



**Rongotai College**  
**Wellington**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Rongotai 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?**

Rongotai College is a Years 9 to 15 secondary school for boys, located in the Wellington suburb of Rongotai. Since the May 2013 ERO review, the school has experienced increased student enrolments. The roll at the time of this ERO review is 656 students, with 16% Māori and 20% Pacific. The school roll is multi-cultural, with students identifying with a wide range of ethnicities.

The school celebrates and acknowledges student success, showing pride in the accomplishments and achievements of current and past students.

Trustees have continued a programme of refurbishment in aspects of the school environment, including the completion of a new gymnasium.

The school is currently involved in two Ministry of Education initiatives. Staff are in the fourth year of implementing Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L). Through recent involvement with Sport New Zealand, they are in the initial stages of developing an integrated approach to learning for a group of Year 9 students. Sport in Education provides professional learning and development (PLD) for teachers and encourages collaborative practice with other schools.

The school has stable leadership and governance and a positive reporting history with ERO.

### 2 Learning

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

Building upon positive achievement outcomes for most learners, school leaders and trustees have established priorities to further raise achievement outcomes for Māori and Pacific learners. Extending teacher's use of data to better meet the learning needs of students and strengthening internal evaluation processes should support achieving this priority.

Results for National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) showed that in 2015 students gained qualifications at Levels 1, 2 and 3 at rates above boys nationally. Māori students experienced considerable success at Level 2 NCEA in 2015, achieving above their peers. For Pacific students there remains disparity in outcomes at all levels. Since the previous ERO report, the number of students achieving scholarship has increased and more students attained merit or excellence endorsed qualifications.

NCEA Level 1 results decreased slightly in 2015 when compared to previous years, especially for Pacific students and students who enrolled after Year 9. The school has responded by developing leadership oversight for these groups and increasing levels of tracking and mentoring.

Data shows most students have achieved NCEA Level 2 at the time of leaving school. There is slight disparity in leaver qualifications for Māori and Pacific students. The school has established a number of strategies to address this challenge. Setting targets to explicitly focus on those students requiring accelerated achievement is likely to improve student success.

Senior students' progress and achievement is suitably tracked and monitored. Several times during the year senior leaders consider each student individually. Learners requiring additional support receive appropriate intervention, including academic mentoring.

Achievement information is gathered for students in Years 9 and 10 to establish the need for additional literacy support and inform class placement. Leaders and teachers continue to review assessment tools in the junior school. As this review is undertaken, staff should continue to extend the focus on literacy across subjects.

Literacy learning support for students with additional learning requirements in Years 9 and 10 is comprehensive. Most students involved in this programme accelerate their achievement.

Teachers access an appropriate range of assessment information to establish levels of student achievement and determine learning objectives. Leaders should continue to build on the successful practice of some teachers in using this data. Promoting its consistent use for planning and teaching is likely to strengthen student engagement and assist in accelerating achievement.

Parents receive appropriate information to support their understanding of student progress and achievement through clear written reports during the year. Increased access to digital information has been positively received by families. Strengthened student goal-setting should further support the conferencing processes with parents and teachers.

### **3 Curriculum**

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

The college continues to make purposeful curriculum changes in response to the aspirations of learners.

A clear mission and vision underpins the curriculum. Shared values are clearly expressed, acknowledging the development of key characteristics and the promotion of excellence in academic, cultural and sporting pursuits. In developing a 'learner profile' the school has articulated the skills, attributes and competencies reflective of their community's vision for student success.

The senior school curriculum provides a range of academic, practical and industry based pathways for students. Ongoing review contributes to relevant changes to better cater for individuals. Learning areas and facilities are well resourced, including suitable access to digital technologies.

Leaders are considering the integration of current subjects with vocational pathways to strengthen curriculum options for students and extend the provision of careers information. ERO's evaluation affirms that this is timely.

