

**EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT:
KERIKERI HIGH SCHOOL**

FEBRUARY 2007

- [1. About the School](#)
 - [2. The Education Review Office \(ERO\) Evaluation](#)
 - [3. School Specific Priorities](#)
 - [4. Areas of National Interest](#)
 - [5. Board Assurance on Compliance Areas](#)
 - [6. Recommendations](#)
 - [7. Future Action](#)
- [Community Page](#)

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

1. About the School

Location	Kerikeri, Northland
Ministry of Education profile number	5
School type	Secondary (Year 7 to 15)
Decile rating ^[1]	8
Teaching staff:	
Roll generated entitlement	76.10
Other	4.25
Number of teachers	90
School roll	1334
Number of international students	29
Gender composition	Girls 51%, Boys 49%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 65%, Māori 22%, other European 11 %, other ethnicities 2%.
Special features	Hē Mātariki; Year 7 and 8 Māori bi-lingual class
Review team on site	October 2006
Date of this report	2 February 2007

Previous ERO reports

Education Review, January 2004
Accountability Review, November 1999
Effectiveness Review, July 1996
Assurance Audit, October 1994
Assurance Audit, October 1992

2. The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Kerikeri High School continues to provide high quality learning opportunities for students from Year 7 to 13. Steady roll growth and good academic standards have been maintained during an intensive three-year period of school-wide development. The board has managed property development and finances well, prioritising resources to support developments in educational programmes. The school's stated values and high expectations are clearly evident. Recent school developments are focused on changing teaching and learning practices and behaviour management approaches to increasingly student-centred models.

Students achieve well in a variety of academic, sporting, cultural and leadership endeavours. Many represent their school and Northland in a wide range of sporting codes, debating teams, kapa haka and visual arts, while others are national representatives in yachting and future problem solving. Achievement in the National Qualification Framework (NQF) is well above the national average and slightly below that of other New Zealand schools of the same decile. Students are justifiably proud of the school and their achievements are celebrated. Māori students achieve better than other Maori students nationally, although their academic success is still below that of non-Māori students in the school.

The board and the two school principals have made a concerted effort over the past three years to address discrepancies in achievement. Strategic goals and resourcing have been directed to improving learning outcomes for Māori students and to supporting students who are underachieving. Strategies underpinning this targeted approach are based on *Te Kotahitanga*, a Ministry of Education funded, teacher development model. Teaching staff have been involved in a school-wide review of teaching and learning practices that focus on increasing levels of student engagement in learning and building positive, constructive relationships with students.

For the most part, staff have engaged enthusiastically in the *Te Kotahitanga* initiative and are positive about the changes taking place within the school. Some teachers have found the process difficult and have expressed reservations about the philosophy of the project and the school's implementation process. A number of staff and parents have raised their concerns with the board, with the ERO, and through the local media. At the board's request, ERO evaluated the implementation and impact of *Te Kotahitanga*, and investigated staff and parent concerns. The findings of the investigation are contained in this report as identified areas of good performance and recommendations for improvement.

As part of the agreed focus area, the report includes an evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning at Years 7 to 10, comments on student progress and achievement, and investigates how the school collects and uses assessment information. Results in the National Certificate of Education Achievement (NCEA), Māori student achievement and the school's provision for students who are underachieving are evaluated as areas of national interest, as is the quality of teaching of writing at Year 8. The emotional and physical safety of students and strategies to prevent bullying are evaluated as part of the board's legal responsibilities.

ERO identified high quality teaching practices across all curriculum areas. The tone of the school is professional and purposeful and staff morale is positive, despite the misgivings of some about aspects of recent change management. Students are well managed and are engaged in challenging and interesting learning programmes. They are confident and assertive, and demonstrate a high regard for their teachers. School managers are making good progress in strengthening systems for identifying and addressing student learning needs and in reducing the number of student stand-downs and suspensions.

Challenges ahead for the board and senior managers are to consolidate and sustain the new directions in teaching and learning. Management practices should be reviewed to ensure that the positive changes are systematically embedded. The principals accept that more could be done to improve the use of student achievement information and to strengthen planning and reporting procedures. The principals' leadership and vision have been crucial elements in implementing recent changes, however the board accepts that increased alignment between strategic planning goals and self review would strengthen these new directions.

Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

3. School Specific Priorities

The Focus of the Review

Before the review, the board of Kerikeri 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 Kerikeri High School.

