

CONFIRMED
EDUCATION REVIEW
REPORT
NAPIER GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL
July 2009



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
TE TARI AROTAKE MATAURANGA

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**CONFIRMED EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT:
NAPIER GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL**

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

1 About the School

Location	Napier
Ministry of Education profile number	217
School type	Secondary (Year 9 - 15)
Decile rating ¹	7
Teaching staff:	
Roll generated entitlement	56.6
Other	1.78
Number of teachers	60
School roll	893
Number of international students	13
Gender composition	Girls 100%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 74%, Māori 18%, Asian 2%, Pacific 1 %, Other 5%
Special features	School Hostel
Review team on site	May-June 2009
Date of this report	17 July 2009

¹ Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.

Previous ERO reports	Education Review	November 2005
	Education Review	February 2002
	Accountability Review	May 1999
	Assurance Audit	August 1995
	Assurance Audit	August 1993

2 The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Napier Girls' High School this year celebrates 125 years of education for students in Years 9 to 13. The unique values and traditions of the school have been retained and celebrated. Since the November 2005 ERO report, a new principal has been appointed and the enrolment zone of the school extended. The board of trustees and principal have a clear strategic focus on fostering academic excellence, through high quality teaching and learning, and supporting students to develop skills for life-long learning. Students have a wide range of academic, cultural and sporting opportunities.

Significant progress has been made in addressing areas identified for improvement in the previous ERO report, that include learning support, use of student achievement information and consultation with the community. Teachers' participation in extensive professional learning and development (PLD) develops teaching strategies to increase students' competency in higher order thinking and engagement in learning. Staff PLD has led to significant changes in approaches to teaching and learning for students.

Respectful and affirming relationships between students and teachers are evident throughout the school. Students have a strong voice in school decisions through their leadership portfolios and representation on a range of teacher-led committees. They are supported to take responsibility for their learning and be self motivated to achieve. Students demonstrate pride in their school.

The previous ERO report acknowledged the high levels of achievement by students in the school. National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) for 2008 show that senior students in Years 11 to 13 achieve significantly above national averages and schools of similar type. The overall achievement of Māori and Pacific students exceeds national averages. Of significance is the increased retention of Māori students at Years 12 and 13. In Years 9 and 10, students' levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy are known on entry, and ongoing assessments measure subsequent improvement using comparative data. Data shows that most students make progress during their time in Years 9 and 10.

Student success in all endeavours is celebrated. Senior managers and teachers demonstrate a belief that all students should achieve to their potential. Individual progress and achievement is closely tracked, with intervention and extension programmes tailored for each student's needs. Teachers are well prepared and responsive to students' learning needs through their effective use of assessment information. They continually strive to make learning meaningful for students.

The principal's leadership is well informed by current educational theory and research. She is capably supported by a team of senior managers. The principal, students and staff work closely together through networks of leadership across the school.

Trustees are highly visible in the school. They consult with and respond to recommendations from senior managers, staff and students. The board works closely with the principal and staff to achieve the best possible outcomes for students. They bring a range of skills to their governance roles and actively participate in training.

High quality self review is evident in the board's planned review cycle and recently completed strategic and annual plans. The board is well informed about students' education, achievement and care through monthly reports from the principal, hostel manager and heads of departments.

Through discussions with ERO, senior managers recognise the need to build on staff skills and current improvement strategies to diversify opportunities for students' learning. They have identified the need to develop flexible programmes to increase student choice, and personalised career plans for beyond school. Such planning, in collaboration with parents and whānau, needs to capture and build on the learning and skills students bring with them to secondary education.

The shared vision for education at Napier Girls' High School, based on a culture of empowering young women, is moving the school from one that stands on tradition, to one that builds on tradition to equip students with the confidence and skills needed for a challenging future.

Future Action

ERO is very confident that the board of trustees can govern the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four to five years.

3 The Focus of the Review

Student Achievement Overall

ERO's education reviews focus on student achievement. What follows is a statement about what the school knows about student achievement overall.

The majority of Years 11 to 13 students consistently achieve above national expectations for NCEA, and make significant progress during their time at the school.

Overall success rates for these students, and the percentage of merits and excellence endorsements they gained, have increased at each level of NCEA since 2005.

In 2008 students achieved the following results:

- at Year 11, 92% achieved NCEA level 1, with 96% achieving the literacy and 98% the numeracy requirements at this level;
- at Year 12, 87% achieved NCEA level 2;
- at Year 13, 78% achieved NCEA level 3;
- 7 students gained 12 scholarships, 1 of these being outstanding;
- Māori students achieved NCEA level 1 to 3 credits at percentages exceeding national averages for like schools; and
- Pacific students achieved NCEA level 2 credits above national averages.

