

Rathkeale College Education Review

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About the School

Location	Masterton
Ministry of Education profile number	245
School type	Secondary (Years 9 to 13)
Decile [1]	9
School roll	282
Number of international students	21
Gender composition	Male 100%
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 80% Māori 10% Asian 9% Pacific 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 2012
Date of this report	11 May 2012

Most recent ERO report(s)	Education Review	November 2008
	Supplementary Review	August 2006
	Education Review	June 2005

The Purpose of an ERO Report

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.

[1]

School deciles range from 1 to 10. Decile 1 schools draw their students from low socio-economic communities and at the other end of the range, decile 10 schools draw their students from high socio-economic communities. Deciles are used to provide funding to state and state integrated schools. The lower the school's decile the more funding it receives. A school's decile is in no way linked to the quality of education it provides.

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1 Context

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

Rathkeale College is an integrated boys' secondary school 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 Matthews Collegiate School are educated at the Trinity School'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' well-being 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.

Students respect the expansive natural environment that contributes to their sense of well-being and provides them with authentic experiences in many subject areas.

2 Learning

How well are students learning – engaging, progressing and achieving?

Information about the prior literacy and mathematics achievement of Years 9 and 10 students is shared with teachers. While individual students' progress is clearly tracked and monitored, there is no college wide analysis of the year groups' results to show progress over time. A greater awareness of analysis by year group will enable the board to be better guided in its planning and resourcing. The senior management team acknowledges that collating and analysing Years 9 and 10 achievement information is a next step.

Senior students are well supported to undertake higher qualifications and achieve success. In 2011 six boys attained ten New Zealand scholarships across eight subjects. Results include six outstanding scholarships and are attributable to deliberate strategies introduced to maintain the high levels of achievement.

National Certificates in Educational Achievement (NCEA) results show high levels of success. Results are comparable with those in decile 8 to 10 schools and are well above national trends. The traditionally high levels of merit and excellence continued in 2011. Achievement of numeracy and literacy requirements at Level 1 is high.

How well does the school promote Māori student success and success as Māori?

The number of Māori boys on the roll is increasing. Trustees and senior leaders see this as an endorsement of the college's aspirations for Māori students. Although the numbers are small, Māori student achievement is high in the senior school. Most achieve at each NCEA level. Although data analysis is completed in departments, there is no cohort level tracking and reporting.

As for all students, teachers have identified some who may not succeed and provide supportive intervention strategies. Māori students have opportunities to develop or extend their leadership skills.

Māori students observed were highly engaged and enjoyed their learning. The recently appointed teacher of te reo Māori is developing an appropriate academic and cultural programme. The senior leadership team has also introduced a Year 9 New Zealand studies programme. This incorporates aspects of tikanga Māori and is enjoyed by both Māori and non-Māori students.

During enrolment, Māori students' aspirations, and those of their parents for them, are

discussed with ongoing consultation during the year. The board, through the principal, is exploring further ways of consulting the community. Senior managers and staff are exploring ways to use the appraisal process to further develop teachers' cultural competence.

Although bicultural values are evident, the school should consult further to determine the means by which greater visibility and resourcing can extend cultural practices and enrich the learning environment.

3 Curriculum

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

The board, through its annual plan, commits to advance the implementation of The New Zealand Curriculum. The curriculum is constantly reviewed and a number of new options have been introduced for the 2012 academic year. Provision of virtual classroom learning opportunities broadens students' subject choice.

The board funds staffing levels to provide smaller class sizes. In this small school each student is well known. The renovated classroom environments are conducive to learning.

There are clear guidelines and expectations for teachers in departmental documents. Students are made aware of the high expectations on enrolment. Excellence is emphasised. The college recognises and celebrates academic, sporting and cultural achievement.

The college is responsive to each student's learning needs. Strategies are in place to support those requiring help in literacy and numeracy and also to extend the high achievers.

Staff have had professional development in boys' education. Outcomes are evident in the "Good Rathkeale Man" programme which models expected behaviour, key competencies and values.

Relationships between teachers and students are respectful and positive. Routines are well established and students positively respond to high behavioural expectations.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The college is effectively governed. There are sound relationships between the college board and the proprietors' board.

Trustees bring relevant experience, training and a range of individual skills. The board is a cohesive team committed to student progress and well-being. Trustees can speak knowledgeably about senior student achievement. Staff report that trustees are supportive, visible and approachable.

The Ministry of Education has approved the board's 2012 charter. Baseline achievement information has been analysed and specific targets have been included in the 2012 annual plan objectives.

The college is managed by an approachable and supportive senior leadership team. The principal effectively leads by example and creates a positive working environment. He has developed a culture of change by setting high and clear expectations.

Staff have had professional development to implement self review. Teachers and departments use an increasing number of tools to improve self review. Although self review operates on whole school, faculty and teacher level, some departments could develop more robust practice. Greater consistency and more evidence-based evaluations will further enhance self-review practices.

Improved perceptions of the college are widely evident in the community and this has further enhanced the level of support it receives.

The pastoral care network is strong. Procedures and guidelines focus on students' all-round development. Students feel they're in a safe, inclusive environment. The college provides a wide range of programmes and opportunities to develop leadership skills and there is an inclusive atmosphere in the school.

Provision for international students

The 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 21 international students attending the school. They are from Thailand, Hong Kong, South Korea, Malaysia and Japan. Students stay for a minimum period of one year.

International students achieve well throughout their time at the school. A dean of international students and a specialist teacher of English as a second language (ESOL) have high expectations for their achievements. They work together to monitor students' needs and use a range of strategies to support their learning. The ESOL classroom provides a base for students to learn English and access support. Staff with responsibilities for international students liaise well with deans, management and boarding house personnel to share information and communicate useful student information to others. School staff and management with boarding house staff work collaboratively to provide a good level of pastoral care. They build positive and productive relationships with students.

International students are well integrated in all aspects of school life. Boarding house activities and other planned social events offer students opportunities to interact. Students value the wide range of activities offered during the day and participate in the sporting and educational activities in the general life of the school.

Strengthening self review, assisted by collating a range of information about international students as a group, should provide a stronger evidence base for decision-making. It may affirm the quality of education and care for international students.

Provision for students in the school boarding houses

In this review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school boarding houses provide a safe physical and emotional environment to support students' learning.

School boarding houses/hostels are required to be licensed by the Ministry of Education and comply with minimum standards specified in regulations.

The school boarding houses, Rugby, Cranleigh and Repton, accommodate 157 students, 57% of the school roll. They are owned by the Trinity Schools' Trust and governed by the Rathkeale College Proprietors' Board.

The boarding houses at this school are:

- administered in a way that promotes a warm and supportive environment for boys
- well-maintained, with a high standard of accommodation recently upgraded to meet the needs of different age groups
- supportive of parents, students and management having open and ongoing communication
- responsive to learners' different cultures, including international students

- managed using a model that seeks students' views, encourages senior leadership and has clear routines and boundaries for conduct
- staffed by well-trained matrons, school staff and a manager who work closely with the college to provide holistic care for each boy.

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
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions
- attendance.

When is ERO likely to review the school again?

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

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