

St Francis Catholic School (Pt Chevalier)
Point Chevalier, Auckland

Education Review Office

External Evaluation

ERO External Evaluation

St Francis Catholic School (Pt Chevalier)

1 Context

St Francis Catholic School is a state-integrated school situated in Point Chevalier, Auckland. The school caters for children from Years 1 to 6. The Catholic special character and the school mission, vision and values are interwoven in all aspects of school life.

A significant feature of the school is the strong pastoral care that staff have for children, families and each other. Children and their parents experience a welcoming and inclusive school. The positive climate promotes children's sense of belonging in the school and provides a comfortable and secure environment for their learning. A whānau meeting room provides a community place for all parents and families to further connect with each other and the school. Staff, children and families value the long-standing and inter-generational connections the school has with its community.

2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are that they be nurtured and challenged in ways that enable them to become socially responsible and well rounded individuals within a secure and culturally inclusive environment. School values include respecting self and others, embracing all cultures, and acting with humility, compassion and tolerance. The board of trustees, senior leaders and staff place children and their learning at the centre of all decision making, and the St Francis' vision and values are highly evident at all levels within the school.

The school's achievement information shows that the majority of children achieve at or above the National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been a consistent trend over the last three years.

Māori student achievement overall shows that these children are achieving at similar levels to the whole school population. School data also shows that, while outcomes for Pacific children were somewhat below those of other groups in 2013, particularly for writing and mathematics, the achievement of these children has been accelerated in 2014 and 2015. This has significantly reduced the disparity in outcomes. The good gains made by these children provides evidence of the effectiveness of support programmes implemented to improve Pacific children's progress and achievement.

Since the 2012 ERO evaluation the school has continued to build on existing high quality teaching practices and to focus on children having greater ownership of their learning. This has been done through broadening student input into curriculum designs. There has been a school-wide focus on writing and mathematics, with external professional development for teachers in these learning areas.

3 Accelerating achievement

How effectively does this school respond to children whose learning and achievement need acceleration?

The school responds very well to Māori children and other children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration.

School leaders and teachers use student achievement information very effectively to identify and monitor the progress and achievement of individuals and groups of children who need additional learning support. Internal moderation processes have continued to develop to strengthen the reliability of achievement information and accompanying teacher judgements about student progress and achievement. Senior leaders have identified that further development could now include moderating student assessment information with other schools.

Leaders and teachers work collaboratively to deliver high quality programmes that promote learning for all children. They reflect on their practice and make changes to further raise student achievement. They maintain an ongoing focus on, and carefully consider what is best for, children with special learning needs. Teachers work closely with these children and their families using a wide range of interventions and targeted programmes to provide a systematic response to children's strengths, interests and learning needs. The board of trustees receives regular information about priority learning groups and strategically allocates resources to support their achievement. Thorough analyses of the outcomes of these interventions and programmes guide refinements that are bringing about ongoing improvements in learning.

Children are kept informed about their progress and set goals for improvement with their classroom teachers, specialist teachers and/or support staff. School leaders and teachers meet regularly with children with high learning or health needs. Senior leaders agree it would now be timely to extend this good practice to include parents/whānau of identified children to further develop learning partnerships that foster accelerated learning for their children.

4 School conditions

How effectively do the school's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices develop and enact the school's vision, values, goals and priorities for equity and excellence?

The school's curriculum and other organisational processes are very effective in promoting and supporting equity and excellence in student outcomes.

Curriculum designs are flexible and highly responsive to children's learning, strengths and interests. A wide variety of learning experiences that feature local contexts and global perspectives provide purposeful learning opportunities for children. Māori language and cultural perspectives are well integrated in all learning areas of the curriculum and are supported by a continuing school-wide focus on building teachers' confidence and capability in te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. Māori children report these approaches help them feel valued as learners and members of the school community.

Children are focused on their learning. Teachers recognise and celebrate children's learning successes. They provide an environment where children have the confidence to take on new challenges and have fun with their learning. Children work collaboratively, think critically and problem solve. There is a good sense of children being actively involved in and excited about learning. The introduction of a foundation class (Pia taata) supports new entrants beginning school. High quality processes are also in place to facilitate smooth transitioning for older children enrolling at the school and for those moving on to intermediate schooling.

Children are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities from a young age. Teachers are continuing to build strategies that encourage children to be self-directed learners who are increasingly taking ownership of their own learning. Parents receive clear information about their child's progress and achievement and have opportunities to contribute to their child's learning through parent, student and teacher meetings.

The principal and senior managers provide strong professional leadership. Clear, coherent systems and documentation support consistency in school operations and teaching practice. Recent changes in the school's performance appraisal processes are helping teachers gather evidence to inquire more robustly into the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

The school is well governed. The board seeks external training to support its governance role and processes are in place for board induction and succession planning. Trustees have a commitment to improved learning outcomes for all children and a positive working relationship with the principal. The school's charter and annual plans are strategic, coherent and aligned with the school vision, values and future direction. Trustees receive clear assurances that the school enacts systems to promote a supportive and healthy environment for children and adults.

5 Going forward

How well placed is the school to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children who need their learning and achievement to be accelerated
- respond effectively to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how well teaching is working for these children
- act on what they know works well for each child
- build teacher capability effectively to achieve equitable outcomes for all children
- are well placed to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children.

The school is very well placed to sustain progress and to make ongoing improvements that impact positively on all children. A culture of continuous self review and teacher reflection contributes to the schools' positive performance.

The board, senior leaders and ERO agree the school's future priorities to promote and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children are to:

- strategically implement the school's e-learning action plan to further enhance the school's curriculum
- further develop learning partnerships with parents of children whose learning and achievement need accelerating.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.

6 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 the following:

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

- During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on student safety and wellbeing:
- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment)
- physical safety of students
- teacher registration
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance
- compliance with the provisions of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014
- provision for international students
- provision for students in school hostels.

7 Recommendations

ERO recommends that the school continues to accelerate the learning of Pacific children so that all children experience excellence and equity in their learning outcomes.



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

18 May 2016

About the school

Location	Point Chevalier, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1488	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
School roll	277	
Gender composition	Boys 53%	Girls 47%
Ethnic composition	Māori	9%
	Pākehā	62%
	Tongan	7%
	Samoan	4%
	Indian	4%
	African	3%
	Chinese	3%
	other	8%
Review team on site	March 2016	
Date of this report	18 May 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	January 2012
	Education Review	June 2008
	Education Review	March 2005