

**Rise Up Academy**

**Mangere, Auckland**

**PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS KURA HOURUA READINESS REPORT**

**Confirmed report to MOE June 2014**

## **BACKGROUND**

The Ministry of Education commissioned the Education Review Office (ERO) to help determine the readiness of RiseUp Academy to operate effectively as a school in 2014.

RiseUp Academy is the one of the first five Partnership Schools Kura Hourua (PSKH) in New Zealand. 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. These schools have been given flexibility about how they operate and use funding to deliver school-specific targets.

A contract between the PSKH and the Ministry of Education serves as the central expression of the sponsor's accountabilities to the Crown, and the Crown's commitment to resourcing the school. Clearly specified targets for student achievement, student engagement, enrolment of priority learners and financial reporting are in place. The contracts were signed in September 2013.

### **Terms of reference**

The MOE asked ERO to:

- focus on the systems and procedures necessary for RiseUp Academy to open smoothly in 2014
- 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, the governance facilitator, local MoE staff and school staff to determine the context and preparation of this school. The process to evaluate the readiness of this school has been tailored to the particular circumstances and progress of the individual school.

An interim written report was prepared for the Ministry of Education in December to comment on progress up to that time to supplement verbal reports.

Visits to the school in 2014 have focused on the development of the teaching and learning model and 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, relating to school governance and management have been discussed with school management and the RiseUp Trust.

## FINDINGS

The RiseUp Academy in Mangere, South Auckland, provides education for students from Year 1 to 6. In April there were 44 students in the school, all of Māori or Pacific origin. School data indicate high levels of student attendance.

The sponsors and school management and staff have demonstrated their commitment to opening a school that has a clearly articulated vision of how it can best serve its community. The school has been founded on identified community need and draws on well established relationships with whānau and community agencies. Successful strategic planning and effective leadership are key factors in the success of the RiseUp Trust in meeting the complex needs of a diverse community.

Many students and parents were already familiar with the RiseUp Trust programme which provides parent with education in how to support children's learning. New parents, with their children, engage in a comprehensive whānau education programme over three terms. The school is a logical extension of this programme and provides an opportunity to build a learning community where the engagement of parents and whānau is integral to the success of the programme.

The Trust Board provides expertise, knowledge and a wide range of skills to support and mentor the school leaders in fulfilling their vision. Governance and management roles are clearly defined and understood. Good processes are in place to sustain effective governance. The Trust Board has benefited from previous work with external evaluators and has developed very good ways of monitoring the extent to which goals have been achieved. A comprehensive self-review process has been developed which focuses on the school's performance story. This provides in-depth and ongoing information about the school's progress to inform governance and management decisions.

The curriculum is designed to provide children with the skills and dispositions that enable them to "develop sharp minds, strong bodies and good hearts". Inquiry learning provides the framework for curriculum delivery. An after school programme that operates four days a week provides opportunities for students in the arts, physical education and fitness. The Christian framework in the school is evident in short daily devotions appropriate to the age and cultural background of the students. Warm respectful relationships between staff and students and purposeful learning are evident in classrooms.

The school has been successful in attracting teachers who are themselves engaged in the local community and who are keen to work in an innovative school. The challenge for staff is building a robust shared understanding of good quality assessment practices so that it is possible to report accurately on the extent to which students have made progress against the school's nominated targets. Planned ongoing professional development will support teachers in their developing understanding of assessment against the National Standards, and in devising ways to moderate teacher judgements.

Good school management systems have been established. School managers have made effective use of external support to develop comprehensive policies and procedures to provide guidance for school operations. Good systems are in place to guide financial management. Review of budget allocations could assist in moving the school from the set up phase to establishing effective practices that are sustainable in the long term.

The school is operating in a church facility that had previously functioned as a small school. Some modifications have been made to provide better toilet facilities and classroom space. More classroom space is likely to be needed soon. While classrooms are attractive learning environments space is somewhat limited. Further work is needed to provide adequate play areas and students have enjoyed the opportunity to be involved with considering how to make best use of the available space and resources.

