

# Botany Downs School Education Review

- 1 Context
- 2 Learning
- 3 Curriculum
- 4 Sustainable Performance

## About the School

Location	Howick, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1235	
School type	Contributing (Years 1 to 6)	
Decile [ <u>1</u> ]	10	
School roll	490	
Number of international students	2	
Gender composition	Girls 51% Boys 49%	
Ethnic composition	New Zealand 54% European/Pākehā 5% Māori 10% Indian 9% Chinese 2% Middle Eastern 2% Pacific 1% African 2% Other Asian 15% other	
Review team on site	October 2011	

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Date of this report	10 February 2012	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	August 2008
	Education Review	August 2005
	Accountability Review	November 2001

## 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. 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.

[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 that have an impact on student learning?

Botany Downs School, in Howick, caters for students in Years 1 to 6. The cohesive and well informed leadership of the principal and senior management team is providing good direction for the school.

'Our best always - BEST' is the school's vision. Students, staff and the board of trustees have a shared understanding of this underpinning ethos, which is strongly reflected in student learning, classroom programmes, relationships, school leadership and governance.

Students benefit from settled and purposeful learning environments. Inclusive and respectful interactions between teachers and students support learning across the school. Students enjoy and can discuss their learning. They have access to a wide range of appropriate learning resources.

The school has a history of positive ERO reports. The principal, trustees and staff have worked strategically to address the recommendations of ERO's 2008 report on the school.

## 2 Learning

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

Students continue to achieve well. School leaders analyse and monitor the quality and reliability of achievement data. The school's data show that most students achieve at or above National Standards for reading, writing and mathematics. Māori and Pacific students achieve at similar levels to those of their peers. Parents receive clear reports on their children's progress and achievement in relation to the National Standards.

Teachers use achievement information to prepare purposeful lessons. They know students well and use this knowledge to target their teaching. Effective use of exemplars supports students to understand what high quality work is. Teachers are developing their ability to analyse achievement information and identify strategies they can use to further improve and extend students' learning. To further improve their judgements on students' achievement in relation to the National Standards teachers could now document ongoing evidence of achievement, such as observations and student conversations, throughout the school year. Teachers are appropriately continuing to refine their moderation practices.

Students are purposefully engaged in their learning, and make good progress. High levels of interest and motivation are evident. Parents' aspirations and teachers' expectations for student engagement and achievement are high.

Students are increasingly supported to take ownership of their learning. They set goals with teachers to improve their reading, writing, mathematics and socialising skills. Teachers support students to reflect on their learning, and to identify their next steps and ways to achieve them. The school has a culture of celebrating and acknowledging student progress and achievement. As a result, students are confident, motivated and well supported learners.

Teachers continue to provide students with vibrant, print-rich environments that support their classroom learning. Staff engage in professional discussions with colleagues to improve their practice.

A strong commitment to supporting students who have special needs or who are at risk of not achieving is evident. A range of strategies and initiatives provides additional learning support and extension for students at all levels of the school.

How well does the school promote Māori student success and success as Māori?

School leaders and the board have a good understanding of the importance of Māori students achieving well in their learning and experiencing success as Māori.

The school consults biannually with its Māori community. The principles of Ka Hikitia, the Ministry of Education strategy for Māori education, guide consultation with parents and students. The principal personally invites parents to engage in conversations about their aspirations and their children's learning.

The school continues to extend opportunities for students to participate in bicultural events and experiences. Teachers could now develop a sequential programme to support students' progressive learning of te reo Māori and tikanga.

### 3 Curriculum

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

The school curriculum promotes and supports student learning effectively.

The school's curriculum framework is designed to provide a broad and integrated curriculum that retains the depth and integrity of individual learning areas. A focus on reading, writing and mathematics in classroom programmes is complemented by well planned inquiry-based learning. The school provides a wide variety of extracurricular opportunities that cater for children's recreational, cultural and sporting interests. As the curriculum is reviewed, school leaders could consider whether students have sufficient input into curriculum design.

The curriculum overview guides teachers in providing students with programmes that respond to their interests and strengths. The school's vision, values and curriculum principles are clearly reflected in classroom and school practices.

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. School leaders and teachers have developed indicators of good practice that are clearly evident in all classrooms. Most teachers use effective teaching strategies, and all teachers are keen to improve the ways in which they support students to take more ownership of their learning. Some teachers have begun using student achievement information as they reflect on the effectiveness of their own practice. These models of good practice could be followed by all staff.

Classrooms are well resourced. School leaders make good use of teacher aides and prioritise resourcing to support learning. They continue to strengthen the use of information and communication technologies to improve outcomes for all students.

The principal and staff ensure that parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and about their child's learning and progress.

## 4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance. A school-wide culture of rigorous critical reflection and self review is contributing to high performance and continuous improvement. Next steps are identified and prioritised from self review. School leaders are refining their documentation of self review so that they can further improve the good practices currently in place.

The board of trustees, school leaders and staff actively work to achieve school goals. Trustees bring a wide range of skills and expertise to their role. They work supportively with the principal and are committed to ensuring ongoing school-wide improvement and positive outcomes for students. Trustees and school leaders have taken all reasonable steps to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for students and staff.

Informative reports to the board about student achievement are used to support the setting of school direction and to plan for improved student outcomes. Resources are allocated to support work to meet identified priorities and goals.

The principal is developing a cohesive, collegial leadership team with restructured roles and responsibilities. He is promoting professional leadership by building capacity within teams and across the school.

School leaders provide good support for staff. They implement a performance management system that is purposeful, improvement-focused, affirms staff and sets goals for their professional growth. Whole school and individual professional development is providing teachers with a clear focus and direction. Appropriate professional learning for staff is based on prioritised areas for development.

Trustees and school leaders are highly effective in engaging the community in the life of the school. Regular and varied communication strategies inform and engage the schools' community.

### 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 there were two international students attending the school. Effective processes are in place to help ensure that international students feel welcomed and supported.

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

ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's self-review process for international students is thorough.

### 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
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

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When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

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Northern Region (Acting)

10 February 2012

