about teaching practice to align these to the school's goals
- providing PLD to appraisers about their roles in appraising staff
- ensuring documentation meets the current requirements for the renewal of teachers' practising certificates.

Provision for international students

The school is a signatory to the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. ERO's discussions with the school confirm that the school has an appropriate self-review process that is well managed and includes useful, self-identified next steps for improvement.

At the time of this review, there were 39 international students attending the school. They benefit from comprehensive pastoral support. Their language and learning needs are well identified on arrival. Good monitoring is in place to support their learning progress, wellbeing and integration into the wider life of the school.

The board receives reports from the international department. The director for international students is aware of the need to include in reports to the board information about how well students are progressing in their learning and being supported to do so.

Provision for students in the school hostel

The school hostel, Adams House, accommodates 135 boarders, 10% of the school roll. It is owned by the school's board of trustees. Boarders come mainly from the wider Canterbury area. The facility is popular, with many more applicants than places available.

The hostel owner and manager have attested that all the requirements of the Hostel Regulations are met. ERO's investigations confirm that there are strong systems to ensure regulations are being met and systems followed.

The hostel manager has oversight of all aspects of boarding. He leads the hostel staff very effectively, provides clear guidelines and well-developed systems for boarders and staff members. He is well supported by the hostel staff to meet the wellbeing, safety and learning needs of the boarders.

Staff members provide programmes that respond to boarders' sporting and other recreational interests, help them meet their learning goals, provide opportunities for leadership, and effectively support their wellbeing.

The manager provides opportunities for boarders and their families to contribute to reviews of systems and services. Parents have expressed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of care and support provided for their sons.

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

Christchurch Boys' High School supports boys well to balance academic achievement against service, sporting and cultural pursuits. Students achieve well with most leavers gaining at least NCEA Level 2. Boys are proud to belong to the school and value the focus on becoming a fine young man. The school is benefiting from strengthened professional leadership. The wider school community strongly supports the school.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Rowe". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Chris Rowe
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern (Acting)

8 October 2015

About the School

Location	Christchurch	
Ministry of Education profile number	327	
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)	
School roll	1348	
Number of international students	39	
Gender composition	100% Male	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	81%
	Māori	11%
	Asian	6%
	Pacific	2%
Special Features	School Hostel - Adams House	
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	8 October 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2012
	Education Review	March 2009
	Education Review	November 2005