



**EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT:
MATAMATA COLLEGE**

AUGUST 2009

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This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

1. About the School

Location	Matamata
Ministry of Education profile number	124
School type	Secondary School (Years 9 – 15)
Decile rating ^[1]	6
Teaching staff:	
Roll generated entitlement	62
Other	3
Number of teachers	65
School roll	903
Number of international students	4

Gender composition	Girls	51%
	Boys	49%
Ethnic composition	New Zealand European/Pākehā	74%
	New Zealand Māori	18%
	Asian	2%
	Other	6%
Special features	Special Needs Unit	
Review team on site	June 2009	
Date of this report	10 August 2009	
Previous ERO reports	Education Review, 2006 Education Review, 2003 Accountability Review, 1998 Effectiveness Review, September 1994 Review, August 1992	

2. The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Matamata College is a co-educational school catering for students from Years 9 to 15. At the time of this review in June 2009 the school roll was 903. Eighteen percent of these students are predominantly of Ngati Haua and Ngati Raukawa descent.

The principal's leadership, approachability and role modelling are appreciated by students, teachers, parents, whānau and the wider community. He is committed to improving his own knowledge of and skills in te reo me ōna tikanga Māori and building a meaningful partnership with staff, students, parents and the community. The principal and his senior management team are focused on improving student attendance, engagement and achievement.

The college has a strong and purposeful relationship with the community and is well supported by local business and industries. Parents and whānau appreciate regular and meaningful opportunities to be informed and talk about their children's successes, learning and progress. Students with identified special learning needs and abilities are well catered for and the school has established sound systems and practices to monitor their progress. There are many opportunities for students to take leadership roles that contribute to the life of the school and community.

In 2008 National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 1 most students achieved their literacy and numeracy requirements. School assessment data shows that student achievement for NCEA Levels 1, 2 and 3 are at and above national expectations. The results for Māori students in Levels 1, 2 and 3 are lower than those for non Māori. The school does not yet have externally referenced data on which to base judgements about overall levels of achievement and progress for groups of students at Years 9 and 10. Students enjoy success in many sporting codes and cultural activities.

There are models of good teaching practice across the school, where teachers use strategies to enhance students' engagement, understanding and ownership of their learning. Further professional learning and development is needed to increase teacher confidence, capability and consistency in teaching practice. This is likely to more effectively engage students in learning and raise achievement.

Trustees are knowledgeable, bring a wide range of expertise to their governance roles and are led by an experienced and skilled chairperson. The school charter and strategic plan provide direction for school operations. Recently the board has focused on the development of learning environments and

information and communication technologies (ICT).

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

3. The Focus of the Review

Student Achievement Overall

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

The college collects and collates standardised assessment data prior to year nine entry. Tools used include Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) in reading comprehension and vocabulary, Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning (asTTle) in reading, writing and mathematics. The school also uses Middle Years Information System (MidYis) to show achievement at year nine to compare with year eleven NCEA Level 1 results. Raising Achievement and Monitoring Progress (RAMP) is a school developed motivational assessment framework for year nine and year ten students.

PAT in reading comprehension and vocabulary data at the beginning of 2009 indicates that a significant proportion of Year 9 students are below national expectations. AsTTle is also used to identify students' levels of achievement on entry to the school. However, the school has yet to implement an assessment system based on national expectations that monitors student progress and achievement in Years 9 and 10.

In 2008, 74% of all students achieved NCEA Level 1. The data for Level 1 literacy and numeracy shows that most students achieved these requirements. In NCEA Level 2, 72% of all student's achieved literacy requirements for university entrance. School assessment data shows 91% of all students achieved Level 2 and 76% of all students achieved Level 3. School assessment data shows that student achievement for Levels 1, 2 and 3 is at and above national expectations. The results for Māori students in Levels 1, 2 and 3 are lower than those for non Māori.

Students enjoy success in a number of sporting codes, cultural activities and leadership experience.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Matamata College was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Matamata College.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus areas for the review:

- the quality of learning and teaching, with an emphasis on the use of ICT to promote student engagement and achievement.

