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This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Kelston Deaf Education Centre (KDEC) is located in an extensive complex of buildings on a large West Auckland site that was previously used as a school and residential centre for deaf and hearing impaired students. KDEC continues to provide educational programmes, support, and specialist services for deaf and hearing impaired students from Years 1 to 15 but, over the years, the role and structure of KDEC has changed significantly. KDEC school enrolls mainly Ongoing and Reviewable Resource (ORRS) funded students. These students are now taught away from the KDEC site in satellite units at eight host schools throughout the wider Auckland region.

The KDEC region extends from Turangi to North Cape and, apart from those attending the KDEC school satellite units, most deaf and hearing impaired students are enrolled in their local school and receive services from Resource Teachers of the Deaf (RTD). At the time of the review, the only students at KDEC's Kelston site were a small number undertaking post-compulsory schooling transition programmes. There are 103 students, including the transition students, currently on the roll of KDEC school. Over 350 students are provided with service by the RTDs.

KDEC is a complex organisation governed by a board of trustees and led by a Chief Executive Officer and senior leadership team. An annual resourcing notice negotiated with the Ministry of Education allow KDEC to provide technical resources and services, residential accommodation, the

regional RTD service, and a licensed early childhood centre for deaf and hearing impaired children. A senior leader has responsibility for each of these components and reports to the board through the CEO. The early childhood education centre is evaluated in a separate ERO report.

KDEC's administration, resourcing and technical support services are located on the Kelston site, as is the student hostel, the early childhood centre and offices for the CEO. Senior leaders and specialist services linked to the KDEC school are housed in various buildings on the campus. The complex also contains the Ruamoko marae, the only marae specially built to serve a deaf community. The board faces significant property challenges on the current KDEC site as it has now become a mainly administrative and resource centre. Much of the land and buildings requires significant maintenance and is no longer used efficiently.

The 2007 ERO report indicated that teaching programmes were soundly based, staff demonstrated a high level of genuine commitment to students, and that teachers were placing a strong emphasis on helping students to become independent learners. In both the KDEC school and the regional service, these findings continue to be evident. There is a focus on setting individual and group achievement targets through the analysis of data and through each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Each student's progress is closely monitored and reviewed, and as a result, teaching programmes that meet individual learning needs are implemented. KDEC school teachers and RTDs continue to provide intensive individual teaching programmes, as well as supporting students and their teachers in their local and host partner schools.

However, for KDEC as a whole, there are concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative structures, personnel, financial and resource management. A number of these concerns result from the historic structure of KDEC but are impeding movement forward and need to be resolved. The board is aware of the challenge it faces as it considers how best to meet the needs of deaf and hearing impaired students in the 21st century.

At the time of this ERO review, the KDEC board was undertaking an internal review of services and staffing centred on the KDEC Kelston site. The Ministry of Education was also reviewing special education services nationally and the KDEC board and staff were contributing to the Ministry review. As both reviews are likely to have significant influence on the further development of services for deaf and hearing impaired students, KDEC, the board of trustees and ERO agreed that ERO will carry out another review in two years.

Future Action

ERO intends to carry out another review in two years.

Kelston Deaf Education Centre's Curriculum

How effectively does the curriculum of Kelston Deaf Education Centre promote student learning: engagement, progress and achievement?

School context

The KDEC school currently caters for 103 students and consists of satellite classes at eight schools. Another satellite class is being planned as part of the foundation development of Ormiston Senior College. Satellite classes share programme planning and professional development across the curriculum in the host schools.

Ten to fifteen percent of the students in the KDEC school achieve at age-appropriate levels. However, most of the students have some degree of learning delay. Another ten per cent are unlikely to progress beyond Level 1 of The New Zealand Curriculum.

The provision of regional services enables students to attend their nearest local school. RTDs work with students and class teachers to support students in all areas of the curriculum.

Areas of strength

KDEC school. The quality of teaching in the satellite classes observed in this review was high. KDEC teachers work well with the host schools to deliver high quality programmes that are integrated into the teaching programme of the host schools. Students benefit from access to attractive environments, committed teachers and supportive school communities. The host schools for the satellite classes have been well chosen to increase the geographic spread of provision for deaf and hearing impaired students across the Auckland region, particularly in areas of demonstrated need. Further provision is being planned as new schools are built.

