



**Bethlehem College
Tauranga**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

Education Review Report

Bethlehem 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. The report answers four key questions about the school.

Findings

1 Context

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

Bethlehem College is a state integrated school located in the western suburb of Tauranga. It operates under the umbrella of the Christian Education Trust to provide Christian-based education for students from Years 1 to 13. The college is structured into three distinct schools; primary (Year 1 to 6), junior secondary (Year 7 to 9), and senior secondary (Year 10 to 13). The college successfully promotes a seamless transition as students move between these different areas. The college's roll of 1590 students include 112 of Māori descent. A large number of students enter the school at Year 7.

The college's vision is to be a Christian learning community of excellence where lives are transformed. There is a high level of commitment to this vision by trustees, school leaders, staff, students and college families. This special Christian character permeates all aspects of college life and underpins the settled learning environment and positive relationships that are highly evident in the college.

Since the 2012 ERO review there have been two changes in the senior leadership team and some changes among the teaching staff. A new chairperson and several new members have been elected or appointed to the board of trustees. Teachers have participated in extensive professional development including a college-wide focus on supporting their understanding of te ao Māori. There has also been a focus on professional learning for teachers in the areas of writing, mathematics and the effective use of digital technology to improve learning outcomes for students.

Students benefit from learning in high-quality, well-resourced facilities and expansive grounds and playing fields.

Bethlehem College has a positive ERO reporting history. In response to the 2012 ERO report school leaders are implementing a strategic approach to developing an agreed common understanding for effective teaching at Bethlehem College.

2 Learning

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

Achievement information is effectively used to make positive changes to learners' engagement, progress and achievement.

Students at Bethlehem College are achieving very well. The college's achievement information for 2015 shows that approximately 90% of Year 1 to 8 students achieved at or above the National Standards in reading and mathematics. Slightly lower results were recorded in writing. Reading and mathematics information for Year 9 and 10 students' shows levels of achievement significantly above national comparisons. In 2014 90% of school leavers had achieved Level 2 or higher in National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) qualifications. The proportion of students achieving merit and excellence grades in NCEA is consistently above that of similar types of schools. The college is gratified by the increasing number of students who are obtaining national scholarships. Māori students achieve at similar levels to their non-Māori peers at the college in National Standards and NCEA results. The National Standards and school leavers' results are above the Ministry of Education's 2017 national targets.

School leaders are continuing to develop processes to support teachers to make reliable judgements in relation to the National Standards.

Trustees are well informed about student achievement and make good use of this information to inform decisions about strategic planning and resourcing. This includes setting appropriate achievement targets in the college's charter.

School leaders make particularly effective use of achievement data to:

- monitor the progress of groups and individual students
- identify students who require additional support or extension
- monitor the effectiveness of support programmes in raising student achievement
- inform decisions about programme planning and initiatives
- guide self review.

There are good examples of teachers making particularly effective use of achievement data to plan and implement specific programmes to meet the learning needs of individuals and groups of students. In these classes students have a good understanding of their learning achievements and next steps. As part of developing the agreed common understanding for effective teaching at the college priority should be given to promoting greater consistency in the use of this practice.

3 Curriculum

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

Bethlehem College's curriculum is very effective in promoting and supporting student learning.

The college has a broad and rich curriculum that strongly reflects the school's special Christian character. This is underpinned by the four pillars of 'challenging the intellectual, developing the cultural, exercising the physical and shaping the moral'. The curriculum is enhanced by a strong commitment to a community of care that includes comprehensive and well-managed pastoral care processes that contribute to student wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Features of the curriculum include:

- extensive opportunities for students to experience success in a wide range of academic, sporting and cultural activities and events
- an appropriate focus on literacy and mathematics in the primary school area of the college
- provision of extensive real-life learning experiences within the local and wider community
- opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and serve the community both locally and internationally.

Teachers are highly committed to the college's vision and special character. They are positive and enthusiastic in their interactions with students and are knowledgeable about the curriculum. Teachers provide clear and consistent expectations for students and effectively use a range of strategies that engage students in meaningful learning. Digital technology is being increasingly well used by teachers and students to enhance learning programmes. ERO observed settled and supportive learning environments and high levels of student engagement and enjoyment of learning across the college. Useful processes are being developed to provide teachers with regular feedback about the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

Students with diverse learning needs benefit from individualised learning programmes provided by experienced and knowledgeable teachers and support staff.

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

Māori students' language, culture and identity is promoted at the college by opportunities to learn te reo Māori across the college and participate in kapahaka. Links with local iwi are strengthened through regular marae visits for students in the primary area. All Year 9 students participate in a noho marae as part of an extensive study of local Māori history and traditions. Teachers have been supported in their knowledge and understanding of te ao Māori by participating in a school-wide professional development programme and visits to local marae. Senior Māori students have opportunities to develop their leadership skills and contribute to strengthening bicultural perspectives within the college.

To further promote success for Māori, as Māori, priority should be given to:

- further developing teachers confidence and capability in integrating aspects of te reo and tikanga Māori within class programmes
- implementing a planned approach to recognising and acknowledging te ao Māori in class and school environments.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Bethlehem College is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The board of trustees, led by a knowledgeable chairperson, provides effective governance for the school. Trustees are supportive of the principal and school leaders. They bring a wide range of skills and expertise to their roles and responsibilities and are fully committed to the college's special Christian character.

The principal continues to provide high-quality leadership that is characterised by an effective strategic approach to the ongoing improvement and development of the college. He ensures that the college's special Christian character is kept to the forefront of all aspects of school operations. The principal is well supported by senior leaders who bring a wide range of skills and expertise to their positions. School leaders work collegially together in the best interest of students.

There is a strong focus on continual reflection and improvement. Comprehensive self-review processes are implemented at all levels of the college. Self-review information is well used to inform decision making.

Students continue to benefit from high levels of parent and community support and involvement in the life of the college.

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

At the time of this ERO review there were 68 international students attending the school, including one exchange student.

The college has sound and well-established processes for the provision of pastoral care for international students led by a knowledgeable International Student Director and dedicated team of teachers and support staff. There is a strong emphasis on providing a supportive family-like environment for international students and ensuring that they are well integrated into the life of the college. Those international students who do not have English as their first language receive effective support from specialist teachers.

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.

Conclusion

Bethlehem College provides a rich, broad curriculum that very effectively supports and promotes student learning. The college's special Christian character permeates all aspects of college life and contributes to a strong sense of wellbeing and belonging for students. Achievement data shows very high levels of academic results across the college.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynda Pura-Watson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'L'.

Lynda Pura-Watson
Deputy Chief Review Officer

24 May 2016

About the School

Location	Tauranga	
Ministry of Education profile number	77	
School type	Composite (Years 1 to 13)	
School roll	1590	
Number of international students	69	
Gender composition	Girls 52% Boys 48%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	69%
	Māori	7%
	Chinese	5%
	Other European	5%
	Indian	4%
	Other	4%
	Other Asian	4%
	Pacific	2%
Review team on site	April 2016	
Date of this report	24 May 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	November 2012
	Education Review	October 2009
	Education Review	September 2006