ERO's findings in this area are set out below.

The Quality of Learning and Teaching, with an Emphasis on the Use of ICT to Promote Student Engagement and Achievement

Background

Since the last review teachers have focused on ICT to strengthen teaching strategies and student engagement in learning. This initiative has been well resourced by the board and an external provider is supporting the college to enhance teacher use and implementation of ICT across the school. There has also been an emphasis on pastoral care practices, particularly in attendance, to support students in their learning.

Areas of good performance

Governance and strategic direction: The board of trustees has a clear vision and strategic direction to improve learning environments and raise student engagement and achievement. A useful framework has been developed to assist the board and senior management team to realise school goals and targets. Trustees are committed to school improvement and ensure that appropriate ICT resources are available to support teaching and learning.

Communication: The school uses a wide range of effective approaches that also include electronic means to inform and consult with its community. Parents and whānau appreciate regular and meaningful opportunities to be informed and talk about their children's successes, learning and progress. The school has a high profile in the community and is well supported by local businesses and industry. High quality communication between parents, the school and local community is contributing to partnerships which engage students in school and community learning opportunities.

Classroom practice: There are models of effective teaching in the school and in these classrooms teachers successfully use ICT and teaching strategies that engage students in learning. These teaching strategies include the use of learning prompts and frameworks, cooperative group work, oral feedback, individual conferencing, self and peer assessment, and student use of ICT. Effective practice in these classrooms is resulting in on task and meaningful learning behaviour, which is enhancing students' understanding and ownership of their learning.

Information and communications technology (ICT): Teachers are progressively integrating ICT into learning programmes. Ongoing professional development and learning opportunities for teachers encourage them to share successes, resulting in improved teaching practice. The substantial resourcing of ICT is strengthening teachers' confidence and students' engagement in learning.

Learning pathways: The school provides a wide range of programmes that cater for the diverse strengths and needs of students. These include:

- computer programmes for career search;
- Gateway programmes for years 11 to 13;
- careers advice, guidance and planning for all year levels;
- designated girls and boys classes; and

- a wide variety of option choices at all levels.

Students benefit from these opportunities and from the involvement of staff and parents in the creation of individualised learning pathways.

Special programmes: Students with identified special learning needs and abilities are well catered for. The school vision promotes inclusion and quality education for all and trustees have provided appropriate ICT resources for teachers and students. Assessment information is used to inform programme planning for groups and individuals. The Totara Learning Centre, Learning Support and GATE programmes are tailored to meet individual learning needs. Students in these programmes are well supported to achieve their potential.

Pastoral care: The school has established sound systems and practices to ensure student wellbeing. A high priority is given to improving student attendance through a team approach involving school personnel, specialist staff, students, parents and whānau. Senior managers and deans are reviewing current discipline practices to adopt a more restorative approach, which has the potential to enhance student engagement in learning. Effective pastoral care is positively influencing relationships and students' self management.

Student leadership opportunities: Students have many opportunities to take leadership roles that contribute to the life of the school. Year 13 students take an active role in the induction and ongoing support and mentoring of Year 9 students. The school's wellness committee that fosters health, safety and good citizenship is organised and led by students. In addition, students coach sports teams and participate in school and community arts activities. These leadership opportunities provide positive role models of engagement and contribution.

Area for improvement

Professional leadership: While the principal, senior and middle managers have a shared vision of 'providing a quality education for all', there are aspects of professional leadership that need strengthening. These aspects include:

- developing and sustaining a school-wide shared vision and understanding about effective pedagogy, including, expectations about teaching and learning;
- refocusing and planning professional learning and development in order to build a sustainable professional learning community;
- implementing consistent quality assurance practices that meet the school's stated expectations; and
- reviewing systems and practices for analysing and reporting student achievement at Years 9 and 10.

The further consideration and development of these areas is likely to enhance teaching practice, improve student engagement and raise the achievement of all students.

