

PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS KURA HOURUA READINESS REPORT: confirmed June 2015

Te Kāpehu Whetū (Teina)

Whangarei

MoE profile number 715

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Education commissioned the Education Review Office (ERO) to help determine the readiness of Te Kāpehu Whetū (Teina) to operate effectively as a school in 2015.

Te Kāpehu Whetū (Teina) is one of four Partnership Schools Kura Hourua (PSKH) established in New Zealand during the second round of this initiative. These schools are a new type of school within the existing network designed to bring together the education, business and community sectors to provide new opportunities for students to achieve educational success.

ERO recognises that these schools have been given flexibility about how they operate and use funding to deliver school-specific targets. Clearly specified targets for student achievement, student engagement, enrolment of priority learners and financial reporting are specified in each PSKH's contract with the Crown.

Terms of reference

The MOE asked ERO to:

- focus on the systems and procedures necessary for Te Kāpehu Whetū (Teina) to open smoothly in 2015
- identify what is in place and its suitability, what is planned, any gaps and whether the plan is achievable
- identify (as near as possible) priority areas to be addressed
- recognise that many procedures and systems will be in the process of being developed and look for evidence that the school is aware of the need and has a planned timeframe to develop them
- seek evidence that the national priorities and all applicable guidelines provided by the Ministry, have been considered.

METHODOLOGY

ERO met with the sponsors, school management team, MoE advisors and school staff over time to determine the school's readiness to open. The process to evaluate the readiness of this school has been tailored to the particular circumstances and progress of the school.

Interim progress was reported to MoE in December 2014.

Visits to the school in 2015 have focused on observations of the programme in action, including discussions with students. Evidence was gathered to verify that timely and appropriate steps have been taken to prepare the school to operate effectively. The matters detailed in the appendix to this report, the readiness profile, have been discussed with school management and the sponsors.

FINDINGS

Te Kāpehu Whetū (Teina) is an initiative of He Puna Marama Trust. The school provides education for children in Years 1 to 6, and is designed to provide continuity between the Trust's established early childhood provision and Te Kura Hourua o Whangarei Terenga Paraoa that opened as a PSKH for secondary students in 2014. All students are Māori.

At the end of term 1 there were 44 students enrolled at the kura. This number is likely to increase to 65 by the end of the year. A prudent process is in place to manage the growth of the roll while awaiting further buildings. As the school roll continues to grow, additional teaching staff will be appointed.

The sponsor, chief executive and professional leader have worked well together to open a new school in a short time. They have been able to draw on the strengths of the sponsor's existing organisation and of their tuakana school.

The school's vision and direction are focused on its three central goals (pou) that guide all activities in the Trust, *kia Māori, kia Mātau and kia Tū Rangatira Ai* (Be Māori, Be Educated, and Be Rangatira). These pou form the basis of the school's curriculum, management and governance.

The school is committed to enabling tamariki to become competent, confident and capable learners in a bicultural setting. The main focus for staff during term 1 has been on establish affirming relationships amongst students and staff, and building connections with whānau.

The school wants to offer a bilingual curriculum that combines the *Marautanga o Aotearoa* and the *New Zealand Curriculum*. At present, they are using a variety of assessment tools to provide relevant information for parents with regard to both Ngā Whanaketanga and National Standards. The school would like to progress towards the use of Ngā Whanaketanga and the *Marautanga o Aotearoa* as their primary assessment method and school curriculum.

In Years 1 to 3, the focus is on immersion learning. In Years 4 to 6, the focus is on transitioning to teaching and learning in English. The school is very aware of students' variable fluency in te reo Māori. They cater for student capability through thoughtful ability grouping across year levels. Students with special learning needs are well included in all events and activities.

The school vision is to provide an ākonga-centred, flexible curriculum, that will enable teachers to accommodate every child's learning style in a supportive environment. However, as yet teachers are doing mostly whole-class planning, and planning from day to day rather than long term. The challenge now for teachers is to clearly plan and document a curriculum that progresses across year levels and provides a long-term perspective of how vision, values and key competencies will be incorporated. To do this well they need knowledgeable curriculum leadership and support.

The recent resignation of the principal is potentially a setback to school development. The director of learning is well aware of the need to make a strategic appointment that will enable sound curriculum leadership in the school. Currently, there is a lead teacher and two supporting teachers.

One of the challenges for the school is to consider what information the sponsor needs to be assured that it is meeting its contractual obligations as a partnership school. Developing appropriate self-review systems to determine the worth of school initiatives and to determine future directions could also be a useful step as the school develops.

All teachers are registered teachers. Appropriate systems for performance appraisal are in the very early stages of development. Processes for maintaining teacher registration records and police vetting records are in place.

Good work has been done to manage the temporary premises and facilities. The school currently operates out of two prefab classrooms in central Whangarei. There is a large outdoor area for leaning and play. Two additional prefab classrooms will be added towards the middle of 2015. These will be complemented by purpose-built classrooms by the end of the year.