Seventy-eight percent of students gained NCEA credits to qualify for University Entrance (UE) literacy. Senior managers have set a target for every student to achieve UE literacy credits before they leave school.

Senior managers are exploring strategies to raise the number of scholarships at Year 13. A senior teacher has responsibility for working with students in Year 12 who show interest and potential to study for scholarships in Year 13. Students have extra guidance and tuition to achieve this goal. Senior managers aim to extend this early identification to Years 9 and 10 students in the future.

Schoolwide achievement information for Years 9 and 10 students in literacy and numeracy, gathered through asTTle (Assessment Tools for Teaching and Learning) and Progressive Achievement Tests (PATs), is known on entry. Ongoing assessments measure subsequent improvement using comparative data. Data shows that most students progress during their time in Year 9. When students are in Year 10 subject teachers manage their assessments. This information is used for reporting to parents, class placements and tracking students' progress and achievement.

Senior managers, deans and teachers effectively monitor all students, identifying trends, appropriate interventions and engaging families in supporting their daughters' learning. Positive trends in the achievement of students previously at risk of not achieving are matched by a range of improvements, such as commitment to learning, attendance and classroom behaviour.

Students have opportunities to achieve in academic, cultural and sporting endeavours. A recent survey found that 87% of students participate in these activities. Students develop leadership skills as prefects, form captains, Kahui Māori, peer tutors, team coaches and through student-led initiatives. Students participate and succeed in international, national and regional competitions.

School Specific Priorities

Before the review, the board of Napier Girls' High School was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Napier Girls' High School.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus area for the review:

- the impact of continuous improvement strategies on student learning and achievement.

ERO's findings in this area are set out below.

The Impact of Continuous Improvement Strategies on Student Learning and Achievement

Background

At the time of the previous ERO report, the board commented that they wanted to focus on further developing high quality teaching that challenges and engages 21st century learners. Senior managers and staff have developed teaching and learning goals, and improvement focused strategies so that students can thrive as learners. Teachers are undertaking PLD with other schools and across departments.

The board has an overarching goal that staff will be responsive to the increasing diversity of students. Promoting students as life-long learners, who apply their learning in a range of contexts, is a school priority. The principal believes that students 'need to think and understand learning to make sense of change'.

The board, principal and senior management team are interested in an external evaluation of the impact of continuous improvement strategies on student learning and achievement.

Student progress and achievement

See section above on **Student Achievement Overall**.

Areas of good performance

- **Expectations**
Senior managers and teachers have high expectations of students as successful learners and achievers. Students understand these aspirations and see them as achievable. In classrooms, teachers maintain a focus on learning, with affirming behaviour expectations evident. Students strive for excellence in everything they do. Expectations for students to achieve are clear and understood.

- **Engagement with learning**
Students are highly engaged with learning. They come to class well-prepared and settle quickly. Students actively participate in their learning, asking questions and engaging in meaningful conversations with teachers and their peers. In most classrooms, skilful use of questioning supports the development of higher-level critical thinking. Teachers use students' prior learning to build on knowledge and understanding. Staff differentiate learning activities in response to students' learning needs. Students demonstrate confidence in themselves as achievers.
- **Early interventions**
Students with learning and behaviour concerns are well supported. Students at risk of not achieving to their potential are closely tracked and monitored by the principal, senior managers and deans. Appropriate programmes are put in place. Recently established early intervention learning and behaviour teams work with these students. The teams use data to systematically review the effectiveness of the impact of these interventions on student engagement. The early identification of students who may cause concern increases their engagement, and reduces the impact of their inappropriate behaviour on other students' learning.
- **Learning environments**
Teaching is well paced and focused on making learning meaningful and challenging for students. Interactions between teachers and students are respectful and productive. Teachers' emphasis on learning, rather than behaviour, encourages a positive learning environment. Students are supported to take more responsibility for their learning.
- **Student voice**
Students across all levels benefit from increased opportunities to be active participants in school decision making. Student leaders have defined expectations of their leadership responsibilities. Students are consulted formally and informally about matters impacting on their learning and welfare. Their voice is actively sought and valued. Students demonstrate a strong sense of belonging and responsibility.
- **School culture**
Strong traditions and values within the school community support a culture of respect for self and others. Teachers know students well. They have consistent expectations that focus on student care and achievement. Students learn in a culture that promotes them as confident and capable achievers.
- **Learning community**
Teachers are committed to their own learning. They seek high quality professional development. These opportunities include collaborative learning across departments, local cluster networks, external providers and presentations at conferences. Teacher professional development leads to significant changes in approaches to teaching.