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

- the impact on student achievement and teaching practice of the school-wide professional development initiative, *Te Kotahitanga*, and other strategies designed to increase student engagement in learning, particularly for Māori students.

Included within the main focus area are the following aspects of school operations related to teaching and learning:

- planning and reporting in relation to student achievement targets;
- analysis of student achievement information;
- the quality of self review;
- classroom teaching practice, and
- teacher appraisal and professional development.

In addition, ERO evaluated:

- the board's procedures for managing staff and community concerns about recent school developments.

ERO's findings in these areas are set out below.

The impact of school-wide professional development initiatives on student achievement and teaching practice

Background

School managers have been concerned for some years about the persistent pattern of underachievement of Māori students. Goals in the school's annual management plans since 2003 reflect the board's intention to address this disparity, but previous initiatives, including the Suspension Reduction Initiative and the establishment of a bilingual class at Years 7 and 8 have been only partially successful in achieving these goals.

In 2003 the board agreed to participate in a teacher development trial based on findings from a Waikato University research project aimed at raising Maori student achievement. Teacher involvement in the project, *Te Kohahitanga*, was initially on a one-year voluntary basis, but positive results, together with additional Ministry of Education funding, encouraged the board to extend the project and to include all teachers in the implementation.

The project has attracted mostly enthusiasm and goodwill from the teachers involved in its implementation. However, there are some teachers who have expressed concerns about the manner in which project implementation has been managed within the school. Trustees selected this focus area for ERO's investigation in order to gain further insight into the impact of the project and to increase their awareness of the benefits to students.

Student progress and achievement

Previous ERO reports comment on the high standard of student achievement. Results on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) since 2003 indicate that student achievement is consistently above the national average and is similar to schools in the same decile band. Literacy and numeracy requirements in the National Certificate of Education Achievement (NCEA) in 2005 were seven and twelve percent respectively above national averages. Overall achievement at Level 1 NCEA is nine percent above the national average and slightly below the average for similar schools. In NCEA Levels 2 and 3, student achievement is closer to the national average but below the decile average. Improved results at Level 1 are pleasing, but further information is needed to explain the fluctuations in achievement at Levels 2 and 3.

The percentage of school leavers gaining University Entrance has continued to rise since 2002. Trends should be analysed to determine whether this pattern could be attributed to increases in the retention levels of senior students. The number of students leaving school with formal qualifications is well above the national average. Similarly pleasing, is the sharp increase in Māori school leavers with formal qualifications, from 17% in 2002 to 53% in 2004. These trends are likely to reflect the school's efforts to engage students in more meaningful learning opportunities through the diversification of qualifications pathways and provision of vocationally oriented courses.

Collated and analysed student achievement data are not yet reported to the board in a systematic and timely manner. The introduction this year of *asTTle* (assessment tools for teaching and learning) will enable school managers to report more accurately on student literacy and numeracy levels. Written reports compiled annually by heads of faculties and departments provide some analysis of NCEA results within subjects. However, student achievement information presented to the board should be analysed to demonstrate trends and patterns in achievement over time.

Areas of good performance

Research based methodology. *Te Kotahitanga* is a well-regarded teacher development initiative funded by the Ministry of Education. The research focus is on raising Māori student achievement, but the teaching and learning approaches are of benefit to all students. The school's request to enter the project was based on appropriate, and well-documented reasons. The principals engaged closely with the establishment of the project and the initial and ongoing training. They facilitate ongoing dialogue with the researchers.

Support for teachers. The project is well supported by the board and senior managers. The principals have a long-term commitment to the project and are leading the school through a period of significant change. Considerable efforts have been made to enable teachers to participate in planning meetings during the school day and to attend intensive professional development throughout the year. The decision by the board to include all teachers after the initial year was considered carefully. The board has taken a keen interest in the professional development undertaken by teachers and is kept well informed about the progress being made.

Positive change focus. Most teachers are enthusiastic about and supportive of the purpose and direction of *Te Kotahitanga*, and express confidence in the project aims that "teachers can make a difference". They have identified strategies for increasing student engagement and have appreciated the constructive feedback from facilitators and the challenges to deficit theories. Teaching practices are benefiting from the project's collegial planning and evaluation model.

Responding to teacher feedback. An increased number of *Te Kotahitanga* facilitators have been trained in order to provide more flexible approaches for teachers who have experienced difficulties with the project's implementation model. The board is aware of the concerns of some of these teachers and has offered additional support to resolve any ongoing concerns.

