



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

Confirmed Report

NEW SCHOOL ASSURANCE REVIEW REPORT

Te Kāpehu Whetū (Tuakana)

Location: Whangārei, Northland

Ministry of Education profile number: 870

June 2021

New School Assurance Review Report

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1 Introduction

A New School Assurance Review is a review of particular areas of kura performance and is undertaken to specific terms of reference.

Terms of Reference

This review is based on an evaluation of the performance of Te Kāpehu Whetū (Tuakana). The terms of reference for the review are to provide assurance to the community:

- that the kura is operating in accordance with the vision articulated by the board of trustees
- that the kura is well placed to provide for ākonga|students.

2 Context

Te Kāpehu Whetū (Tuakana) opened in Term 1, 2019 as a Designated Character School (DCS). Prior to this, it had operated as a Partnership School|Kura Hourua since 2015.

Its sister kura, Te Kāpehu Whetū (Teina), caters for tamariki in Years 1 to 8. The kura operate on separate sites, however tamariki in Years 7 and 8 are based at Te Kāpehu Whetū (Tuakana), located by the Hātea River, in the business district of Whangārei.

3 Background

E kore ahau e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiatea.

The vision of Te Kāpehu Whetū (Tuakana) is to provide an education where being Māori is the 'norm' and the expectations are that all ākonga will achieve: *kia Māori*|to be Māori; *kia Mātau*|to be educated; *me kia tū rangatira ai*|to be rangatira. These expectations align to a pou which are the structures for success. Adults' different roles and responsibilities are connected to ngā pou.

Pouako|teachers deliver a curriculum that has some links to rangatahi experiences and kaupapa of the kura. Teaching and learning practice is guided by *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. The men of the 28th Māori Battalion provide inspiration by reminding rangatahi of their rights to citizenship through reference to Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Kura Tuakana provides education for ākonga in Years 9 to 13. The board has considered bringing Teina and Tuakana together as one kura on the same site. Doing this could provide a more seamless education experience for ākonga as they progress from Year 1 to 13. Currently, an acting pouhere|principal has responsibility for leading both kura.

The establishment board (EBOT) has organised the kura to be governed by an Alternative Constitution for Boards of Trustees (ACB). This arrangement, approved by the Minister of Education, is designed to maintain the special character of the kura by recognising its partnership with He Puna Mārama Trust and the kaupapa it actively promotes. It also allows the board to provide governance for Kura Tuakana and Kura Teina.

The board has established policies and processes to guide kura operations and makes good use of external agencies to support governance and management.

4 Findings

The kura is not yet operating fully in accordance with the board's vision. The vision, values, and principles of the kura are yet to be realised in governance, leadership, and teaching practice. Ākonga and whānau partially benefit from the kura environment. Rangatahi show some of the attributes outlined in graduate profiles for Paetawhiti (Years 9 and 10) and Paerangi (Years 11 to 13). Te reo Māori is used in a bilingual setting. Ākonga are involved in aspects of ngā tikanga o Ngāpuhi. Suitable resources, including information technologies and community facilities are accessed by ākonga to support their learning and wellbeing.

While there are significant areas for development still required, preparatory work by the establishment board (EBOT) and pouhere, guided by the governance facilitator, has ensured the timely transition to a DCS. The ACB provides good governance, including identifying areas for development.

The board's well-considered strategic plan outlines the vision, goals, and expectations to achieve valued ākonga outcomes. Trustees and pouhere have identified that evaluating how well strategic goals have been progressed would be a worthwhile next step. The findings of an independent review commissioned by the board in 2019 could contribute to this evaluation and provide insights about how successes can be built on and areas for development addressed.

The kura is working towards being well placed to provide for all ākonga. Pouwhakarehe leaders are developing processes for identifying trends and patterns in achievement information. Evaluation and reporting of this information will inform the board about ākonga progress and help pouwhakarehe to prioritise professional development needs, and source external expertise and advice. Teaching practising certificates are current.

The board is in the process of considering the role of pouhere for both the Tuakana and Teina Kura. A decision is yet to be made whether the two kura have the one pouhere or not. This situation will become clearer as the board undertakes its strategic planning. The board is also considering how to address overstaffing in relation to the ākonga roll number.

Consultation with whānau is mainly on an individual basis. It is focused on learning progress and wellbeing of tamariki. The board could consider ways to consult with whānau about how positive learning experiences of ākonga in Years 1 to 8 can be built on and strengthened as they transition to Year 9.

In developing systems and practices to meet legal requirements, trustees, pouhere, pouwhakahere and pouako should ensure that all areas of compliance are met. Trustees, with support from administration staff, have a 2021 schedule for updating the child protection, work experience, and physical restraint and seclusion policies. The complaints procedure is also being updated to make it clearer and more transparent.

5 Board assurance on legal requirements

Before the review, the board and principal of the kura 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:

- kura management and reporting
- 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 students' 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.

To improve practice pouhere, pouwhakahere and the board need to address the following areas of non-compliance:

- All aspects of safety checking of staff members are completed, and records kept for the period of time they are employed by the board [Children's Act 2014].
- Develop an Inclusivity Policy that prohibits discrimination, harassment, and bullying [Children's Act 2014].
- Ensure completed EOTC risk assessment and supervision forms are relevant to each EOTC experience [NAG 5 – with reference to EOTC Guidelines 2016, updated April 2018].

6 Conclusion

While the transition of the kura to being a DCS was well managed, there have been changes of staff, including several pouhere, and a lack of unity between staff and the board. The kura is working towards being well placed to support students' learning and wellbeing.

The vision, values, and principles of the kura have yet to be realised in the daily learning experiences of rangatahi. The board acknowledges this situation and has concerns that the inclusive, supportive environment of Kura Teina is not as evident in the Years 9 to 13, Kura Tuakana. Staff are uncertain how best to enact a curriculum that recognises and builds on the strengths of whānau and rangatahi – to live and succeed as Māori.

ERO, with the Ministry of Education and board will determine the next step to gain assurance that Te Kāpehu Whetū (Tuakana) is progressing to meet its obligations as a designated character school. These obligations are that the kura is well placed to provide for ākonga, and the kura is operating in accordance with the vision articulated by the board of trustees.



Phil Cowie
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Northern Region - Te Tai Raki

5 November 2021

About the Kura

Location	Whangārei, Northland
Ministry of Education profile number	870
Kura type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)
Kura roll	76
Ethnic composition	Māori 75, NZ European/Pākehā 1
Review team on site	June 2021
Date of this report	5 November 2021