

Ruru Special School

Education institution number:

4011

School type:

Special School

School gender:

Co-Educational

Definition:

School for pupils with intellectual impairments

Total roll:

113

Website:

<http://www.rurued.school.nz>

Telephone:

[03 215 9379](tel:032159379)

Address:

Ruru Street, Invercargill

[View on map](#)

Reports for Ruru Special School

Most recent reports

[Profile Report April 2024](#)

[Board Assurance Report April 2024](#)

Previous reports

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Ruru Special School - 08/08/2016

08 Aug 2016

Findings

Students have a strong sense of belonging at the school in a family-like setting where families and whānau are welcomed and included in activities and learning. The school's vision and values are highly evident. Students are seen as capable and confident learners. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that students are well prepared for their life beyond school, and can confidently take their place in the world.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.

1 Context

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

Ruru Special School provides care and education for students with high and complex needs from ages five to twenty one years. The school provides programmes for students across several sites. Most students attend satellite classes, depending on their age, capabilities and family choice. All year levels are well catered for with:

- Years 1 to 3 students at Salford School
- Years 4 to 6 at Donovan School
- Years 7 to 10 at Verdon College
- ages 16 to 21 years in a Ruru-developed transition-to-work programme on the Southland Institute of Technology (SIT) campus.

Students have a strong sense of belonging at the school in a family-like setting where families and whānau are welcomed and included in activities and learning.

The school offers an outreach programme to provide mainstream schools with support for students with high and complex needs.

In 2014 the Ministry of Education (MoE) commissioned a report in relation to how well the school was providing a safe emotional and physical environment for students. The MoE has informed ERO that the board has responded to the recommendations in the report and has made changes to policies, procedures and practices. The changes have improved the quality of relevant documentation, follow up and reporting about behaviour management and student safety.

2 Learning

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

The school makes very good use of learning information to set challenging and realistic goals for each student. Students achieve well in response to the goals that have been set.

All students have an individual learning plan for what they need to learn and how to manage their personal needs. Staff have recently reviewed individual plans to better align agreed goals for student learning, wellbeing and transition. These plans now contain more and better detail to guide staff and to inform parents about students' goals and future direction.

Teachers, teacher aides and therapists give frequent, timely and helpful feedback to students about their learning and progress. Students who can talk about their learning contribute to these conversations about what they and their teachers need to do to help them progress and to achieve their goals.

Each student is supported by effective communication between staff and families with a clear focus on what students need to learn to make the progress that best suits them. Parents are well informed about the progress their child is making.

Overall achievement is regularly monitored, collated and summarised in reports to trustees about how well the annual targets have been met. Trustees are well informed about how well students are being supported to make the necessary progress and what else can be done to accelerate progress.

3 Curriculum

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

The school's curriculum very effectively promotes and supports students' learning.

Particular strengths include the:

- strong focus on the 'holistic' development of the students
- ways in which adults in the school promote students' independence and self-management skills
- wide range of interesting experiences and programmes students enjoy
- effective use of the wider community to broaden students' learning and experiences.

The school's vision and values are highly evident. Students are seen as capable and confident learners. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that students are well prepared for their life beyond school, and can confidently take their place in the world.

Staff work collaboratively to respond to the needs and abilities of each student and build on individual strengths.

The purpose-built indoor and outdoor spaces are attractive and well developed to give students a range of choices about activities that meet their needs and encourage independence. These facilities include:

- a multi-sensory room to provide stimulation or calming programmes
- a self-contained 'flat' to help students learn independent and social skills
- a therapy pool and gymnasium to support students' physical development.

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

The school effectively promotes educational success for Māori students. Māori students achieve well at this school. Students' culture, language and identity are valued and celebrated. They benefit from a range of cultural experiences and visits.

The board makes good use of individual staff interests and cultural strengths to engage whānau in culturally appropriate ways. Teachers actively encourage and support whānau to be a part of their children's learning.

The board is well informed about Māori student achievement and progress.

4 Sustainable Performance

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

The school is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The principal and deputy principal are highly committed to ensuring positive outcomes for students and their families. They have high expectations for students and teachers, and promote a collaborative culture of learning amongst staff.

There are comprehensive guidelines for governance. Trustees are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities. They generously provide resourcing for professional learning for all staff to ensure that students' physical and learning needs are well catered for.

School leaders have developed useful systems for all aspects of school operations. The board and senior leaders acknowledge that the MoE-commissioned report in 2014 has been beneficial in helping them look more closely at how well these procedures and practices positively support student learning and safety.

Area for development

The board and senior leaders acknowledge that self review needs to be more rigorous. For the board to be assured that changes to policies, procedures and practices are having the desired outcomes, self review needs to include:

- evaluative judgements about what is working well and what needs improvement
- the sources of evidence that have led to the judgements being made
- recommendations that support ongoing improvement.

These components are likely to lead to more meaningful evaluations of the effectiveness and impact of changes made.

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

Students have a strong sense of belonging at the school in a family-like setting where families and whānau are welcomed and included in activities and learning. The school's vision and values are highly evident. Students are seen as capable and confident learners. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that students are well prepared for their life beyond school, and can confidently take their place in the world.

ERO is likely to carry out the next review in four-to-five years.

Lesley Patterson
Deputy Chief Review Officer Southern

8 August 2016

About the School

Location	Invercargill	
Ministry of Education profile number	4011	
School type	Special School for Students aged 5 to 21 years	
School roll	64	
Gender composition	Boys: 46 Girls: 18	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	54
	Māori	10
Special Features	5 classes at Ruru base school 2 satellite classes at local primary schools 1 satellite class at a local secondary school 1 satellite class at the Southern Institute of Technology Vocational and Transitional Programmes Outreach service	

Review team on site

April 2016

Date of this report

8 August 2016

Most recent ERO
report(s)

Education Review

September

Education Review

2009

Education Review

August 2006

November 2002