## **Priority areas to be addressed**

The school leaders and staff have worked hard to ensure the school is ready to operate effectively. To build on this momentum the school could now strengthen:

- teachers' understanding of the use of assessment processes to identify individual learning needs
- teachers' capacity to report on student achievement in relation to National Standards
- ongoing monitoring of how well the school promotes a safe physical environment
- provision of specialist resources for science, reading, art, etc.

School managers should develop a more robust system to ensure that maintenance issues are addressed effectively. It would be helpful if the board budgeted for planned and incidental improvements and maintenance.

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



**Readiness Profile**
**Rise Up Academy**
**Matters to address**
**comment if applicable**

The vision and direction for the school is developed and reflected in documentation for the school.	✓	Well articulated vision shared with community and highly evident in all school documentation and visual material. The commitment to engaging whānau in learning is building a strong learning community.
Planning and practices show responsiveness to the needs of Maori students, Pasifika students, and students with special education needs.	✓	The school has risen from and is responsive to the Pacific community. School culture is inclusive and responsive to individual need.
Processes for planning and reporting, and self-review are being developed.	✓	Effective governance and management systems evident. Self-review systems in place for the Trust are very robust. The next step is becoming familiar with any additional; elements that relate to being a school.
Processes are to ensure students settle effectively into the new school have been developed and are being implemented.	✓	Many students and parents were already familiar with Rise Up Trust programme and personnel, and the transition has been comparatively easy. Relationships are warmly supportive between the school and families.
Systems for assessing, analysing and reporting on student achievement are being developed.		Systems for gathering data are in place. The next step is to build a shared understanding of the use of assessment processes to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify individual learning needs</li> <li>• report reliably in relation to National Standards.</li> </ul> Further professional development will help here.
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.	✓	Comprehensive policies developed in consultation and collaboration with the board. Care has been taken to ensure that they are consistent with MoE guidelines. Policies and procedures are clearly written, easily available and cover all major aspects of health and safety. All necessary information is clearly displayed where needed.
There is an efficient management structure with suitable governance interface, appropriate structures and delegations.	✓	Effective management and governance is in place. Board members and school leaders bring

		experience, commitment and professional expertise to their roles.
School leaders are developing shared beliefs about desired teaching and learning approaches amongst school leadership and staff	✓	Teachers are continuing to build a shared understanding of what best practice in teaching and learning should be for these children and their families. Strong professional leadership is underpinned by ongoing professional development for teachers.
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.	✓	The school curriculum has been developed based on the New Zealand Curriculum, incorporating Biblical principles. Collaborative planning is helping to build shared understanding of good teaching practice.
The school is staffed appropriately to provide the desired programme and staff induction is planned	✓	Classroom teachers are all registered and experienced. Comprehensive induction has helped teachers to understand the school's philosophy and build the school culture.
Performance management systems for staff are being developed	✓	Performance management structure is in place. Data base for monitoring renewal of police vetting and teacher registration under way.
A disputes procedure has been developed	✓	Easily available to public and consistent with contractual undertakings.
Effective systems are in place to monitor student engagement, including a student management system.	✓	Good systems are in place to monitor student engagement. 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.	✓	The 44 students are all of Pacific and Māori heritage. Many come from across Auckland City. All students are also enrolled in the RiseUp after-school programme at no additional cost to the family.
Policies and procedures for managing school finances and a draft budget for 2014 are in place	✓	Good systems evident. The next step is to review budget allocations to ensure that resourcing decisions are sustainable and cater for contingencies.
Staff and students have access to appropriate furniture and equipment, teaching materials, library, resources, ICT.	✓	Classrooms are attractive and appropriately furnished. Students have access to ICT to support their class work. Specialist resources to support learning need further development.

<p>There is a plan for the operation and maintenance of the school premises.</p>		<p>The Rise UP trust has worked with the owner of the property to improve the facility. The next steps are to ensure that maintenance issues are addressed effectively, and to make budget provision for planned and incidental improvements and maintenance.</p>
--	--	---