Improved relationships. The project is having a positive impact on the learning environment. Higher levels of engagement have been noted and the improvement in student and teacher relationships in the classroom is resulting in a corresponding reduction of disciplinary referrals. Teachers welcome students by name, provide positive feedback and have reduced the potential for conflict. The use of restorative justice practices supports this model of inclusiveness.

Teaching and learning. Teachers express high expectations for student achievement and make learning programmes interesting and relevant. Programmes are challenging and many teachers construct learning outcomes and assessment criteria with students to support the development of students' critical thinking skills. Greater emphasis placed on formative assessment is enabling students to gain confidence and better understand how to improve their learning.

Areas for improvement

Aligning school systems and strategic goals. Senior managers should review and strengthen school-wide management systems in order to further support and sustain the new teaching and learning initiatives. The review should help to ensure greater alignment between school systems and the board's strategic direction. For example, department goal setting, performance management, expectations for planning and assessment, teacher appraisal and class observations, target setting and reporting should, where possible, reflect the broader goals of *Te Kotahitanga*.

Reporting student achievement. Improvements are needed in the collation and use of school-wide student achievement information. Teachers should make better use of diagnostic data to provide differentiated teaching programmes that cater for students' different learning needs. Achievement information should be analysed and reported in more detail to allow patterns in achievement to inform the board's decision-making. The role of the principals in this regard should become less managerial and more strategically focused.

Communication and feedback. The anxiety of some staff about recent change management could possibly have been anticipated and better managed initially. The principals have since undertaken a review of the effectiveness of school-wide communication systems. This has been a useful response to concerns raised about inadequate staff consultation.

Strengthen staff appraisal. The board's appraisal policy and guidelines for the appraisal of teachers and support staff are not clear. The development of an annual appraisal cycle would help school managers to monitor the quality of teaching and should provide assurance to the board that all teachers have appraisals that comply with legal requirements. A signed appraisal report, identifying strengths and annual professional development goals, should be held on teachers' personnel files.

Principals' appraisal. The board is considering ways to strengthen the principals' appraisals through broader consultation and the involvement of an external appraiser. These refinements would increase the level of feedback received by the principals and better support and value their respective roles.

4. 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 Kerikeri 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

During the review, ERO evaluated the extent to which the school has knowledge of and strategies for promoting the achievement of Māori students.

Areas of good performance

The board has developed comprehensive goals and targets to address the learning needs of Māori students as part of the school's strategic overview. Trustees have actively sought the views of Māori in the community and have made strategic appointments of Māori staff to support the achievement of these targets. In particular, the principals and board have:

- extended provision for teaching Māori language across all levels of the school;
- entered into a long-term development contract with Māori researchers and committed personnel and resources to supporting the *Te Kotahitanga* initiatives;
- maintained a successful Māori bi-lingual class that supports the transition of Years 7 and 8 bilingual students into the secondary school environment;

- demonstrated respect for Māori protocols and tikanga through the use of local marae for teacher development programmes;
- provided meaningful support and acknowledgement of the school's high performing kapa haka group; and
- increased the number of Māori staff and engaged local expertise in providing high quality te reo programmes.

Positive trends in the attendance, engagement and achievement of Māori students have been identified and reported through the work of the *Te Kotahitanga* facilitators. Teacher enthusiasm for the project initiatives is having an impact on the culture of the school and is strengthening practices that are more distinctly student centred and inclusive. These positive changes are likely to contribute to continued improvement in the achievements of Māori students over time.

Areas for improvement

Collating and reporting achievement. Expectations for reporting on Māori student achievement should be made more explicit. Reports to the board from the principals and heads of departments should provide analysed information and comment about the achievement of Māori students to evaluate progress against the board's goals for improving outcomes for Māori students.

Discipline. While student suspensions and stand-downs are trending downwards, the concern remains that Maori students are still over-represented in these groups. Trustees should examine their rate of exclusion, which is high compared to similar schools, and ensure that the conditions that they place on students returning to school after suspension are supportive and achievable.

Providing for Students who are Underachieving

ERO is currently evaluating how well schools are providing for those students in their school who are not achieving as well as they should. ERO's findings for Kerikeri High School are summarised below.

Areas of good performance

Identification of learning needs. The school has reliably identified students who are underachieving and has implemented programmes to address their learning needs. Using a range of diagnostic tools that previously included Progress and Achievement tests (PAT) and, more recently, asTTle, the school identifies student literacy and numeracy levels at Years 7-10.