Development of an effective teacher profile enables staff to identify the key characteristics desired in their practice. In classes where these expectations are well understood, student engagement in learning is purposeful. School leaders continue to build teacher practice through strengthened processes. Changes have included: further development of teaching as inquiry and revision of the appraisal system to better support teacher growth and accountability.

Staff and trustees engage purposefully with Pacific parents. The provision of Samoan language from Year 9, and into the senior school, is in response to the large number of Samoan learners in the school. Pacific identity is affirmed through events, experiences and relevant curriculum contexts. Leaders are currently reviewing Pacific success with the aim of raising achievement and evaluating how well the provision of language, culture and identity occurs across the curriculum.

Comprehensive pastoral systems are reviewed to improve how they respond to student wellbeing. Staff work collaboratively to promote inclusive practices. Leaders facilitate and guide development of PB4L practices. The 'Rongotai Way' aims to build on school culture and encourages student's positive involvement at school. Students form key relationships with staff and their peers. Student surveys are well used to consider their wellbeing and inform school development.

The Tamatoa Special Needs Unit caters for students identified with complex learning needs in a positive and supportive environment. Comprehensive individual education plans guide learning and encompass the aspirations of families. Digital portfolios and learning narratives are used to share significant moments and promote a collaborative learning partnership with families and whānau.

English speakers of a second language access appropriate support programmes to promote their language development.

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

Māori student's participate in school leadership and have a positive presence in the school. Culturally responsive contexts suitably acknowledge Māori learners culture and language. Curriculum choices encompass te reo Māori at all levels of the school and Māori performing arts as an optional subject in Years 12 and 13.

Following consultation with Te Whānau o Tangi te Keo, a strategy has been implemented to further accelerate the progress of Māori students and to promote their success as Māori. The goals contained in this plan should purposefully build on the positive provision for Māori students.

## 4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to strengthen internal evaluation practice to sustain its performance and continue to improve outcomes for students.

Trustees possess a range of valuable skills to support sound governance. Regular reporting contributes to appropriate operational management and decision making. Policies and procedures are suitably reviewed to guide meeting legislative requirements. Strategic planning goals are clear and reflect school priorities. Strengthening goals and measurable outcomes contained in annual planning should increase trustee's knowledge of the impact of their decisions on learning.

The principal and senior leaders focus purposefully on achieving the school's annual priorities. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities and guide ongoing development in relation to these goals. Leadership is strengthening the collective capability of staff to better meet the needs of all students.

Senior leaders and trustees recognise the benefits of sound internal evaluation. They seek to build on current practice, and their successes to date, by strengthening evaluative practice collectively across the school. Introduction of staff consultation groups is promoting a shared knowledge of evaluation.

The annual department reporting framework provides a consistent overview of student achievement. Continuing to strengthen the evaluative commentary contained in these reports should improve the quality of reporting and assist in decision making.

### 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 five international students attending the school. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

International students are well catered for at Rongotai College. Their progress and achievement is carefully monitored. Strong support is provided to promote wellbeing and pastoral care. Productive relationships with other schools supports students to pursue a wide range of courses and interests. The new international director is seeking to strengthen the provision of education for international students through the use of evaluation.

### 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

Students achieve well in national qualifications. Māori and Pacific students have a positive presence in an inclusive school that values the many cultures and ethnicities of students. Strategic priorities are firmly based on improving student outcomes. The school is well led and supported by sound governance. Strengthening internal evaluation should further improve student outcomes.

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



Joyce Gebbie  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

7 June 2016

## About the School

Location	Wellington	
Ministry of Education profile number	277	
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 15)	
School roll	659	
Number of international students	5	
Gender composition	Male 100%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	15%
	Pākehā	45%
	Pacific	20%
	Asian	12%
	Other ethnic groups	8%
Special features	Tamatoa - Special Needs Unit	
Review team on site	April 2016	
Date of this report	7 June 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	May 2013
	Education Review	January 2010
	Education Review	December 2006