



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**St Joseph's School (Grey Lynn)**  
**Auckland**

**Education Review Office**

**External Evaluation**

# ERO External Evaluation

## St Joseph's School (Grey Lynn)

### 1 Context

St Joseph's School (Grey Lynn) is a small inner city state integrated Catholic school that caters for children from Years 1 to 6 and also for girls through to Year 8. The school is part of the wider parish family and enjoys close relationships and connections with members of the church and the local community. The school roll reflects the ethnically diverse community that the school and the local Catholic parish serve. Two percent of children have Māori heritage and 98 percent are from Pacific nations.

Recently a new principal has been appointed bringing with her a refocus on the needs of the school. There have been other staff changes, including the recent appointment of a Deputy Principal to the senior management team. The school hosts a French kindergarten during the week and a Russian language school on the weekends.

### 2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes defined by the school for all children are respect, excellence, honesty and compassion adopted from the founding charism of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop. These values are encouraged and modelled with the children and encompass the Gospel values and values from *The New Zealand Curriculum*. They form an integral part of the curriculum and the teaching approach. The school reports that 86 percent to 90 percent of learners achieve at or above National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics with the greatest majority achieving at National Standards. The data show that Māori and Pacific children achieve equally as well. Their achievement levels continue to improve.

Since the 2013 ERO evaluation the school has continued to use good moderation practices to form overall teacher judgements about student achievement. The school has continued to embed its assessment practices. Teachers have participated in comprehensive professional learning and development contracts with Ministry of Education including Accelerated Learning in Mathematics, Accelerated Learning in Literacy, Learning with Digital Technology and Assessment for Learning. This targeted professional development has supported teachers to reflect on their teaching practice.

Teachers and leaders know and care for children and their families/whānau. Teachers position learners to progress and succeed. Appropriate levels of intervention and individual support are provided for each learner.

### 3 Accelerating achievement

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

The school is effective at responding to children whose learning and achievement needs acceleration. School leaders have recently put in place diversity registers in each classroom that capture the broad progress of each child. Teachers use school professional learning community meetings to support each other to know and develop each child.

School leaders track and closely analyse achievement information. This ensures learning is optimised for each child and supports them to become successful learners.

The school has developed effective relationships with families. Staff work alongside parents to develop successful learning support programmes for their children. Parents and teachers have previously participated in the "Reading Together Programme" that is planned to be continued to support learning at home. Parents enjoy positive and strong partnerships with the school.

At all areas of the school there is a high level of responsiveness to children's needs. Teachers and senior leaders identify and provide learning support to encourage children's continued progress. Children are benefitting from teaching practices that are promoting learning.

In 2015 an external provider facilitated school-wide professional development in literacy. Teachers looked at the impact of teacher practice on children's learning outcomes. This investigation resulted in the development of a portfolio for teacher appraisal focussed on raising student achievement. This development should be revisited to ensure leaders and teachers share the same expectations.

#### **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 targets for equity and excellence?**

The school is increasing its effectiveness to enact its vision, values, goals and priorities for equity and excellence in alignment with the school's vision and mission statements. Children are confident, articulate and engaged in learning and share a strong sense of school pride. They are happy, kind and caring of each other. Pastoral care has high priority in the school.

Leaders and teachers, with help from external providers, have developed a new curriculum for the school using the outcomes of consultation with students, staff and parents. Every effort has been made to integrate the Catholic Curriculum with *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Emphasis is placed on acquiring literacy and mathematics skills and knowledge. Leaders are looking at ways the curriculum can support the development of deeper thinking skills and more complex learning behaviours.

High quality teaching and learning can be found in some areas of the school. Leaders and teachers are aware of the importance of building more consistent, high quality teaching and learning practices across the school. Teachers are looking at ways to further deepen children's engagement with learning by promoting and supporting children to lead their own learning. Digital devices are increasingly being used as a tool to support student engagement.

The board, led by a long-standing board chairperson, is committed to the wellbeing of the staff and children of the school. A new board with a wide range of professional skills has recently been formed and has undertaken training to further upskill its stewardship role. Trustees fully support the leadership and the new direction of the school. Some review, updating and implementing of current policies and procedures is required to meet legislative requirements. The board has developed a working plan to better manage and prioritise board objectives.

The new principal has a deliberate, considered approach which is effecting positive changes for the school. The new leadership team is recognising its capacity and clarifying its vision. Leaders exhibit a good balance of backgrounds, skills and experiences. Recent training with an external provider has resulted in good systems to further develop teachers' professional learning.

Leaders and teachers are developing systems and processes to promote their inquiry, knowledge building and evaluation. Leaders and teachers gather and analyse information to make decisions about appropriate school priorities. They are beginning to use external expertise and networks to grow their evaluation and inquiry capacity.

## 5 Going forward

### How well placed is the school to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it?

Leaders and teachers:

- know the children whose learning and achievement need 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.

At St Joseph's School (Grey Lynn) most children achieve at the required level in relation to the National Standards. The next step is to lift children's achievement to the above level of the National Standards.

The senior leadership team acknowledge there is some urgency to increase the consistency and quality of teaching across the school. Teaching approaches should be consistently focused on the specific learning needs of children whose progress and achievement needs further acceleration.

The following areas of future focus have been developed with the principal to continue to build the school's capacity to achieve and sustain equitable and excellent outcomes for all children. Senior managers should:

- continue to use a range of teacher professional development to lift the quality of teaching across the school
- increase student ownership of learning and opportunities for children to lead their own learning
- embed the new curriculum ensuring the inquiry process is integral
- implement the appraisal system in line with Education Council requirements
- align the goals from the Strategic Plan through all systems.

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

## 7 Recommendation

ERO recommends that the new board of trustees and leadership team set up clear operational systems so that the school has a clear focus on accelerating student achievement and continues to improve outcomes for all children.



Graham Randell  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

28 October 2016

## About the school

|                                      |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Location                             | Auckland  |   |
| Ministry of Education profile number | 1493  |   |
| School type                          | Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)                               |   |
| School roll                          | 67  |   |
| Gender composition                   | Girls 40<br>Boys 27                                       |   |
| Ethnic composition                   | Maori<br>Samoan<br>Tongan<br>Cook Island<br>other Pacific | 4<br>36<br>13<br>7<br>7                 |
| Review team on site                  | August 2016   |   |
| Date of this report                  | 28 October 2016   |   |
| Most recent ERO report(s)            | Education Review<br>Education Review<br>Education Review  | June 2013<br>May 2010<br>September 2007 |