



**Kavanagh College  
Dunedin**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Kavanagh College

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?**

Kavanagh College is a co-educational, state integrated secondary school providing a special character Catholic education for students from Years 7-to-13. The school maintains a close relationship with other local schools, especially Catholic primary schools, the Catholic parish community and other institutions. The school is part of the Dunedin Catholic Schools' Community of Learning.

The school's inclusive culture is highly evident. Its roll reflects the increased social and cultural diversity within the Catholic diocese and local community. There are 34 international students enrolled at the school.

The school is developing the use of ICT and BYOD (bring your own device) to support teaching and learning and communication with parents and whānau/fānau/aiga.

In response to the areas for review and development in the 2013 ERO report the school has:

- strengthened its focus on building teachers' professional practice
- lifted overall levels of achievement of Māori and Pacific students
- improved reporting on the impact of new initiatives
- improved aspects of reporting to the board of trustees on initiatives.

### 2 Learning

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

This school uses achievement information well to make positive changes to learners' engagement and achievement.

Teachers proactively communicate learning and engagement information with students and parents. Most teachers are providing useful ongoing feedback and next learning steps to students. Senior students are being made more aware of their progress toward reaching qualifications through regular updates the school provides. Those that ERO spoke with, valued the ongoing sharing of this information.

The school has implemented a very effective system for identifying students at risk with any aspect of their learning and engagement. This includes comprehensive assessment and analysis of the learning needs of those most at risk with their learning. This has led to targeted interventions in core curriculum areas such as reading, writing, mathematics and more timely and effective communication and support for students.

Assessment information is being shared with tutor teachers enabling closer monitoring and mentoring of students at risk in their learning. Some restructuring of leadership responsibilities and systems supports this well. It would be useful for leaders to analyse and report the overall trends and patterns in this information to inform school internal evaluation.

Students overall, achieve very well in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA). This has been a consistent pattern since 2011. Good proportions of senior students gain merit and excellence endorsements. Most school leavers have achieved an NCEA qualification. The school has very high retention rates of students to 17 years of age. Every year some senior students gain scholarships.

Student achievement information in 2015 shows that in Years 7 and 8:

- well over three quarters of students have achieved at or above the National Standards in reading and writing
- achievement in mathematics is considerably lower
- positive shifts in achievement can be seen for students between Years 7 and 8.

#### **Next steps**

The analysis and reporting of Years 7 and 8 National Standards information should be significantly improved. This should include comprehensive analysis of rates of progress for groups and cohorts of students.

Leaders and teachers should find better ways to track and show progress for individual students and groups from Years 7 to 10. This includes setting more useful achievement targets for students whose progress needs to be accelerated. Leaders should ensure all relevant staff know these targets and that there is suitable planning and reporting of ongoing progress towards meeting these.

### **3 Curriculum**

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

Students benefit from a broad curriculum that promotes and supports their learning.

The school's values of truth, respect, justice and service underpin every feature of the school. Students value the school's special character and its Religious Education (RE) programme. Through the RE programme teachers promote critical thinking and a keen sense of social justice and service. This learning is set in meaningful contexts, often includes a Māori dimension, and allows older students to pursue areas of personal interest.

Leaders and teachers provide a curriculum that is responsive to the needs, interests and abilities of students. Students' academic, sporting and cultural success is celebrated. The adaptation of the curriculum to best meet students' needs is particularly evident in the senior school and in the way students continue to be encouraged to independently manage their learning.

Students' wellbeing is well supported. Deliberate structures and practices that reflect the special Catholic character promote this, including:

- early identification and effective communication about students' pastoral needs and how best to support them
- specific health and wellbeing initiatives, including practices such as peer support and restorative justice.

The school has significantly improved its communication with different groups within the school. This includes school leaders and teachers:

- increasingly seeking student perspectives about their learning
- increasingly seeking student, parent and staff voice/feedback about the impact of new initiatives
- frequently updating parents about their child's attendance, engagement and learning.

Effective structures and practices are helping teachers deliver a responsive curriculum and improve teaching and learning. Examples include, an improved curriculum review model and appraisal system, as well as professional learning groups. These practices have increased teacher reflection and collaboration and have led to more timely and well-informed change.

The key next steps are to continue to:

- strengthen the new curriculum evaluation
- continue to develop meaningful ways to integrate Māori and Pacific cultures into students' learning.

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

Māori students' progress and achievement is closely monitored. The school has more work to do to ensure equity of educational outcomes for its Māori students.

Aspects of te ao Māori and te reo and tikanga Māori are integrated in school-wide practices and teaching programmes. The number of senior students studying te reo Māori at NCEA level remains small. These students are supported in their correspondence school learning by a member of the Māori whānau.

A next step for the board of trustees is to develop a plan as to how the school can strengthen Māori students' sense of pride and identity within the school, including the school's provision of te reo Māori classes through to the senior levels. This should be done in consultation with Māori whānau and informed by the opinion of Māori students. Progress in achieving the planned goals should be closely monitored and regularly reported on. The board should also continue to seek ways to have Māori representation within school governance.

### **How effectively does the school promote educational success for Pacific students?**

The school has significantly improved how it supports its Pacific students to be successful in their learning and feel a sense of place and belonging. There are good to very good levels of achievement at NCEA Levels 1 and 2. Almost all Pacific students remain at school to 17 years and leave with a minimum of NCEA Level 2.

The school's involvement in the Ministry of Education's Talanoa project has led to improved engagement and achievement of Pacific students. It has led to:

- increased sense of pride and identity for Pacific students
- improved communication between the school and Pacific students and parents
- very careful tracking and monitoring of the progress, achievement and wellbeing of Pacific students
- in-depth staff reflection and professional learning about how to best support Pacific learners.

#### **4 Sustainable Performance**

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

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

School leaders' priority for improving teaching and learning is strongly evident in the school's plans, goals and improved processes. New developments and strategic goals are introduced in a considered and well-planned manner. Leaders and teachers value and collect the views and ideas of students and their families/whānau/aiga on a wide range of school matters and use these to inform improvements. Relationships between teachers, school leaders, principal and the board are positive and productive.

The leadership team has worked collaboratively with teachers to strengthen support for teachers' professional practice. They have introduced new structures and systems providing improved information about how well teaching and learning is meeting the needs of students. Positive impacts of these developments include:

- improved teacher appraisal processes
- greater evidence of teachers critically reflecting on the effectiveness of their teaching in departments, professional learning groups and as individuals
- well planned professional development.

A mostly new board is being well supported by the past board chair and trustees to learn about their new roles.

##### **Next Step**

The board needs to more effectively monitor the progress the school is making towards achieving its annual goals.

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

The school has begun to align its policies and procedures to meet requirements for the 2016 Code. International students are well supported in their learning and pastoral care.

## 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

Students benefit from a broad curriculum that promotes and supports their learning. The values of truth, respect, justice and service underpin every feature of the school, including the curriculum. Students needing support with their learning and wellbeing are well supported. Teachers work collaboratively to improve teaching and learning. Students overall achieve well.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.



Dr Lesley Patterson  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Te Waipounamu Southern

## About the School

Location	Dunedin	
Ministry of Education profile number	536	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
School roll	815	
Number of international students	35	
Gender composition	Girls 52%; Boys 48%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	66%
	Māori	12%
	Pacific	7%
	Other ethnicities	15%
Review team on site	September 2016	
Date of this report	30 November 2016	
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review	November 2013
	Education Review	June 2010
	Education Review	December 2006