Learning enrichment. Students with learning support needs are also identified from information provided by parents and previous schools. Teacher aides provide individual in-class and withdrawal support programmes for these students. Ongoing assessment and feedback assists the students to evaluate their own work and to construct individual learning goals with their teachers.

Keri reading programme. Year 7 students needing assistance with reading comprehension are provided with weekly support from a Year 13 tutor during terms two and three. Teachers have noticed that the Year 7 students in the programme have an increased interest in reading and are more motivated to read.

Alternative pathways. The range of courses tailored to suit different abilities and interests of senior students has increased. New programmes include those with a focus on travel and tourism, hospitality, automotive, metal and furniture engineering. Opportunities for work experience with businesses in the community will be enhanced with the introduction of the new Gateway programme in 2007.

Professional development. Teachers are able to access learning enrichment support to assist them in developing strategies to support underachieving students in the context of classroom learning programmes.

Area for improvement

Use of assessment information. The school has begun to collect standardised literacy and numeracy data using the new asTTle assessment tools. Teachers should make greater use of this diagnostic assessment data in classroom planning. School managers should ensure that the new student database is readily accessible to teachers.

The Quality of Teaching for Year 8 Students: Writing

Background

Writing is part of *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*, one of the statements covering the essential learning areas of the New Zealand curriculum. Findings are based on an evaluation of the writing programme provided for a Year 8 class, within the context of the school curriculum.

Areas of good performance

Planning. The English department has a curriculum overview and unit plans to support the teaching of writing and to enable teachers to record progress and achievement. Teacher planning is referenced to national curriculum objectives. Learning intentions are specific for Year 8 students and are reflected in the programme delivery and in students' work.

Identified learning needs. Student learning needs are identified through diagnostic testing, anecdotal evidence, teacher referral and collegial discussions. In this class, students have programmes differentiated to suit their learning needs. Students understand the teacher's learning expectations and can explain their progress and development in writing.

Resources. The teacher uses a variety of writing genres and strategies to cater for the varying needs and interests of students. Students have a choice of topics, either suggested by the teacher, or self selected. The programme is well resourced with readers, journals, dictionaries and library books that are readily available. Little use is made of national exemplars, but school benchmarks are used to moderate teacher assessment.

Relevance. Students have opportunities to experience workshops with visiting authors and to make regular library visits. The emphasis in the programme is on making connections and ensuring that topics are relevant to students. The teacher responds to students' interests and sets challenges that enable them to achieve confidence and success in writing.

Delivery. The teacher has good strategies for engaging students and demonstrates a passion for writing that is reflected in classroom delivery. Students participate with enthusiasm and the quality of writing attests to high levels of motivation. Good progress is evident and students have opportunities to improve their skill across a range of written activities.

Area for improvement

Assessment. More effective use of opportunities for peer and self-assessment would further enhance the high quality of the writing programme. Students are involved in cooperative learning where they discuss ideas but do not formally evaluate their own written work or provide feedback to peers using the identified learning intentions. Standardising school benchmark criteria with the national writing exemplars would help ensure that teacher judgements about student achievement are consistent with national expectations.

Provision for International Students

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

Kerikeri 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.

There are currently 29 international students attending Kerikeri High School. The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

Areas of good performance

Administrative systems and compliance. A comprehensive set of documents underpins the administration and pastoral care of international students. Parents, caregivers and students receive good information about the school, induction procedures, support systems and agencies. International department staff have a documented plan to guide their practices. Fee-paying students generally stay in the school for periods of up to six months and information relating to them is well organised and current. The school reports to the administrator every six months and the staff of the international department meet fortnightly with the principal and provide regular reports to the board of trustees as required.

Welfare. International students receive high quality pastoral care. The international student director, home-stay manager and international department staff provide a warm, supportive environment for international students. All home-stay arrangements are made by the school. The manager visits students' accommodation and has established positive working relationships with home-stay parents and families. First language support is made available to students and their parents through the school. Students report that they are happy and feel well supported.

Orientation. Orientation is provided when international students enrol in the school and continues throughout their schooling under the guidance of the international student director, home-stay manager and staff. Students speak highly of their initial three-day orientation experiences, which include a pōwhiri, familiarisation with school protocols and routines and an introduction to their Kiwi buddies. Orientation programmes are provided for students who arrive at the beginning of the school year, and throughout the year.

