

Confirmed Report

NEW SCHOOL ASSURANCE REVIEW REPORT
Middle School West Auckland

Location: Glendene, Auckland

Ministry of Education profile number: 713

December 2015

New School Assurance Review Report

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1 Introduction

A New School Assurance Review is a review of particular areas of school performance and is undertaken to specific terms of reference.

New School Assurance Reviews are generally undertaken within the first year of the school's opening.

Terms of Reference

This review is based on an evaluation of the performance of Middle School West Auckland. The terms of reference for the review are to provide assurance to the community:

- that the school is well placed to provide for students
- that the school is operating in accordance with the vision articulated by the sponsor.

2 Context

Middle School West Auckland is a Partnership School Kura Hourua (PSKH). Partnership Schools Kura Hourua are bound by a Partnership Contract with the Crown to deliver defined outcomes, particularly in regard to student achievement and engagement in learning. Sponsors report quarterly to the Ministry of Education. The performance of the school is also monitored by the PSKH Authorisation Board.

3 Background

Middle School West Auckland is the second of two Partnership Schools Kura Hourua sponsored by the Villa Education Trust. Like South Auckland Middle School, this school provides for students in Years 7 to 10. The business manager and academic advisor support both schools and work with the individual principals to implement the Villa model of learning.

Middle School West Auckland is located primarily in Glendene in a property leased from a church. The school has exclusive use of most parts of the facility with some areas being used by the church at weekends. Some modifications to the building have been made to meet operating requirements and to provide the learning spaces that allow for specialist teaching.

The school is organised into units of up to 60 students with their teachers. The school is currently operating two units on one site and a further unit at another site in Henderson. There are currently 113 students on the roll and the school is progressing towards meeting its minimum roll requirement.

4 Findings

Middle School West Auckland has made a successful start to operating as a school that aims to provide a strong learning foundation for emerging adolescents. The curriculum is a model that the sponsor is successfully using in other Villa Trust schools. It uses project-based learning and incorporates a number of projects that are designed to provide broad coverage of the essential learning areas of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. The afternoon programme provides opportunities for te reo Māori and kapa haka, sports, the arts, and trips related to project work. Sports coaches who provide much of the afternoon programme at the other Villa Trust schools are also working at Middle School West Auckland to ensure that students have good access to sports and physical activity.

Students learn in classes of up to 15 students and classes are settled and purposeful. Students are expected to manage their time and to increasingly personalise how they engage with projects. Teachers are aware of the need to support students who may not be familiar with studying independently as they adapt to this way of learning and to using digital technology purposefully for learning.

Students respond positively to teachers' high expectations. The students we talked to were very positive about the school. They reported that they get plenty of individual help from their teachers, and that, while some of the work is hard, they enjoy the challenge and variety of learning in this way.

Teachers are appropriately qualified and registered, and bring specialist subject skills and knowledge of secondary schooling. They are well supported by ongoing professional development within the school and across the Villa Education Trust schools. Their recent work on what they expect graduating students to achieve reflects their shared commitment to *The New Zealand Curriculum*, and to the vision and values articulated by the sponsor.

School leaders are aware of the challenge of gathering and using reliable and valid achievement data to demonstrate student progress. Planned professional development will help teachers use existing assessment tools to address students' learning gaps more specifically. Currently most students are at or below the applicable National Standards. Students are achieving better in maths than in reading or writing. Girls outperform boys in most areas. Good provision is made for students with identified special needs.

The school has faced significant challenges during the year in regard to changes in staffing and in their shared occupancy of the Henderson site. School leaders have demonstrated resilience and a clear commitment to building an inclusive, learning-focused school culture. They acknowledge the need to provide Māori learners with an environment and programme that builds learners' language, culture and identity. Strengthening this aspect of school provision is an ongoing challenge.

A significant proportion of students who have previously been disengaged from schooling have enrolled at the school. School leaders are actively seeking ways to monitor their engagement at school and to provide appropriate support when necessary. Two staff members are employed to support students and their whānau, providing liaison with both the school and wider community. This has proved beneficial in working with students to settle into their new school. School leaders

are establishing good relationships with external agencies such as CYFs, the police and other services to support the students who are at risk of poor outcomes. Improved attendance at school has been a significant and pleasing outcome this year for many of the students.

Sponsor assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the sponsor and school leaders completed the *ERO Sponsor 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:

- governance management and reporting
- curriculum
- management of health, safety and welfare
- personnel 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
- processes for appointing staff
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

Conclusion

Students at Middle School West Auckland are enjoying a model of teaching and learning that supports and challenges them. Good systems are in place to support learners and their families and to build a school culture based on mutual respect.

ERO is likely to carry out the first full review of the school after 12 months as part of the regular review cycle for new schools.



Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

About the School

Location	Glendene, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	713	
School type	Partnership School Kura Hourua	
School roll	113	
Gender composition	Boys 55% Girls 45%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	43%
	Pākehā	23%
	Samoan	10%
	Other Pacific	16%
	Other	8%
Review team on site	October 2015	
Date of this report	16 December 2015	