

15 March 2010

## **To the Parents and Community of Tahuna Normal Intermediate School**

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Tahuna Normal Intermediate School.

Tahuna Normal Intermediate School is a state school in Dunedin catering for students in Years 7 and 8. At the time of the October 2009 review it had a roll of 475 students. Twelve percent of the students were Māori, 3% Pacific and 4% Asian. At the beginning of 2009, a new principal was appointed.

Students learn and play in a positive, caring and inclusive environment. They told ERO they enjoy the friendliness of other students and that the teachers are approachable and supportive. ERO observed respectful relationships between students and adults. Teachers use effective classroom management skills and students learn in settled classes. Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school. Senior managers make personal contact with the families of all new enrolments. Students are well supported as they make the transition to secondary school.

Students have a wide range of interesting learning experiences that happen within and beyond the classroom. Topics of study focus on relevant contexts, for example, the sustainability of local coastlines. Programmes beyond the core subjects allow students to follow their interests and abilities in sport, music, the arts and culture, and technology. Students work towards gaining awards in the school-wide citizen development programme. They told ERO they appreciate the variety of activities they can choose from.

Students benefit from good to high quality teaching. Most teachers use effective strategies to involve the students in their learning. These teachers make the learning relevant and known to the students. Senior managers recognise the need to provide high-quality learning programmes for all students at all times. Students with specific learning needs are well supported. There are good systems to identify and monitor these students.

Reports to the board show that a high proportion of students are achieving at levels higher than their peers nationally in reading and mathematics. Achievement information indicates that the students make good progress in reading and mathematics during their time at the school. For the past few years the school has set targets to raise levels of achievement in reading and mathematics and other areas of school-wide focus and interest. In 2009, the third target to increase the students' writing levels was supported by school-wide professional development in written language.

Māori and Pacific students feel well supported at the school. The school's Te Roopu group has continued to grow in numbers and strength. It provides a special context where Māori and Pacific students discuss issues, ideas and concerns within a Māori context following the principles of tikanga Māori. Most Māori and Pacific students achieve well.

Senior managers have strengthened the school's procedures for reviewing the effectiveness of school programmes. The opinions of students, parents and staff are gathered and reported. Recent reports have had a focus on identifying areas that need improving.

This review identified that teachers and senior teachers are working on developing programmes to make better use of student achievement when reviewing the effectiveness of learning programmes. Better use of assessment information is likely to help managers and teachers target key areas of learning for individuals and groups of students.

The board takes all reasonable steps to ensure that students are safe.

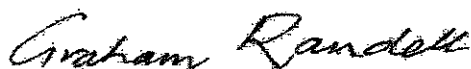
### **Future Action**

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can govern the school in the interest of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report. ERO is likely to carry out the next review in three years.

### **Review Coverage**

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, [www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz).



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