Regional services. The RTDs provide similarly high quality programmes. They are enthusiastically led and well managed to work across a wide geographic area. Ongoing action research and professional development is helping these teachers, with KDEC school teachers, to build a specialist pedagogy for teaching deaf and hearing impaired children in New Zealand.

Transition programme. Eight KDEC school students currently take part in an intensive post-compulsory schooling transition programme to equip them for future study or training, and to develop independent life skills. The course is flexible, focused on young adults' needs, and enables young people to explore options within a supportive environment.

Māori. Acknowledgement of the special place of Māori as tangata whenua is at the heart of KDEC. The marae, Ruamoko, is central to the life of the wider KDEC community. Currently a process is in place for reviewing KDEC practices regionally and in the KDEC school against the Ministry of Education's Māori education strategy, Ka Hikitia -Managing for Success.

Resource support. An extensive resource department supports the work of teachers and students across the whole KDEC area. The challenge of producing resources in New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) is ongoing as students access more and different parts of the curriculum. High quality

publications to support service provision, such as audiology, and the regular publication of an electronic newsletter that includes NZSL, are features of the resource department.

Areas for development and review

Changing the organisational structure. The board's strategic plan has identified challenges for KDEC in the near future. Ongoing financial difficulties, a declining roll, and increasing costs have led to current restructuring.

The board and senior leaders are aware of the need to move forward to meet these challenges. The next step is to develop an action plan to change the organisational structure of KDEC so that it better reflects the board's focus areas of raising student achievement, promoting excellence, and managing change.

Property. Matters relating to property are currently being reviewed with the Ministry of Education. Discussions should be informed by consideration of what is the best model for future provision for deaf education.

Access to ICT. The rapid progress of information and communication technologies that can serve the deaf and hearing impaired well is evident in parts of the school. Some staff are frustrated by lack of access to possible technologies; others are struggling to keep up. A clear strategic vision for ICT provision and systems for up skilling all staff would be a useful step.

Personnel management. The board employs over 170 staff in a variety of roles and on different contracts. The complexity of personnel management in this environment resulted in the board organising an external review of personnel management and associated systems. The board has now appointed a human resources consultant to work part-time in the school to implement the findings of the review. The challenge for her is to rationalise policies and procedures, and to centralise record keeping, to enable the board to be confident that the contract provisions of all staff are being met.

Self review. Self-review systems in KDEC are weak, in part because of the complexity of the organisation and the lack of cohesive policies and reporting structures. Management and leadership structures and processes should be reviewed and external professional development sought for the senior leadership team. Further external professional development should be provided for middle managers.

The 2007 ERO report recommended changes to quarterly reporting. While some progress has been made, reporting processes could be further developed so that compartmentalisation is reduced and the board is aware of how it meets its obligations under the National Education Guidelines. Accompanying student achievement data with a reflective written analysis would assist. Trustees should consider what information they require and the form in which it is to be delivered. External assistance and training in their roles and responsibilities would assist the board to define their

reporting needs more clearly. Current reporting to the board is quarterly, too complex, and is unlikely to enable trustees to ask pertinent questions to inform their governance decisions.

Agreed Priorities

ERO and the board of trustees agree that the next stages of development should focus on developing an action plan to change the organisational structure of KDEC so that it better reflects the board's focus areas of raising student achievement, promoting excellence and managing change.

Provision For Students In The School Hostel

In this review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school hostel provides a safe physical and emotional environment that supports learning for students accommodated in the hostel.

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

The school hostel, Totara Village, accommodates 14 students, or 13% of the school roll. The hostel is owned by Kelston Deaf Education Centre.

The hostel consists of three houses, Raintree, Matai, and Lynwood Cottage, where three older students are exploring an environment that is increasingly like an independent flat, with reduced adult supervision. The Village provides opportunities for students from outside the Auckland metropolitan area to have access to specialised programmes at local satellite classes and in the transition programme, when indicated by their individual education plan (IEP) and Student Development Plan (SDP).