High quality team and networks. The international department staff form a cohesive supportive team that works closely with the school's pastoral care and teaching staff. This liaison ensures that students receive 'wrap-around' pastoral and academic support and can access these services as required. Teaching staff receive information about the rationale and history of the school's provision for international students and staff new to the school also receive information to increase their awareness and understanding of this provision. Cross-cultural training is provided for all staff through the international student department.

English language support. Most international students arrive in the school with relatively good English language skills. However, a high quality English language support programme is provided for any international students who require further assistance with English language learning. The programme is well delivered and resourced and student progress and achievement is appropriately monitored and celebrated.

Integration. International students are successfully integrated into the life of the school. Students report that they have many choices and opportunities to pursue their interests and develop new skills. They take advantage of the many academic, sporting, cultural and leadership programmes offered in the school and develop good friendships with fellow students and their home-stay families.

5. Board Assurance on Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Kerikeri 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.

Strategies for the Prevention of Bullying

ERO expects that each New Zealand school will have acknowledged that bullying behaviour is a risk to be managed.

As part of this review ERO talked to the board and staff about ways in which the school organisation and culture support the physical and emotional safety of students. In particular ERO asked about the strategies the school has put in place to prevent bullying of all types and what the board and staff know about the success of these

approaches.

Kerikeri High School is developing a more inclusive, student-centred culture. Teachers are modelling positive relationships in the classroom and the pastoral care network has been strengthened. Year level deans and two qualified counsellors are available to meet students' guidance needs. School values strongly promote the right of students to learn in a safe, respectful and supportive environment.

The school has taken the following steps to prevent bullying in the past three years:

- limited the use of mobile telephones and provided information to parents and student about cyber-safety;
- introduced more constructive approaches to managing student behaviour in classrooms and in the school grounds;
- introduced restorative justice practices to resolve conflicts;
- continued to promote a variety of opportunities for student leadership;
- maintained high quality peer support programmes to enhance transition for students new to the school; and
- coordinated pastoral care, guidance, attendance and discipline systems.

Senior managers are confident that the school's focus on building respectful relationships between staff and students is proving effective in reducing discipline issues and truancy. Referrals to deans have dropped and suspension and stand-down rates are trending downwards. Students appreciate the additional support that teachers provide. They are cooperative in class and interact with one another in positive ways. Māori students in particular report that other students are very supportive of their culture and respectful of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori.

Few instances of student bullying are reported and staff respond promptly to any concerns that are brought to their attention. Complaints are well documented and appropriately investigated. Trustees have reviewed the complaints policy and have made known options for raising concerns through the principals or through the board.

Recommendation

The board's current sexual harassment policy and procedures should be updated to encompass legislation relating to the Human Rights Act. It would be useful to include harassment procedures and information on professional conduct as outlined in the Teacher's Collective Employment Contract, in the staff handbook.

Compliance

During the course of the review ERO identified areas of non-compliance. In order to address these the board of trustees must:

- 5.1 strengthen performance management policies and procedures, formalise the appraisal of support staff and ensure that all teachers and unit holders have a signed appraisal report based on the appropriate professional standards,
[New Zealand Education Gazette, 10 February 1997, State Sector Act, s77C, 1988]; and
- 5.2 ensure that all teachers are registered and maintain a current practicing certificate or limited authority to teach,
[Education Act 1989, s120].

6. Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees recommend that, in order to sustain and support current good practices and to improve the quality of reporting, the board and principals will:

- 6.1 implement more systematic self-review procedures to strengthen reporting against strategic planning goals and targets;
- 6.2 make better use of analysed assessment information for setting targets and reporting on student progress and achievement; and
- 6.3 continue to improve communication systems in order to strengthen staff and community confidence in the operations of the school.

7. Future Action

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

Signed

Elizabeth Ellis
Area Manager Reporting Services
for Chief Review Officer

2 February 2007

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To the Parents and Community of Kerikeri High School

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

Kerikeri High School continues to provide high quality learning opportunities for students from Year 7 to 13. Steady roll growth and good academic standards have been maintained during an intensive three-year period of school-wide development. The board has managed property development and finances well, prioritising resources to support developments in educational programmes. The school's stated values and high expectations are clearly evident. Recent school developments are focused on changing teaching and learning practices and behaviour management approaches to increasingly student-centred models.

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ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

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>.

Elizabeth Ellis
Area Manager Reporting Services
for 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.

[\[1\]](#) Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.