The school is appropriately resourced for this stage of its development. The school has experienced significant challenges with ICT connectivity. They hope to address these at the time of the rebuilding in 2015.

The school has not had the benefit of working with a governance facilitator to support them to understand their contractual obligations during this developmental stage. While it is true that there is significant organisational and management strength within the He Puna Marama Trust, opening a primary school is a new enterprise of considerable complexity.

A number of challenges that ERO identified at the end of 2014 remain. They include:

- developing the school curriculum, and building a shared understanding of teaching and learning practices to support the school direction
- ensuring that all documentation is specific to this school, and clearly defines the school curriculum and supporting pedagogy,
- clarifying assessment, and ensuring appropriate assessment tools are used to monitor student progress and demonstrate success
- ensuring a suitable student management system is in place.

These matters are critical to ensure the school is able to meet its contractual obligations and targets for student achievement.

Priority areas to be addressed

Urgent priority must be given to the appointment of a suitable curriculum leader/ principal. Other areas for development are:

- documenting the school's curriculum and teaching expectations
- actively involving whānau as vital participants in their tamariki's education and learning
- personalising learning plans for each child to accelerate their progress and achievement

- continuing to develop assessment and moderation practices to ensure the robustness and validity of student achievement information
- ensuring that teacher:student ratios for new entrant students facilitates their transition into school, and maximises student learning.
- developing performance management systems for staff that are consistent with the sponsor's contractual obligations.

Where there is need for further development, we are confident in the school's willingness to address these matters over time.

Appendix: Readiness Profile
Te Kāpehu Whetū

Matters to address	Progress	Comment where applicable
The vision and direction for the school is developed and reflected in documentation for the school.	✓	Very clear school vision and purpose and link to kaupapa. Promotion of success as Maori is clear and consistent in all documentation.
Planning and practices show responsiveness to the needs of Maori students, Pasifika students, and students with special education needs.	✓	100% Māori enrolment – kaupapa underpins all thinking and actions. Special educational needs student well supported by teacher aide and supported to access the breadth of the curriculum.
Processes for planning and reporting, and self-review are being developed.	Developing	Early stages – no formalised or strategic, sequential processes evident. Next step is to consider what information the sponsor needs to be assured that obligations are met, and what level of self review is need internally to continue to monitor the impact of any initiatives, and the quality of teaching and learning.
Processes are to ensure students settle effectively into the new school have been developed and are being implemented.	✓	The emphasis during the first term has been on establishing sound relationships between and amongst students and teachers.
Systems for assessing, analysing and reporting on student achievement are being developed.	Developing	School is using a combination of Ngā Whanaketanga and National Standards. They have recently begun to use recognised assessment tools and gathered baseline data. Reporting to parents yet to be developed. School should also consider ways of effective moderation to ensure validity of data.
A set of key policies and procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and students, and there is a programme in place to develop others that may be needed.	✓	Adapted from existing organisational policies and procedures and tailored to needs of primary aged children.
There is an efficient management structure with suitable governance interface, appropriate structures and delegations.	✓	The support of He Puna Marama Trust leadership, staff and systems has been very important in enabling the school to start well. School principal to be appointed following the resignation of the existing principal who had curriculum leadership oversight of both kura.
School leaders are developing shared beliefs about desired teaching and learning approaches amongst school leadership and staff.	Ongoing	Key understandings are beginning to be shared. Appropriate PLD may be required to further develop these understandings and expectations, and to induct a new principal.

A school curriculum and programmes are being developed to reflect the needs of students and sufficient planning is in place to guide learning as the school opens.	To develop	A key area for development. More articulated planning is required, as well as planning for differentiated provision across the school.
The school is staffed appropriately to provide the desired programme and staff induction is planned	To develop	Now need to appoint a new principal.
Performance management systems for staff are being developed	To develop	Very early stages. Appraisal policy and procedures yet to be developed.
A disputes procedure has been developed	✓	Clear and well documented.
Effective systems are in place to monitor student engagement, including a student management system.	✓	KAMAR in place. However, connectivity is an issue – low broadband access. Not clear how well this system is yet used. Teachers report that attendance is carefully monitored and student attendance rates are high.
An enrolment scheme and enrolment procedures are in place, (noting that the school has a maximum roll as referred to in Schedule 3 of the Contract), and they must adhere to the “open for all” enrolment policy whilst targeting priority learners.	✓	44 students on roll. Prudently, the school is taking expressions of interest, but is not accepting more students until there are additional buildings.
Policies and procedures for managing school finances and a draft budget for 2015 are in place	✓	Carefully thought through and documented.
Staff and students have access to appropriate furniture and equipment, teaching materials, library, resources, ICT.	✓	Classrooms are bright and tidy. ICT and resources need further development. Access to ICT is slow and is impeding curriculum sharing and development. Student access to the internet is very slow. Many reading books in classrooms.
There is a plan for the operation and maintenance of the school premises.	✓	Ongoing development of school buildings is well managed.