

Christchurch Girls' High School | Te Kura o Hine Waiora - 09/08/2016

Findings

Christchurch Girls' High has a longstanding tradition of education for girls. There is a culture of high expectations for positive outcomes for all students. Levels of achievement have remained significantly high over time. The school's new vision embraces tradition, innovation and excellence. The board and principal work well together and have actively advocated for improved facilities.

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

1 Context

What are the important features of this school that have an impact on student learning?

Christchurch Girls' High School remains a high-performing school and has made significant progress since the last full ERO evaluation in 2012. The reconsidered vision strategically positions the school for the future by building on its longstanding traditions while also embracing innovation and excellence.

The recent addition of the school's name in Māori – Te Kura o Hine Waiora - provides a meaningful opportunity to integrate the history of the local area into the school's culture and curriculum programmes.

The school has sustained a positive culture for learning and achievement, with a focus on a holistic approach to education. Students continue to demonstrate pride in their school.

At the time of the ERO evaluation, major building redevelopment had begun. The board and principal have strongly advocated for facilities that best promote the school's vision.

2 Learning

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

The school is using achievement and other information effectively to make positive changes to student engagement, progress and achievement.

Students' learning strengths and needs are well identified upon entry to the school. Their progress is regularly monitored across junior and senior years. Within subject areas, teachers adapt aspects of learning programmes to better meet students' identified needs. Learning

support leaders provide a good range of opportunities for students who need to improve their literacy and numeracy skills, especially at junior levels.

The school's Year 9 and 10 information shows that:

- the majority of students in Year 9 make satisfactory to very good progress in their learning
- by the end of Year 10, most students are well placed to achieve success in their Year 11 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) programmes.

Senior student achievement information, over time, reflects sustained levels of student success. This includes:

- consistently high roll-based achievement across NCEA Levels 1-3 that is significantly higher than national comparisons
- very high achievement in literacy and numeracy
- almost all girls leaving the school with the NCEA Level 2 qualification.

The shared commitment to excellence across the school community remains very evident. School leaders and teachers are focused on continuing to raise the quality of qualifications through an increased number of excellence endorsements, especially at NCEA Level 2. Achievement data for 2015 shows that the success of Māori students noticeably improved across all NCEA levels.

Students are well supported in their learning by teachers. Settled and purposeful learning environments promote student engagement and understanding of learning. The effective support students receive when they transition into the school helps them to develop a sense of belonging and positive attitudes to learning and achievement.

Senior leaders closely scrutinise progress and achievement information from all learning areas. They keep the board well informed about achievement and progress towards school goals and targets. This is helping the board to understand learning and achievement, and to make relevant resourcing decisions.

Next step

Since the 2012 ERO evaluation, there has been some broadening of assessment opportunities for students. ERO recommends that curriculum leaders and teachers continue to develop this range of assessment approaches so that the diverse learning needs of students are further supported.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning. A culture of high expectations for successful outcomes for all students continues to be a defining feature of the school. A wide range of learning opportunities within and beyond the school across

academic, sporting and cultural codes contributes to the very good level of student participation in these areas.

Students benefit from the strong support teachers and curriculum leaders provide for their learning interests and programmes. Within learning areas, leaders and teachers work collaboratively to support and strengthen individual students' learning needs.

Some new senior courses have been added to the school's curriculum. This is beginning to widen the range of options available to students, especially those for whom more practically-based programmes promote educational success and expanding career opportunities.

Students benefit from the range of appropriate pastoral care. The current review of pastoral systems is aimed at strengthening support for girls' wellbeing and learning progress.

The gradual implementation of a range of digital technologies is being well considered. School leaders are focused on ensuring that digital tools are used well in teaching and learning programmes. The school's e-learning leadership and strategy provide clear directions for ongoing development in this area.

The school's career programme is at the early stage of development. Current and planned improvements are likely to considerably strengthen and broaden learning and career opportunities for students.

Senior leaders and teachers ensure that there are ongoing opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate students' successes across academic, sporting and cultural areas.