4. Areas of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Matamata College ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

Success for Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the extent to which the school was familiar with the **Māori Education Strategy – Ka Hikitia: Managing for Success** and progress made since the last review in promoting success at school for Māori students.

The school reports it has considered *Ka Hikitia* and made changes to some of its practices and planning as a result.

Areas of progress

Te reo me ōna tikanga Māori: Since the last review the school has re-established Te Rangimarie, the forum for parents and whānau of Māori students to have a voice. This group is supported by the board and values opportunities to discuss and endorse the school's plans and targets for Māori students.

The newly formed kapa haka group is reinforcing the language structures of te reo Māori, performing arts and affirms the identity of students. Senior Māori student leaders provide support and positive role modelling for their peers.

The principal's leadership, approachability and role modelling are appreciated by students and whānau. He is committed to improving his own knowledge of, and skills in, te reo me ōna tikanga Māori and this is valued by the Māori community. A meaningful partnership is evident with a focus on improving student attendance, engagement and achievement.

Areas for further improvement

Retention and qualifications: Retention rates for Māori students in Years 12 and 13 are below those of their peers and NCEA data for 2008 shows that the percentage of Māori students achieving at Levels 1, 2 and 3 is lower than that of non Māori. It is necessary to strengthen the analysis and interpretation of assessment information to include retention levels in all year groups to more effectively monitor Māori student achievement and progress.

Student engagement in learning: While the school gives priority to raising the attendance of Māori students, whānau and students identified that the next step for the school is to increase student engagement in learning in classrooms.

Implementing the New Zealand Curriculum in 2010

Progress to date

In preparing for teaching the New Zealand Curriculum in 2010 the school has involved all staff in both

internal and external professional development relating to the revised curriculum. Some departmental schemes reflect the key competencies and senior managers and teachers have started to review the school vision, principles and values.

Next steps

The school has decided that its priorities for preparation over the next three to six months are to continue to review and align current practices and documentation with the New Zealand Curriculum 2010.

Thinking about the Future

ERO is currently discussing with secondary schools how they are thinking about the future and what it might mean for their students.

The school reports that it has thought about the future and what it might mean for their students by prioritising for the integration of ICT into classroom practice.

Provision for International Students

Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students and the Provision of English Language Support

Matamata College 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students.

The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

Area of good performance

Documentation and systems: There are sound systems in place for keeping required information on international students. The induction manual provides up-to-date information about the school and all the relevant information needed for an international student to settle into the school. Home stay parents are visited by the coordinator and the outcome of these visits is recorded and an overall report is presented to the board of trustees on a regular basis. Systems for monitoring each student's progress are in place. The recent establishment of an intranet site is progressively allowing teachers and students to communicate effectively. The use of detailed systems and documentation is helping to ensure the successful placement of international students within the school and local community.

Provision of English Language Support

Area of good performance

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): An enthusiastic ESOL tutor provides regular support for the international students. She assists them both within their mainstream classes and on a withdrawal basis with the ongoing development of their English language skills. The ESOL department is well resourced and the tutor selects relevant resources to assist individual students with their studies. International students enjoy their studies and appreciate the strong support of the international student coordinator and tutor.

5. Board Assurance on Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Matamata College completed an ERO *Board Assurance Statement* and *Self-Audit Checklist*. 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; and
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment);
- physical safety of students;
- teacher registration;
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions; and
- attendance.

Compliance

In order to improve current practice, the board of trustees should:

- 5.1 ensure that all staff are appraised against the relevant professional standards annually.

6. Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees have developed the following recommendation:

- 6.1 that professional leaders review systems and practices to sustain school-wide expectations for teaching and learning, and the interpretation, analysis and reporting of student progress and achievement.

7. Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

Dr Graham Stoop
for Chief Review Officer

10 August 2009

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To the Parents and Community of Matamata College

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Matamata College**.

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Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

Dr Graham Stoop
Chief Review Officer

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT REVIEWS

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the Government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting is based on three review strands.

- **School Specific Priorities** – the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.

- **Areas of National Interest** – information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements** – assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

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Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

[1] Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.