



## ERO External Evaluation

### Cromwell College, Cromwell

The purpose of ERO's external evaluations is to give parents, whānau and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education children and young people receive. ERO reports on the equity and excellence of learning outcomes for all students and for specific groups including Māori students, Pacific students and students with additional learning needs. This includes a focus on accelerating learning for students. ERO also reports on the quality and effectiveness of the school's processes and practices for continuing and sustaining improvement. The report gives evaluation findings that answer four key questions about the school's performance.

### School Context

Cromwell College is a Years 7 to 13 state co-educational school in Central Otago. It has a current roll of 503 students. Since the 2014 ERO review, the roll has increased by 20%.

The school's vision is: Best I can be. Its mission is to produce students who are: respectful, courageous, life-long learners who pursue excellence. Its values are: *kia manaaki* (respect), *kia māia* (courage) and *kia rawe* (personal excellence). The board's strategic goals are: striving for personal excellence; nurturing an environment of respect; and making effective use of resources.

Leaders regularly report to the board schoolwide information about outcomes for students in the following areas:

- achievement in relation to levels of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and the New Zealand Qualifications Framework
- engagement and wellbeing for success
- achievement in relation to school goals.

There have been recent changes in middle and senior leadership. The school hostel provides apartment living for senior students.

The school is part of the Community of Learning | Te Kāhui Ako o ngā awanui.

## Evaluation Findings

### 1 Equity and excellence – achievement of valued outcomes for students

#### 1.1 How well is the school achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for all its students?

Cromwell College is effective in achieving equitable and excellent outcomes for most of its students.

In each of the past three years, achievement of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 2 has improved. An increasing number of students have gained NCEA merit and excellence endorsements. Proportionately more girls than boys gained the NCEAs, and an improved proportion of Māori students gained NCEA Levels 1 and 2 in 2018.

Students in Years 9 and 10 achieve at expected curriculum levels in most learning areas. Significant improvements were made in reading and writing in 2018.

Most students in Years 7 and 8 achieve at expected curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics. There is disparity in boys' achievement in reading and mathematics, and significant disparity in boys' writing at this level. An equitable proportion of Māori students in Years 7 and 8 achieve at expected levels in literacy and numeracy.

School leaders measure and report on other valued outcomes. Success in student leadership and citizenship programmes is reported to and valued by the board. Attendance has improved significantly for all students. Through longitudinal surveys, students report positive wellbeing outcomes, including feeling safe at school. A significant proportion of students make positive transitions to employment.

#### 1.2 How well is the school accelerating learning for those Māori and other students who need this?

The school effectively accelerates the progress of those Māori and others students who need this.

Processes to identify, track and support students at risk of not achieving are well embedded in the senior levels of the school and are developing for students in Years 7 to 10. The school has implemented a range of programmes aimed at accelerating learning for those who need this. Leaders have begun to evaluate the impact of these programmes.

### 2 School conditions for equity and excellence – processes and practices

#### 2.1 What school processes and practices are effective in enabling achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?

Students are provided with good opportunity to learn, achieve and progress in the breadth and depth of *The New Zealand Curriculum* through:

- active use of the local environment to support outdoor pursuits, leadership development and education outside the classroom
- highly productive partnerships with local industries and tertiary providers to support career exploration and transition
- effective use of external education providers to enhance curriculum choice for senior students
- teachers deliberately aligning task design, teaching activities and resources to promote achievement of learning outcomes.

Students participate and learn in a caring, collaborative learning community characterised by respect, relational trust and cooperation. This is evident in the teaching, modelling and celebration of the school's values. A consistent approach to positive behaviour management is promoted and shared with teachers, students and the community.

Communication within and beyond the school is increasingly effective in promoting positive outcomes for students. The pastoral network of teachers communicates effectively and responds quickly to a wide range of student needs. Parents and whānau are informed about student engagement, learning and wellbeing through improved communication. Strengthened collaborative practices for monitoring students' attendance have improved their opportunities to learn. A range of student support services and programmes enables the school to respond to the wellbeing needs of individuals and groups of students

Leaders have implemented effective schoolwide systems for tracking and monitoring all students' progress. Leaders and teachers use these systems increasingly well to know what works to improve and support outcomes for students in learning, wellbeing and engagement.

