

Rongotai College
Wellington

Confirmed

Education Review Report:
Arotake Paerewa

Kumēa te paetawhiti kia tata
Whakamaua te paerewa kia tīna
Tukuna te paehiranga kia topa!

Education Review Report: Arotake Paerewa Rongotai College

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.

Findings

1 Context

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

Rongotai College is a Year 9 to 15 secondary school for boys, located in spacious grounds in the Wellington suburb of Rongotai. Within the 602 students in the school, there is a real diversity of backgrounds, abilities, and experiences. Students representing 43 different ethnicities are enrolled.

Students come from a wide range of contributing schools. The college is inclusive, and new entrants are quickly integrated into the 'Rongotai way'. The small size of the school and its multicultural nature contributes to good relationships and a feeling of respect and valuing others.

The college has a proud sporting and academic history, and is strongly supported by community groups such as the Samoan parents' association (ASOSI), the whānau support group and the parents' association. Many old boys have maintained links with the college.

Low staff turnover provides stability and reflects the college's settled environment and affirming atmosphere.

The school has a positive ERO reporting history.

2 Learning

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

Staff use achievement and other information to make positive changes for learners. Many Year 9 and 10 teachers use standardised test information to group students for instruction and identify those who need extra support or extension. A number of teachers are using assessment information to differentiate and personalise learning. The next step is for this practice to become schoolwide.

School information indicates that students at all levels make sound progress. Most students achieve National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) qualifications. There are high achievement levels in numeracy and literacy requirements at Level 1. Overall achievement in NCEA has improved steadily since the 2009 ERO review.

There has been significant improvement in retention rates and NCEA achievement levels for both Māori and Pacific students in recent years. While they are not yet achieving at levels comparable with all students in the college, Māori and Pacific students are achieving at levels comparable with male Māori and Pacific students in similar schools.

Pacific students generally achieve good NCEA results and some participate in the Victoria University Outreach programme for potential university students. However, the college has identified poor attendance as a key constraint to some Pacific students reaching their full potential. Strategies have been developed to address this issue.

3 Curriculum

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

The college curriculum effectively promotes student learning. A broad range of cultural, leadership, and sporting activities are integral to the curriculum. A range of pathways is available in the senior school including alternative National Certificates. Year 9 students are able to sample a variety of subject options to explore possible career direction.

The college is a collaborative learning community, with a strong and continuing focus on improving the quality of teaching. Teachers conduct personal inquiries to better support students' achievement and work with colleagues to share teaching practices likely to provide the best outcomes for students.

Teachers know their students well and prepare curriculum content that is responsive to students' interests. Students are usually active learners. They are focused and very respectful towards each other and to adults. Engagement is high and interactions positive.

Senior leaders recognise that further development of teachers' cultural competencies should further enhance the engagement of Māori and Pacific students.

Students with disabilities and high learning needs are well catered for in the Tamatoa Unit. The head teacher leads a complementary staff team and students benefit from their collaborative approach and their diversity of expertise and interests.

Pacific students are well supported by ASOSI, Pacific peer support and the use of Pacific ex-students employed as teacher aides. Students are positive about the college and the range of activities offered. Samoan language is taught at all levels and students participate in sporting, social and cultural activities.

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

Māori students are fully represented in cultural, leadership, sporting and academic activities. The college actively supports Māori students to celebrate their language, culture and identity.

Rongotai College promotes Māori success through a number of initiatives with Māori students and their whānau. These include:

- the development and good use of Tangi te Keo – the wharenuī
- te reo Māori classes at each year level
- offering Māori Performing Arts at Level 2 NCEA
- student participation in a Victoria University Outreach programme

- pōwhiri for new students and staff
- culture groups [for example, kapa haka]
- a whānau support group
- whānau hui, which are informal forums where information is shared and parents' aspirations for their children are sought

A recent survey of Māori students has provided a foundation for teacher discussion on how their classroom practice can become more responsive to students' culture. It will also contribute to community discussion on the development of an action plan for promoting Māori student success as Māori. The board expects to complete the action plan this year.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The good provision for education reported in ERO's 2010 report has been sustained. Sound governance is evident. Trustees have established a clear vision and values for the college. They are a united team and use their individual skills and knowledge to promote ongoing school improvement, particularly in student achievement.

College systems and procedures are robust and cohesive. Policies have been reviewed and reduced to a manageable number. These are supported by comprehensive management procedures.

The college is well led. The principal and senior leadership team work collaboratively. Professional leaders articulate and promote high expectations for teaching, learning and achievement.

Early in each year, heads of department report the outcomes of the previous year. These documents vary in quality and information. Most make little reference to progress and achievement of students in Years 9 and 10 and are not always tightly linked to the strategic plan, nor include sufficient depth of analysis of student achievement. Better guidelines, measurable targets and monitoring the quality of department review should provide the board with improved information for evaluating the extent to which the strategic plan has been met.

The college's appraisal system is rigorous, supportive and developmental. Teachers include an inquiry topic as part of their professional development. This improvement-focused work is shared and contributes to the overall teacher knowledge of what strategies work for Rongotai students. The next step is for senior leaders to develop guidelines to evaluate the impact of these strategies.

The college has very good relationships with its community and is actively supported by parent groups.

In order to improve the quality of self review and enhance governance and management capability, college leaders should strengthen evidence-based evaluation against agreed indicators.

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. At the time of this review two international students were attending the school.

The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

ERO's investigations confirmed that the college's self-review process for international students is thorough. Effective policies and practices support the social integration and academic learning programmes of the college's two international students.

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:

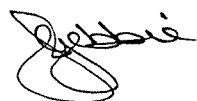
- board administration
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel management
- financial management
- asset management.

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.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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



Joyce Gebbie
National Manager Review Services
Central Region (Acting)

30 May 2013

About the School

Location	Wellington	
Ministry of Education profile number	277	
School type	Secondary (Year 9 to 15)	
School roll	602	
Number of international students	2	
Gender composition	Male 100%	
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā	44%
	Pacific	24%
	Asian	14%
	Māori	13%
	Other ethnic groups	5%
Special Features	Attached Units: Tamatoa - Special Needs Unit Wellington Activity Centre	
Review team on site	March 2013	
Date of this report	30 May 2013	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	January 2010
	Education Review	December 2006
	Education Review	June 2003