

Marcellin College Education Review

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1 Context

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

Marcellin College in Royal Oak Auckland is an integrated Year 7 to 13 Catholic coeducational school with a roll of over 600. Fifty four percent of the students are of Pacific descent. The college provides a welcoming and inclusive environment for students. The majority of students travel from outside the area. The school continues to promote positive relationships with its school community.

Students and parents speak convincingly about the college being a family. The college's six guiding values are practised by students and teachers. Parent feedback reflects the importance placed on these values in teaching and learning programmes.

Since ERO's 2011 report, the college has taken very good steps to extend leadership opportunities for senior students. Leadership roles for students at other year levels have also been strengthened. With the completion of the gymnasium and the dance and drama suite, students have gained further opportunities to learn and achieve. The school's learning environments and grounds continue to be well maintained.

An experienced chairperson leads the board of trustees. Trustees are committed to serving the college and to promoting 21st century learning for students. The long serving principal retired at the end of 2013. The board has employed acting principals for the duration of 2014. A new principal has been appointed to lead the college from January 2015.

2 Learning

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

Senior leaders gather and collate assessment information. Their analysis of this data shows how well students make progress and achieve during the year. Leaders share this information with students, parents and the board. However, this data is not always clear. At Year 7 and 8 for example, teachers could be more explicit when reporting National Standards information to parents.

Assessment information is used to place Year 7 to 10 students in classes according to their learning needs. Some students move to different classes during the year as their achievement changes. This results in students having to build new relationships with other students and teachers.

National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) results over the past three years show that students continue to achieve well at Level 1, 2 and 3. However, Māori students as a group are not achieving as well as other students in the school, in the region and nationally. The board agrees that it is a priority to address this as part of the school's strategic planning.

There is variability in the extent to which teaching is focused on students' specific learning needs. Some heads of department use students' interest areas to improve student engagement and achievement.

Leaders should now support teachers to inquire into their practice by analysing student achievement information from their own classes over time. This approach would help teachers to promote students' engagement, progress and achievement and assist them to further align teaching practices to The New Zealand Curriculum. Whole staff professional development would help teachers and school leaders to make better use of achievement information to evaluate the impact of their teaching practices on students' learning and progress.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum promotes and supports student learning well. Teachers and students have good relationships with one another. There is a positive tone in the college and classrooms are very settled. Students are engaged in their work and the use of common literacy strategies has helped to improve the quality of writing school wide.

In Years 11, 12 and 13, students have access to a wide selection of subjects. The college is expanding learning and achievement opportunities outside the classroom. Students can investigate alternative learning pathways to support their career choices. Some departments are exploring integrated approaches across curriculum areas. This initiative is encouraging students to remain at college until Year 12. It is also promoting student engagement and higher levels of achievement.

School leaders are committed to supporting all students to experience success. Students appreciate how teachers include their different cultures in teaching programmes. Teachers offer tutorials before and after school, during interval and lunch breaks, and in weekends. This is helping students to achieve academically. Teaching students from different year levels in senior classes is a challenge for some teachers, although this is counter-balanced with smaller numbers of students in these classes.

The college regularly reviews the curriculum. Heads of Department measure common goals and share their findings. Further development is required in the Years 7 to 10 curriculum. Changes could include a more coordinated approach to develop and provide a seamless curriculum that promotes students' independent learning.

A senior leader heads a strong pastoral care team. This team provides a good range of strategies to support student wellbeing. Students acknowledge the significance of the work carried out by their deans and tutor teachers. They are supported to take on leadership roles which include being peer mediators, prefects and whānau leaders. School leaders recognise that developing restorative practices is an important next phase in promoting student wellbeing.

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

Teachers identify Māori students in each of their classes. Events like Matariki and Te Wiki mo Te Reo Māori are celebrated. Students welcome visitors to the school using appropriate tikanga. Some departments include contexts relating to te Ao Māori in their curriculum.

However, a formalised plan is needed to fully enact the board's Treaty of Waitangi policy. School leaders should also develop shared strategies or goals to promote educational success for Māori students as Maori. Ministry of Education resources could guide this development. Teachers could use the Registered Teacher Criteria to examine the term ako and how it aligns to their teaching, their professional learning and to students in their classes.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The board of trustees at Marcellin College is repositioning itself to improve and sustain the school's performance. Trustees have been strategic in the appointment of an acting principal to manage the college until the new principal begins at the start of 2015. The acting principal, in consultation with the new appointee, is leading the board through a review of policies to align with the board's review of its three year strategic plan.

ERO and the board agree that important next steps include:

- senior leaders working with an external facilitator to promote a shared understanding of effective leadership practice
- accessing an external appraiser to appraise the performance of the senior leadership team
- teachers using student achievement data more effectively during the year to inform their teaching
- increasing teachers' bicultural competencies to help raise Māori student achievement
- strengthening how self review throughout the college is conducted, documented and used to facilitate school improvement.

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 four international students attending the college.

International students are well integrated into the life of the school. They are encouraged to enter courses that will take them into tertiary study. A specialist literacy teacher supports their learning, providing extra tuition where necessary. International students achieve well in their classes.

Good pastoral support is given to international students. As well as the school's strong pastoral network, other specialist external agencies are available to these students. The coordinator meets regularly with host families, teachers and deans. She attends cluster meetings with coordinators from other schools. This helps to ensure the school is well informed about current best practice for international 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

Marcellin College is an integrated Year 7 to 13 Catholic coeducational college with a culturally diverse roll. The college provides a welcoming and inclusive environment for students. Students at Years 11, 12 and 13 achieve well at NCEA. The college continues to promote positive relationships with its school community.

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

Dale Bailey
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Northern Region

15 December 2014

School Statistics

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| Location | Royal Oak, Auckland | |
| Ministry of Education profile number | 63 | |
| School type | Secondary (Years 7 to 13) | |
| School roll | 643 | |
| Number of international students | 4 | |
| Gender composition | Male 56%, Female 44% | |
| Ethnic composition | Maori | 7% |
| | NZ European/Pakeha | 8% |
| | Pacifica | 58% |
| | Asian | 24% |
| | other | 3% |
| Review team on site | October 2014 | |
| Date of this report | 15 December 2014 | |
| Most recent ERO report(s) | Education Review | September 2011 |
| | Education Review | November 2008 |
| | Education Review | June 2005 |