

# Mana College Education Review

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## About the School

Location	Porirua
Ministry of Education profile number	254
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 15)
Decile [ 1]	2
School roll	442
Gender composition	Male 55% Female 45%
Ethnic composition	Māori 68% Pacific 22% NZ European/Pākehā 8% Other ethnic groups 2%
Special features	Te Whare Ako (Special Needs Unit)
Review team on site	May 2011
Date of this report	10 August 2011
Most recent ERO report(s)	Supplementary Review July 2008 Education Review May 2007 Supplementary Review January 2005

## 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. ERO's reports are intended to be clear, concise, constructive and evaluative. 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.

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

[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's context that have an impact on student learning?

Mana College is a Year 9 to 15, coeducational secondary school in the Porirua Basin. At the time of this review in May 2011 it had a roll of 442 students from a range of ethnicities. The majority of students (66%) are Māori. Students who spoke with ERO identified that the variety of cultures is positively acknowledged in a very inclusive environment.

Well-established links into the local community and with mana whenua, Ngāti Toa, contribute to the school's distinctive character. A focus on working collaboratively with family/whānau promotes student engagement.

Comprehensive pastoral care builds relationships that support students to participate in the range of learning and social opportunities available. "Our Way" includes an emphasis on maintaining safe and respectful practices that contribute to learning.

Considerable sporting and cultural success at regional and national level is an important source of school pride and is enthusiastically celebrated.

Previous ERO reports have highlighted the need for teachers and managers to make greater use of achievement information to inform teaching and self review to promote improved outcomes for students. While significant progress has been made in some areas, responding to underachievement continues to be a necessary focus.

## 2 Learning

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

Useful, valid information is collected in reading and mathematics to show achievement and progress in Years 9 and 10. No moderated writing information is collected schoolwide. Collation of data indicates significant patterns and trends, including progress as students move through the junior school.

Initial testing indicates a high proportion of students achieve below expected levels in reading and mathematics as they enter Year 9. Supplementary Tests of Achievement in Reading (STAR) data in 2010 indicates accelerated progress for many students during Years 9 and 10. However, by the end of Year 10 a significant number of students remain at risk in reading and mathematics.

A Certificate of Learning related to essential skills and topic work is used to award credits in each subject at Years 9 and 10. Regular monitoring of progress during the year is supported by interventions for students causing concern. Anecdotal evidence indicates the credit system is linked to improved motivation and engagement.

In 2010 National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) performance was below that of students in Decile 2 schools nationally. Over the last three years Level 1 results have been relatively stable and Level 2 have improved significantly. Level 3 remains a concern and targeted mentoring in 2011 aims to improve these results. A New Zealand Scholarship was achieved in each of the last three years.

The range of opportunities in the senior school is reflected in a higher retention to Year 13 than comparable schools. The proportion of leavers with Year 12 qualifications however, is below other decile 2 schools. Trustees have identified that increasing the proportion of leavers with Level 2 qualifications is a priority.

Teachers continue to develop their understanding and ability to use assessment information to cater for needs. Achievement information collected using standardised tools is collated and shared to support differentiated class programmes that allow access to learning for all students. Although the use of these practices is inconsistent, clear expectations and support are in place to further improve practice. Ongoing review and inquiry throughout the year further contribute to teacher ability to respond to students' developing needs.

Parents and whānau are well informed about progress and achievement and any associated issues. Academic counselling introduced in 2010 further engages both students and families in considering education pathways and builds relationships to support learning.

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

Year 9 and 10 data indicates Māori students share in the benefits of the focus on improving reading in the junior school. NCEA Level 1 achievement is similar to Māori in comparable schools. The proportion of Māori leavers with Level 2 is also similar.

A range of strategies specifically focus on supporting Māori student success and effectively provide worthwhile pathways into the senior school and beyond.

E Tipu e Rea whānau includes te reo Māori 'rich' classes at Year 9 and 10 and senior students who strongly contribute to school tikanga.

Many Māori students achieve positive outcomes in the range of opportunities available to them. However, senior managers and ERO agree it is timely to collaboratively review current practices, and consider actions, to promote greater belonging and achievement for Māori.

### 3 Curriculum

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

The Mana College curriculum appropriately reflects the values, achievement objectives, and key competencies of The New Zealand Curriculum. A philosophy and strong commitment to building relationships and working collaboratively with families and whānau are evident. Improving achievement in literacy is a current strategic focus.

The curriculum features a range of courses and subject options designed to meet the needs of individual students. A broad variety of programmes and approaches are implemented to support learning and social development. These include programmes to maintain the participation and engagement of students at risk of not achieving.

Students with high needs are effectively catered for in an inclusive special needs classroom, Te Whare Ako, and other mainstream classes. Their programmes are individualised and regularly monitored.

A mixed pattern of engagement is evident between and within classes. In classes where high levels of engagement are typical, teachers use a successful range of good teaching practices. They hold high expectations for learning and behaviour. Lessons are suitably-paced, relevant and matched to students' ability. Teachers question and challenge to develop students' understanding. Relationships are supportive and based on mutual respect. However, some classes are dominated by low engagement and classroom management issues that impact on student progress.

Support to improve teaching practice is available through well-planned professional development and thorough appraisal processes focused on improvement. Observations of practice, sharing of ideas and reflective discussions assist enhanced practice.

A cross-curricular approach to improving students' reading effectively promotes levels of achievement. Planned actions, including extensive professional development and clear guidelines and expectations successfully increase teachers' understanding of responding to achievement information. Deliberate teaching strategies, implemented in many classrooms, reflect the priority given to literacy, and produce measurable improvements for students.

Positive relationships between Pacific students and staff are apparent. The cultural diversity of Pacific students is valued and celebrated. Pacific achievement is variable. It is appropriate to collaboratively consider additional actions targeted to improving achievement of Pacific students.

## 4 Sustainable Performance

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

Pastoral care processes assist students to remain engaged and at school. A wide range of interventions and programmes involving staff, community and external agencies effectively supports students. Considerable whānau contact is also a feature. Restorative practices are characteristic of schoolwide interactions and contribute to enhanced relationships between students and staff.

Staff, know students well and their calm interactions contribute to the development of a family like atmosphere. Students, who spoke with ERO, believe their teachers to be positive, accessible and helpful.

Trustees maintain strong links with the community. Informative reports to the board from senior managers support decision making. Self review is a priority for board committees.

Reflective practices schoolwide support improvement. Review is often evidence based and involves students, staff, parents and trustees. Review includes consideration of academic achievement, factors affecting engagement and school systems.

Current self-review practice does not consistently lead to explicit plans for ongoing improvement, particularly in student achievement. A greater focus on specific actions to improve outcomes is needed. This should include:

- continuing to improve interpretation and use of data by teachers and managers
- developing clear action plans with measureable outcomes for improvements considered to be priorities
- regular monitoring and reporting of progress towards stated targets
- reviewing the effectiveness of implemented actions.

More comprehensive self review should show that actions implemented to improve achievement are enhanced and sustained over time.

### Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of the school 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
- 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
- attendance.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

Kathleen Atkins  
National Manager Review Services  
Central Region

10 August 2011