- **Strategic approach to teaching and learning**
The principal and senior managers use strategic and well planned approaches to promote improvement in teaching and learning. They work closely with staff to develop and use strategies that are responsive to the increasing diversity of students. These strategies include building students' skills so that they are self-managing, life-long learners with high-level thinking skills. Staff are establishing a shared philosophy about what constitutes successful learning for students.
- **Self review**
Trustees and senior managers lead high quality, responsive self review that underpins decisions affecting student learning, achievement and care. Strategic and systematic review by the board, principal and senior managers are inclusive of all members of the school community. Review is based on the comprehensive collection of well documented information. Strategies and initiatives introduced as a result of self review impact positively on students' learning and care.

Area for improvement

- **Continuous improvement**
Through discussions with ERO, senior managers recognise the need to build on staff skills and current improvement strategies to diversify opportunities for students' learning. They have identified the need to develop flexible programmes to increase student choice, and personalised career plans for beyond school. Such planning, in collaboration with parents and whānau, needs to capture and build on the learning and skills students bring with them to secondary education.

Areas of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Napier Girls' High School ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

The Achievement of Māori Students: Progress

In this review, ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of Māori students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement.

Approximately 18% of students attending the school are Māori.

Areas of progress

- **Student achievement**
 Since 2006, analysis of data for Māori students shows significant improvements in achievement, with 92% of Māori students attaining academic qualifications. An increased number of Māori students stay at school for four to five years. The percentage leaving with level 2 or level 3 NCEA is 16% higher than the national average for Māori students. Department and class analysis of achievement information has improved. Senior managers and teachers work together to develop strategies to assist Māori students to learn and achieve.
- **Leadership opportunities**
 Māori students are well represented in leadership roles within the school. Kāhui Māori is a leadership system for Years 12 and 13 students. The Manu Taki (senior Māori student) is a prefect. Māori students are also well represented in form captain positions. Students have a major role in developing the tuakana/teina programme. Māori students demonstrate a sense of pride and belonging.
- **Māori Achieve team**
 Māori students' welfare and achievements are well monitored. The Māori Achieve team has an overview of Māori student participation, academic achievement and retention. The team has undertaken considerable work, developing initiatives to motivate and assist Māori students. Parents and staff are represented on the team. Professional development for all staff has focused on powhiri and integrating kaupapa Māori. Other initiatives include whānau hui, Years 9 and 10 mentoring, targeted careers work with a group of Year 10 students, and strengthening the school kapa haka. The board and staff demonstrate a commitment to raising the profile of Māori students in the school.

Area for further improvement

- **Professional development**
 Departments need to strengthen and expand strategies to support Māori students' success, and build on the learning teachers have already undertaken as a group in this area. Professional development, focused on Māori students as learners, should further benefit the learning relationships between teachers and students.

The Achievement of Pacific Students: Progress

In this review ERO evaluated the progress the school has made since the last review in improving the achievement of its Pacific students and in initiatives designed to promote improved achievement. The school has eight students who identify as Pacific. They come from Samoa and Fiji. At each year level the number of students is few and their progress and achievement is individually monitored. Students in Years 9 and 10 achieve at comparable levels to their peers and above national

averages in NCEA. Subject teachers acknowledge and affirm the cultural identity of Pacific students through their class programmes as appropriate opportunities arise. The school has good systems to ensure programmes of support and extension meet the individual needs of these students. Pacific students are represented in school leadership roles and participate in speech and cultural festivals.

Implementing the New Zealand Curriculum in 2010

Progress to date

In preparing for teaching the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) in 2010 the school has:

- consulted its community and incorporated eight values into the school's 2009 to 2013 strategic plan;
- reviewed outcomes for students against the proposed curriculum goals;
- undertaken professional development to develop key competencies. Staff have mapped the current and future Napier Girls' High School student against the key competencies;
- developed an annual plan with goals linked to the NZC principles;
- reviewed school traditions to ensure these are consistently understood;
- introduced Year 12 Education for Enterprise to develop the skills, attitudes and values that are reflected in the key competencies;
- considered the courses available to students and the skills needed for the future; and
- provided staff professional development based on developing students' thinking skills.

Next steps

The school has decided that its priorities for preparation over the next three to six months are:

- to investigate and develop learning pathways for students to select across the eight learning areas; and
- seek more input from parents and caregivers about how their daughters may learn in the future.

Thinking about the Future

ERO is currently discussing with secondary schools how they are thinking about the future and what it might mean for their students.

The school reports that it has thought about the future and what it might mean for their students in the following ways:

- the ability to live, study and work in a world in which change is a constant;

- thinking skills and strategies;
- skills to use learning technologies in a global context;
- increasing staff knowledge of student aspirations for their future;
- providing structures that enable students to learn at curriculum levels appropriate for them; and
- ongoing involvement of the Old Girls network in the traditions and celebrations of the school's institutional life.

Provision for International Students

Compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* and the Provision of English Language Support

Napier Girls' High 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students.

