

**Northcross Intermediate
Browns Bay, Auckland**

Confirmed

Education Review Report

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Northcross Intermediate

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?

Northcross Intermediate is a high performing school for Year 7 to 8 students. High expectations underpin all aspects of school operation including teaching and learning programmes, staff professional development and reflection, and the extension of modern learning environments. School leaders, trustees, and staff collaborate well to sustain school strengths while promoting significant and influential initiatives.

The school, located on Auckland's north shore, is one of New Zealand's largest intermediates. Its roll is 53 percent New Zealand European/Pākehā and eight percent Māori. It has a large number of other European students including those from Britain and South Africa. Korean students comprise six percent of the roll and Chinese three percent.

The school offers a wide range of learning options and co-curricular opportunities to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students. It features a warm and inclusive school climate in which all students can feel valued. Effective procedures for promoting student wellbeing are well embedded in the school.

2 Learning

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

The school makes very good use of achievement information to promote the progress and achievement of learners. Information about student achievement is thoroughly collated and analysed by year level, gender and ethnicity. School-wide trends and patterns are examined, and syndicate and class level data scrutinised. The rich analysis of achievement information clearly influences the school's strategic direction and the allocation of resources. It helps ensure that curriculum decisions are evidence-based.

The school has embarked on a long-term focus of "Visible Learning". This approach draws on research into best use of achievement information to make positive changes for students. It is impacting positively throughout the school and providing teachers with increased knowledge about

the learning of individual students. It helps teachers use what they know about student learning to promote student success, participation and academic engagement. Students know more about where they are at and their next learning steps, increasing the agency they have over their own learning. Parents have more information about how they can support the learning of their children. In response to these positive outcomes, school leaders are determined to continue embedding the principles and practices of Visible Learning throughout the school.

The school uses achievement information to identify students who are at risk of poor educational outcomes. Once identified, the progress of these students is very closely monitored. The students receive targeted support in their classrooms. Those withdrawn from their classes for specialised literacy and mathematics programmes receive effective additional instruction. Most learners make faster than expected progress while on the withdrawal programmes. The school also caters well for students who are new speakers of English. Specialised English language support programmes are of a high quality and support these students to engage successfully in classroom programmes.

Students achieve well in relation to National Standards, although the school's National Standards data has fluctuated over the past three years. Despite the fluctuation, school data clearly demonstrate that the school lifts student achievement levels each year and that the majority of students make good progress in their learning over the two years they are enrolled at Northcross Intermediate.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum promotes and supports student learning effectively. It is a rich and innovative curriculum that is responsive to student feedback as well as to educational research. The curriculum provides students with broad, relevant and well integrated programmes that give due regard to New Zealand's bicultural heritage.

School programmes prioritise literacy and numeracy while placing high value on student-led inquiries and helping students learn how to learn. The curriculum features a wide range of teaching and learning options and is responsive to the varied preferences of students and teachers. Students are highly engaged, confident and enthusiastic learners.

An extensive range of activities helps students develop their strengths, talents and confidence in sports, the arts, languages, technology, computer programming and coding, knowing about other cultures and performance. The variety available enables all students to participate in areas of interest. The activities provided enrich students' knowledge and skills, while helping develop across-school social cohesion. They provide many meaningful ways for students to undertake leadership roles.

Productive relationships and affirming values underpin a school culture in which students support each other and encourage each other to succeed. Students are also supported by the strong focus the school places on student wellbeing. Pastoral care networks are well connected. They are carefully designed to promote inclusive approaches and to support students' academic, social and emotional needs.

Curriculum developments are very well led and managed. School leaders recognise the value of embedding effective teaching linked to Visible Learning throughout the school. They continue to work constructively with teachers - building on teacher strengths, encouraging the sharing of good practices and strengthening curriculum connections across the school. The school's executive

leaders have carefully aligned teacher appraisal and teacher development processes to further foster teacher reflection and to nurture professional growth. Distributed leadership, and collegial and collaborative approaches are all focused on helping to ensure that students receive high quality programmes.

Students are responding positively to the increasing opportunities they have to engage in e-learning. The board of trustees facilitates these developments by providing resources and digital infrastructure throughout the school. Although many students bring their own devices and so have choices in their learning, this is not yet the case for all students. Similarly, not all teachers demonstrate good progress in using e-learning approaches to facilitate student learning. The board and school leaders have appropriately identified the development of whole school best practices in e-learning as an important next step for the school's curriculum.

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

Northcross Intermediate effectively promotes educational success for Māori, as Māori.

The thoughtful initiatives undertaken within the school are closely aligned to the best practices outlined in current research and Ministry of Education resources. They are future-focussed and well resourced. The board's appointment of a Māori cultural adviser gives a focus for the provision of tikanga and te reo Māori within the school, and supports the progress, achievement and wellbeing of Māori students overall.

The initiatives undertaken have had a positive impact. Engagement with whānau has increased and become more meaningful. The access Māori students have to their language, culture, and identity in the school setting has increased. Data show clearly that the school is lifting the achievement levels of Māori students in reading, writing and mathematics.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

Northcross Intermediate is very well placed to sustain its high performance.

The school's leaders are enthusiastic, capable and well informed about educational developments. They have expertise in their key leadership roles, and their insightful practices guide school direction-setting. These leaders network purposefully through their local, national and international links. They are knowledgeable, reflective professionals who are strongly focussed on what is best for students.

School leaders promote ongoing development of teaching and learning. They have participated in the development of modern learning environments and teaching practices. They are building distributed leadership within the school, mentoring and extending curriculum leadership capacity and capability. School leader's model and support teacher leadership through inquiry. They have established sound processes for teacher accountability and ongoing improvement.

Positive school development is enhanced by effective school governance. Capable trustees bring specialised governance expertise to their roles. They too, connect and contribute to sector relationships. The board has clear strategic priorities. Its actions and reporting processes are increasingly linked to these priorities. Trustees recognise the value of carefully evaluating the impact of school initiatives at a board level. The school's robust self review processes help the board to sustain ongoing improvement.

The board recognises the need to upgrade some of the school's classrooms to further promote modern learning approaches. It has sound plans for addressing this need in the near future.

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 the review there were 31 international students attending the school.

Northcross Intermediate provides its international students with a very good standard of education, care and support. International students are well integrated into classrooms, school life and extra-curricular activities. They receive high quality English language support. They make good progress and achieve well at the school. The school has well established robust processes for monitoring of the quality of its provisions for international students.

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

Northcross Intermediate is a high performing school. Students experience success in their learning and benefit from a wide range of learning opportunities. The school's inclusive culture supports learner diversity and is responsive to the needs of emerging adolescents. Robust self review informs the board's strategic direction and results in ongoing improvement.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Randell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G' and 'R'.

Graham Randell
Deputy Chief Review Officer Northern

9 October 2015

About the School

Location	Browns Bay, Auckland	
Ministry of Education profile number	1396	
School type	Intermediate (Years 7 to 8)	
School roll	994	
Number of international students	31	
Gender composition	Boys 53% Girls 47%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	53%
	Māori	8%
	British/Irish	10%
	Korean	6%
	Chinese	3%
	South East Asian	3%
	Japanese	1%
	Pacific	1%
	other European	14%
	other	1%
Review team on site	August 2015	
Date of this report	9 October 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	July 2012
	Education Review	January 2009
	Education Review	January 2006