Next steps

In consultation with curriculum leaders and teachers, school leaders should:

- strengthen opportunities for teachers' collaboration across learning areas to share good practice and increase all students' understanding of themselves as learners
- increase meaningful opportunities for the learning support programme to be more fully integrated into the school's curriculum, planning and direction.

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

A number of improvements have been made to the ways Māori culture is reflected in the school. A new room has been established for Māori and Pacific students to meet and study. Māori students have regular opportunities to be involved in a range of cultural events and activities.

School leaders have re-established links with the local rūnanga. Whānau hui continue to be an important opportunity for Māori parents to contribute their ideas and suggestions for improvements that promote success for Māori, as Māori.

Next steps

In consultation with Māori students and their parents, senior leaders should develop and implement a Māori action plan that identifies key priorities and goals for development,

including the use of te reo Māori across all classrooms. Progress towards these goals should be regularly evaluated and reported to the board and Whānau Hui group.

A planned approach to meeting the needs of Pacific students should also be implemented, regularly evaluated and reported in a way that is manageable for school leaders and teachers.

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. The board, leaders and teachers are strongly focused on continuous improvement and ensuring high outcomes for student learning and achievement.

Trustees bring a diverse range of skills, experience and expertise to their role as stewards of the school. They are well informed about student achievement and school operations. The principal and board have positive relationships and work closely together. They are proactively managing major school developments and have good systems for promoting physical safety within the school.

The principal provides strong leadership and has a clear vision for the school's strategic direction. The newly-developed vision retains the rich traditions of the school, while embracing the future. The principal is well supported by senior leaders. This senior leadership team is focused on providing an environment and conditions conducive to meeting school goals and targets.

School leaders and teachers have positive learning relationships with parents. They have extended the ways they communicate with parents and whānau to share information about girls' learning and achievement.

The principal and school leaders have developed an improved process for teacher appraisal and inquiry into teaching practice. This new process is well considered, based on research, and has student learning at the centre.

Next step

The principal and senior leaders regularly gather a wide range of feedback from staff, students and the community about aspects of school programmes and operation. The school's approach to making use of this information needs to be more evaluative. The board and senior leaders should:

- develop a more strategic framework for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of programmes and initiatives designed to meet school priorities
- extend the scope of evaluation to include the effectiveness of appraisal, governance and school leadership.

Provision for international students

The 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. The school has attested that it complies with all aspects of the Code.

At the time of this review there were 20 international students attending the school, none of whom were exchange students. The school provides good quality pastoral care and education for international students. Their education includes a focus on achieving NCEA literacy credits. Students are well integrated into the school, including participation in an International Club.

The school has robust systems for managing international students and for reviewing its performance against the latest revision of the Code.

Provision for students in the school hostel

The school hostel, Acland House, accommodates 108 students, 10% of the school roll. It is owned by the Christchurch Girls' High School Board of Trustees. The hostel owner has attested that all the requirements of the Hostel Regulations are met. Recent reconstruction and restoration of the original homestead has resulted in high quality spaces for administration, dining and junior girls, while still preserving the character of the original building.

The hostel is characterised by:

- effective relationships within the hostel and between the hostel and school
- an emphasis on students' safety, welfare and care
- an attractive environment that supports students' learning.

This is achieved through:

- well established governance, including a strong policy base and strategic planning
- efficient and effective administration, including computer-based management practices
- regular communication with parents, including well-analysed surveys
- caring relationships between staff and students and between senior and junior students.

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

Christchurch Girls' High has a longstanding tradition of education for girls. There is a culture of high expectations for positive outcomes for all students. Levels of achievement have remained significantly high over time. The school's new vision embraces tradition, innovation and excellence. The board and principal work well together and have actively advocated for improved facilities.

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Lesley Patterson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern

9 August 2016

About the School

Location	Christchurch	
Ministry of Education profile number	328	
School type	Secondary (Years 7 to 13)	
School roll	1089	
Number of international students	20	
Gender composition	Females 100%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	76%
	Māori	10%
	Asian	10%
	Pacific	3%
	Other Ethnicities	1%
Special Features	School Hostel-Acland House	
Review team on site	May 2016	
Date of this report	9 August 2016	
Most recent ERO reports	Education Review	August 2014
	Education Review	August 2012
	Supplementary Review	November 2008