



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Gladstone School (Masterton)**  
**Masterton**

**Education Review Office**

**External Evaluation**

# ERO External Evaluation

## Gladstone School (Masterton)

### 1 Context

Gladstone School, established in 1876, is a small rural school near Masterton that caters for students in Years 1 to 8. Of the 127 students, 20 identify as Māori. An enrolment zone is in place.

New trustees have joined the board after recent elections. They have already participated in governance training.

### 2 Equity and excellence

The vision and valued outcomes, defined by the school for all children, are to provide a safe learning environment that contributes to quality learning experiences for students and builds a foundation for their future. Respect, inspirational learning, perseverance, community identity, sustainability and resilience are the values identified to underpin teaching and learning. Gladstone School acknowledges the importance of the principles of the *Treaty of Waitangi*.

The school's achievement information shows that most students are achieving at or above the National Standards for reading, writing and mathematics. In 2015, overall, girls achieved higher than boys, with significant disparity between boys and girls in writing. Writing has been identified as a key area requiring improvement for all students.

The school reports that 2014 National Standards data showed improved outcomes for Māori students in mathematics and reading. The school has strategies in place to promote Māori student achievement. However, developing a sustained trajectory of improvement is an ongoing next step.

The school uses a range of assessment tools to determine overall teacher judgements about students' achievement. Whole-school moderation takes place in reading, writing and mathematics. The principal agrees that the next step is to participate in external moderation through the local schools' network.

Since the last ERO evaluation the school has worked to strengthen:

- the school leadership model and taken a strategic approach to the appointment of staff
- collaboration between teachers
- teaching and learning, with a particular focus on accelerating students' achievement in mathematics and literacy
- community and iwi engagement.

There has been a strong drive to integrate future-focused education practice, including e-learning. Participation in a local school cluster is aimed at fostering collaborative, regional sharing of information to improve student outcomes.

The recent introduction of the capability and assessment tool should further support teachers to identify and better cater for priority learners.

### **3 Accelerating achievement**

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

The school should continue to strengthen its response to Māori children whose learning and achievement need acceleration. Their abilities and next steps are identified through close scrutiny of nationally normed tests and overall teacher judgements.

Specific strategies are in place to accelerate the progress of identified students. Their achievement is tracked and outcomes are reported to the board as evidence of making progress in relation to annual plan targets. The next step is to draw together the elements that are making a difference to Māori students' achievement and develop a structured plan with specific outcomes documented.

The school has introduced a range of strategies and support structures to accelerate Māori student achievement. These include:

- the appointment of staff with contextual knowledge and links to mana whenua
- developing a reciprocal relationship with local iwi
- noho marae to support the school's understanding of tikanga Māori and the concept of success for Māori as Māori
- restoring tuku tuku panels for the local marae
- regular hui that facilitate opportunities to gather whānau aspirations
- students capably welcoming visitors with a mihi whakatau
- Māori achievers being invited into the school as role models for students
- kapa haka, which has supported improved cultural responsiveness schoolwide.

The principal and the board have identified the need to continue to strengthen connections and consultation with whānau Māori. Teachers have begun to unpack Ministry of Education publications such as *Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*, and *Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success 2013 - 2017*, to inform and reflect on their practice.

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

The school responds well to other children whose progress needs to be accelerated. The learning of these students is targeted in the school's annual goals, through teachers' in-class inquiries, and specific interventions which are tracked in the special education register.

External support over time has strengthened the school's capacity to monitor and track the progress and achievement of all students and for teachers to use student achievement data at classroom level to specifically target their teaching to learners' needs.

Students' interests and ideas about their learning are being sought and acted on to provide more meaningful contexts for their learning.

## 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's curriculum and other organisational processes and practices to successfully develop and enact the vision, values, goals and targets should be further strengthened to promote equity and excellence.

The school continues to review its documented curriculum. There is a strong focus on reading, writing and mathematics. Other learning areas are comprehensively covered through an inquiry-learning approach. Te reo me ngā tikanga Māori are increasingly integrated into the curriculum and evident in practice.

A strategic approach to the introduction to e-learning is in place. Careful consideration and trialling of 'modern learning' principles is occurring. This is supporting an increasingly collaborative approach to teaching, and students' understanding of their own learning and achievement.

The board has a well organised approach to governance. Trustees have a range of relevant expertise to support school operation and are well informed about student achievement and school activities by the principal. Well-developed understanding of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities is evident.

The school's strategic plan places appropriate emphasis on national priorities and its vision for the future. Progress in relation to annual goals is suitably monitored and reported. Restating strategic and annual goals in more measurable terms should provide a better platform for monitoring progress and evaluating how effective strategies and interventions have been for students.

Leaders are strongly focused on improvement. The teacher performance management process is rigorous and consistent with Education Council expectations.

Teachers are well supported in their roles and have many professional development opportunities. Recent work undertaken to strengthen teachers' practice in literacy and mathematics has led to an improved approach in these areas. Inquiries into the impact of teaching practice on students' learning continue to strengthen. Further improving the understanding and use student of achievement data at classroom level, and the scrutiny of outcomes for priority learners, to inform teaching decisions, are next development steps.

Students are confident, cooperative, respectful and happy. A strong sense of their connectedness with the school is evident. The well-developed learning environment and positive school tone provide a good basis for learning in all areas.

Parents receive comprehensive reports about the achievement and progress of their children at Gladstone School. An increasing emphasis is being placed on developing learning partnerships with families.

The use of internal evaluation to discuss the impact of the strategic plan is evident. Continuing to develop a schoolwide approach to internal evaluation is a next step.

## 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 to the strengths, needs and interests of each child
- regularly evaluate how teaching is working for these children
- need to systematically act on what they know works for each child
- need to have a plan in place to build teacher capability to accelerate the achievement of all children who need it.

There is a commitment by leaders and trustees to building capacity for sustainable, future-focused teaching and learning. Strong support for teachers' development is evident. The appointment of staff has been strategically planned. While a considered approach is taken to long-term planning, the development of internal evaluation, linked to school priorities is at an early stage. Staff and trustees should work together to construct a robust framework for internal evaluation that provides clear evidence of the impact of initiatives on outcomes for students, and guides decision making in an ongoing way. The principal and the board have begun this process.

Action: The board, principal and teachers should use the findings of this evaluation, *the Effective School Evaluation* resource, the *Internal Evaluation: Good Practice* exemplars and the *School Evaluation Indicators* to develop more targeted planning to accelerate student achievement. Planning should show how processes and practices will respond effectively to the strengths and needs of children whose learning and achievement need to be accelerated.

As part of this review ERO will continue to monitor the school's planning and the progress the school makes. 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

To improve learning outcomes and achievement trustees, the principal and teachers should continue to:

- revise annual achievement targets and goals to more specifically focus on learners whose achievement needs to be accelerated
- extend communication with Māori whānau, families and the school community to develop partnerships that promote student learning
- develop the school curriculum and improve integration of te ao Māori in documentation
- strengthen the use of internal evaluation to evaluate the impact of measures taken to raise the achievement of all students at risk of not achieving.



Joyce Gebbie  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

27 October 2016

## About the school

Location	Masterton	
Ministry of Education profile number	2845	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	127	
Gender composition	Female 50%, Male 50%	
Ethnic composition	Māori Pākehā	16% 84%
Review team on site	August 2016	
Date of this report	27 October 2016	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review Education Review Education Review	October 2013 September 2010 June 2007