



**Rathkeale College  
Masterton**

**Confirmed**

**Education Review Report**

# Education Review Report

## Rathkeale College

The purpose of ERO's reviews is to give parents and the wider school community assurance about the quality of education that schools provide and their children receive. An ERO school report answers the question "How effectively is this school's curriculum promoting student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?" Under that overarching question ERO reports on the quality of education and learning outcomes for children and for specific groups of children including Māori students, Pacific students and students with special needs. ERO also reports on the quality of the school's systems for sustaining and continuing improvements. The report answers four key questions about the school.

## Findings

### 1 Context

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

Rathkeale College is an integrated secondary school for boys in Masterton. The board of trustees governs the school and The Trinity Schools' Trust Board is responsible for the oversight of the school's special Anglican character, property and the boarding houses. Years 12 and 13 students from St Matthew's Collegiate School are educated at the Rathkeale St Matthew's Senior College based at Rathkeale College.

This is a welcoming school where a positive tone and warm relationships prevail. The culture focuses on students' wellbeing through a strong pastoral care system. Students demonstrate a sense of pride in their college.

The special character is evident and well promoted by the newly appointed chaplain, who works closely with the guidance network and boarding house staff.

The values are embodied in the four pillars of the "Good Rathkeale Man". Students are encouraged to be at ease with themselves, have an awareness of others, are prepared to step forward and know they stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before them. These values are physically represented on four imposing pillars in the newly developed Jubilee Quadrangle. They are also strongly represented in the students' demeanour.

Students enjoy the expansive natural environment that contributes to their sense of wellbeing and provides them with authentic experiences.

### 2 Learning

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

Senior student achievement in the National Certificates in Educational Achievement (NCEA) continues to be very high at Levels 1 and 2. The school has noted the lower performances at Level 3 and University Entrance in 2014 and has put measures in place to address this. Students achieve very good endorsements to their qualification and there continues to be high levels of success in New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) scholarship examinations.

School assessment information indicates many Year 9 and 10 students achieve well across their subject areas. The board also recognises that a small number of students may be at risk of not achieving Level 1 NCEA in literacy and numeracy. Broad targets have been set to address this potential issue. These targets should be more focused and require further strengthening and better monitoring to ensure teachers meet individual needs.

Māori students achieve well academically and across a wide range of school activities. Their attendance and retention is high.

### **3 Curriculum**

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

The Rathkeale College curriculum effectively promotes and supports student learning. A suitable range of subject choices is available to meet the increasingly differentiated student pathways.

The school ethos promotes participation and students take full advantage of the many opportunities available. Students' physical and social needs are well met.

Students are active, on-task learners. They interact positively and are respectful, confident and motivated. They support one another in and outside the classroom.

Teachers engage students well. They are usually prepared, know their students well and make lessons enjoyable. The senior curriculum is guided by NCEA requirements and outcomes confirm these subjects are appropriately taught. The next step is to provide better curriculum leadership for Years 9 and 10, including use of detailed assessment information to enable teachers to better focus strategies on individual needs. This should support further monitoring and reporting of student progress.

The school has a number of strategies to promote a bicultural curriculum within the school. The New Zealand studies course sets a good foundation for the students who choose this option. All students would benefit from this course as it covers place-based history, an insight into tikanga Māori and some te reo Māori.

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

The school is strengthening its links with whānau and iwi to establish a shared understanding of what constitutes educational success for Māori as Māori. The school recognises that a next step is to have further discussions with the Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Ngāti Kahungunu and consider how the school will advance the iwi education plans.

A further development is for the school to advance its commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi in the physical environment, and in classroom programmes that support Māori student's language, culture and identity.

Teachers have some opportunities to learn te reo Māori and to improve their cultural responsive practices.

## **4 Sustainable Performance**

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

Rathkeale College is very well placed to sustain and improve its performance. The principal and trustees are improvement focused and are setting increasingly high expectations for students and staff.

The board is well organised and has appropriate procedures to guide good governance. Wide consultation and considerable reflection contributes to a well considered strategic plan. Professional leadership is a significant strength of the college. The principal works effectively to steer the school on its path of continuous improvement.

The board and principal agree that the next step is for the annual plan to include more specific targets for Year 9 and 10 students that guide teachers to focus on students at risk of underachievement at NCEA Level 1. This should include the board receiving reports during the year to monitor progress with the target.

Teachers, managers and the board review regularly, but for the most part it is reflective. The next step is to strengthen the evaluative approach. A comprehensive survey of school practice in 2014 indicated strong support and endorsement from parents, the community and students.

The well-considered framework for the recently introduced teacher appraisal system has the potential to support teachers to be more responsive to specific student needs. This should be strengthened to include specific goals linked to the annual plan. Closer interrogation of the data to consider the impact of teaching should be part of this process.

### **Provision for international students**

Rathkeale College 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 15 international students attending the school, including one exchange student. Students originate from seven different south-east Asian countries.

All international students are full time boarders at the school and stay in one of the three boarding houses. Their welfare and pastoral care is well supported by the boarding staff working collaboratively with academic teachers. The Dean of International Students is also the Director of Boarding so continuity of care between home and school is effective.

International students are achieving and progressing well in their learning. The specialist teacher of English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) monitors students' academic progress and facilitates appropriate response to support their academic needs. The ESOL classroom provides a base for students to access support and study English.

Trustees receive regular updates about students' involvement in the school and their academic achievements.

Strengthening self-review processes should enable the staff responsible to better evaluate the quality of provision for international students and inform future decision making.

## **Provision for students in the school hostel**

The school's boarding houses, Rugby, Cranleigh and Repton, accommodate 131 students, 45% of the school roll. It is owned by the Trinity Schools' Trust Board. The board has attested that all requirements of the Hostel Regulations are met.

The buildings are well maintained. The houses have recently been upgraded to meet earthquake requirements. Facilities in Cranleigh are modern and well presented. The board has plans to continue refurbishing and modernising Rugby and Repton.

The director of boarding, housemasters and tutors teach at the college. The director is responsible for the day-to-day running of the houses and keeps the board well informed through monthly reports. Each house has a housemaster, an experienced matron and tutors who work well as a team. They are supportive of families through regular communication

Camaraderie and friendships are evident in this warm, supportive, family-like environment. The well-established routines and procedures contribute to an orderly environment for the boarders.

## **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

Rathkeale College students are successful academically. The special Anglican character is highly evident. Students are motivated, active learners in well-organised classrooms. The boarding houses are warm supportive family environments. The next steps for the school are to focus more on the achievement of Years 9 and 10 students and to strengthen the school's evaluation processes.

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



Joyce Gebbie  
Deputy Chief Review Officer Central

19 May 2015

## About the School

Location	Masterton	
Ministry of Education profile number	245	
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)	
School roll	302	
Number of international students	15	
Gender composition	Male 100%	
Ethnic composition	Māori	10%
	NZ European Pākehā	84%
	Asian	5%
	Samoan	1%
Special features	Co-educational Senior College, Years 12 and 13 (Rathkeale College and St Matthew's Collegiate School) Boarding houses (Responsibility of the Trinity Schools' Trust Board as proprietor)	
Review team on site	March 2015	
Date of this report	19 May 2015	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	May 2012
	Education Review	November 2008
	Supplementary Review	August 2006