Leaders contribute positively to the Cromwell College learning community. This is evident in:

- the leaders' responsiveness to student voice and the promotion of student leadership
- the supportive, professional environment in which teachers work
- the principal's commitment to te reo Māori and kapa haka that is reflected in the increased visibility of te ao Māori in the school.

Trustees, leaders and teachers recognise the importance of student and community voice and use it as a key resource when deciding priorities for improvement. Evaluation, including professional inquiry, enables the creation and sharing of new knowledge and understandings about what makes a bigger difference for all learners.

Community resources enhance student learning, wellbeing and transition opportunities. The board has engaged meaningfully with the school community to develop and refresh the vision, values and strategic direction of the school. It builds relational trust with the community to ensure active, reciprocal communication with and participation in the life of the school.

## **2.2 What further developments are needed in school processes and practices for achievement of equity and excellence, and acceleration of learning?**

ERO has identified, and the school agrees, that trustees, leaders and teachers need to:

- embed the tracking, monitoring and reporting of student progress and achievement in Years 7 to 10
- put in place a cohesive school-wide literacy approach with a particular focus on boys' progress and achievement, and evaluate its impact on student outcomes
- continue to build teacher agency in differentiated teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners.

### **3 Other Matters Provision for students in the school hostel**

The school hostel, Cromwell College Apartments, accommodates up to 22 students. At the time of this review there were 19 students in residence, 3% of the school roll. The hostel is owned by the Cromwell College Charitable Trust. The owner has attested that all requirements of the Hostel Regulations have been met. ERO's investigations confirm that there are sound processes to manage students' safety and support their learning,

Students live in groups of five in each apartment and take responsibility for their own care and wellbeing such as menu planning and cooking. Their life skills, outdoor pursuits programme and academic studies are well supported by hostel and school staff.

Students spoke very positively about the hostel's inclusive culture, their growing independence and the high level of pastoral support they receive.

#### **Provision for international students**

Cromwell College is a signatory to The Education (Pastoral Care of International Students) Code of Practice 2016 (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code. ERO's investigations confirmed that the school's processes for reviewing compliance against the code are robust, well documented and lead to change where needed.

At the time of this review, there were seven international students attending the school.

Students receive a welcoming and personalised introduction to the school and the community. The international department is well resourced and staff ensure international students' needs are met throughout their stay. Valued outcomes for international students include academic and language learning, life skills, leadership and outdoor education. Trustees receive regular reports about the provision for international students.

### **4 Board assurance on legal requirements**

Before the review, the board 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
- finance
- 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 and certification
- processes for appointing staff
- stand down, suspension, expulsion and exclusion of students
- attendance
- school policies in relation to meeting the requirements of the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

## 5 ERO's Overall Judgement

On the basis of the findings of this review, ERO's overall evaluation judgement of Cromwell College's performance in achieving valued outcomes for its students is:

Well placed

[ERO's Framework: Overall School Performance is available on ERO's website.](#)

## 6 Going forward

### Key strengths of the school

For sustained improvement and future learner success, the school can draw on existing strengths in:

- the broad, localised and responsive curriculum that engages students
- the positive culture for learning and wellbeing that supports students to learn
- engagement and involvement with the community that establishes effective school community partnerships.

### Next steps

For sustained improvement and future learner success, priorities for further development are in:

- embedding the tracking, monitoring and reporting of student progress and achievement in Years 7 to 10
- implementing a cohesive school-wide literacy approach with a particular focus on boys' progress and achievement, and evaluating its impact on student outcomes
- continuing to build teacher agency in differentiated teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners.



Alan Wynyard

Director Review and Improvement Services Southern 3 May 2019

## About the school

Location	Cromwell
Ministry of Education profile number	373
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)
School roll	503
Gender composition	Girls 49% Boys 51%
Ethnic composition	Māori 19% NZ European/Pākehā 72% Pacific 2% Other ethnicities 7%
Students with Ongoing Resourcing Funding (ORS)	Yes
Provision of Māori medium education	No
Review team on site	February 2019
Date of this report	3 May 2019
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review October 2014 Education Review August 2011 Education Review March 2008