The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

Areas of good performance

- **Systems and procedures**
Staff have effective systems to ensure compliance with the Code and international student welfare and academic progress is well supported. Policies and procedures are systematically reviewed. The international dean reports the progress and achievement of international students to the board on a regular basis. Well managed systems make sure international students are effectively cared for. The care of international students is well monitored.
- **Orientation**
Student orientation programmes assist international students settle into their new environment. An orientation booklet provides information to help students familiarise themselves with the school setting and New Zealand culture. Students regularly meet and have informal contact with staff responsible for them. A senior international student acts as a mentor. Students participate in a number of outings that help them experience and appreciate New Zealand's cultural heritage. Students have positive initial experiences that help with adjustment to school life.
- **Support**
International students' learning and welfare is effectively managed. The international student dean, hostel personnel and other school staff closely monitor students' academic progress and welfare. Teachers provide additional tutorial support to students in their subject areas. International students are involved in cultural and sporting activities. Students report that they feel well supported during their time at the school.

- **Language support**
Students receive good quality English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) support during their time at the school. They are tested on arrival and appropriate programmes are developed for them. Most of the students sit unit standards in ESOL. Students are monitored and their progress tracked over time. Records show that students make good progress with their reading, vocabulary and oral language skills. Written, oral and visual resources are spontaneously used by students in their learning. The ESOL teacher provides students with support and language skills to help them learn in their mainstream classes.

Area for improvement

- **Learning in subject areas**
Support for ESOL students' language development from teachers in mainstream classes is variable. Activities related to subject area topics are not always tailored to students' level of English. Making use of the ESOL teacher's knowledge of these students, and adapting subject resources, should better support students' learning in these classes.

Provision for Students in the School Hostel

In this review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school hostel provides a safe physical and emotional environment that supports learning for students accommodated in the hostel.

School hostels are required to be licensed by the Ministry of Education and comply with minimum standards specified in the hostel regulations.

The school hostel, Hewitt House, accommodates 155 students, 17% of the school roll. The hostel is administered by the Napier Girls' High Board of Trustees.

Areas of good performance

- **Management**
The hostel is well managed. The manager meets regularly with, and is well supported by, school trustees; hostel board and principal. A hostel dean provides the manager with links to the school teaching and support staff. The manager has positive working relationships with hostel staff. She works closely with boarders' families, listening to their ideas and concerns. The manager fully understands her role in providing an environment where students are safe and secure, and parents assured their children are well looked after.
- **Relationships**
Positive and trusting relationships are a feature of the hostel. Students are welcomed into the hostel family. Year 13 boarders take responsibility as buddies to support Year 9 students in their first year. Students enjoy living in a community where they can establish friendships with girls from all year levels. They have positive relationships with staff.

- Leadership opportunities
The school and hostel provide leadership opportunities for students. Boarders voice concerns or ideas to regular management team meetings through a student representative. Student leaders speak highly of the receptive way their contributions are valued and acted on.
- Hostel staff
Staff have responded to a previous ERO report suggestion that they participate in professional development. They have completed certificates related to their roles, and participate in professional learning with school staff. The head supervisor, who stays on site, has helped develop comprehensive systems and routines. She is capably assisted by a team of supervisors, study tutors, support and catering staff. All staff have job descriptions against which they are regularly appraised. Duty staff are always available for students should they require assistance or have concerns. House routines to guide boarders and staff are well documented. Staff are aware of the needs of young women living in a boarding situation.
- Hostel facilities
Boarders are provided with comfortable and well maintained facilities. Sleeping areas are suitably furnished and provide privacy for students. A variety of spaces, with televisions, computers and cooking facilities are available. Study rooms are provided for all students. These rooms are supervised by tutors who help boarders with work related to their learning. Students have high quality facilities for living and learning.

4 Board Assurance on Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Napier Girls' High School completed an ERO *Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist*. 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; and
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment);
- physical safety of students;
- teacher registration;

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

Compliance

ERO's investigations did not identify any areas of concern.


5 Recommendation

ERO and the board of trustees have developed and agreed on the following recommendation:

- 6.1 senior managers continue to build on current continuous improvement strategies and staff skills, to further develop flexible programmes that increase student choice and build on the learning students bring with them to secondary schooling.

6 Future Action

ERO is very confident that the board of trustees can govern the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four to five years.



Dr Graham Stoop
Chief Review Officer

17 July 2009

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To the Parents and Community of Napier Girls' High School

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Napier Girls' High School.

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Review Coverage

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.



Dr Graham Stoop
Chief Review Officer

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT REVIEWS

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the Government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting is based on three review strands.

- **School Specific Priorities** – the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- **Areas of National Interest** – information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements** – assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

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Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.