- Hostel staff promote the development of students' social skills and growing independence. Students take responsibility for shopping and planning menus, maintain their accommodation to a high standard, and enjoy the social and sporting activities available as part of their life in the Village.
- Hostel staff take care with student safety, and evacuation procedures in the event of fire are well understood. All staff hold current first-aid certificates. The next step is to consider what to do in the event of an earthquake or any other civil defence emergency.
- A complaints policy has been developed and is now readily available for parents. Hostel managers note that it is not always easy to contact parents and caregivers and thought should be given to ways of ensuring that at least one guardian of a boarder can always be reached while the student is accommodated at the hostel.
- The board organised an external review of the hostel to address some identified concerns. Trustees are following up on the recommendations of the review but need to have good systems in place to strengthen ongoing self-review processes.

Recommendations

ERO recommends that the KDEC board of trustees strengthen self-review processes. The board should ensure that there is ongoing review of the policies and procedures that apply to the hostel, and of reporting that informs the board about the effectiveness of these policies in practice.

Board Assurance On Legal Requirements

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Kelston Deaf Education Centre completed an ERO Board Assurance Statement and Self-Audit Checklist. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legal obligations related to:

- board administration;
- curriculum;
- management of health, safety and welfare;
- personnel management;
- financial management; and
- 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;
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions; and
- attendance.

In order to improve current practice, the board of trustees should ensure that it is provided with reports that enable trustees to be assured that they are complying with the National Administration Guidelines, the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, and applicable personnel legislation.

The board has voluntarily withdrawn as a signatory to the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students.

Future Action

ERO intends to carry out another review in two years.

Richard Thornton

National Manager Review Services

Northern Region

15 June 2010

About The School

School type Special School, school for students with hearing impairments; Years 1-15

Decile[1] 3

Gender Girls, 50%, Boys 50%
composition

Ethnic Māori 33%, NZ European/Pākehā 23%, Indian 9%, African 8%, Samoan 8%, Cook
composition Island Māori 6%, Tongan 6%, Fijian 3%, other 4%

Special KDEC school: satellite units at: Kelston Boys High School, Kelston Girls College,
features Papatoetoe High School, Kelston Intermediate School, Mission Heights Junior College ;
Kelston Primary School; Papatoetoe East School, Oteha Valley School.

School Hostel;

Resourcing Notice for regional service and resource development.

Review May 2010
team on
site

Date of this 15 June 2010
report

Previous Education Review, January 2007 Education Review, May 2003 Accountability Review,
three ERO January 2000
reports

Community Page

15 June 2010

To the Parents and Community of Kelston Deaf Education Centre

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on Kelston Deaf Education Centre.

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Review Coverage

This report provides an evaluation of how effectively the school's curriculum promotes student learning - engagement, progress and achievement. ERO's evaluation takes account of the school's previous reporting history and is based on:

- what is known about student achievement information, including the achievement of Māori and Pacific students;
- decisions made to improve student achievement using assessment and selfreview information; and
- teaching strategies and programmes implemented to give effect to the school's curriculum.

ERO also gathers information during the review to contribute to its national reports. The national reports are published on ERO's website.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, www.ero.govt.nz.

Richard Thornton

National Manager Review Services

Northern Region

General Information about Reviews

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting integrates the following:

- school curriculum;
- national evaluation topics -contribute to the development of education policies and their effective implementation; and
- Board Assurance Statement, including student and staff health and safety.
- ERO's review is responsive to the school's context. When ERO reviews a school, it takes into account the characteristics of the community from which it draws its students, its aspirations for its young people, and other relevant local factors.

ERO also builds on the school's own self-review information. ERO is interested in how a school monitors the progress of its students and aspects of school life and culture, and how it uses this information to improve student learning.

- This helps ERO to answer the major evaluation question for reviews:

How effectively does this school's curriculum promote student learning - engagement, progress and achievement?

Areas for Development and Review

ERO reports include areas for development and review to support on-going improvement by identifying priorities. Often the school will have identified these matters through its own self review and already plans further development in those areas.

[1] School deciles range from one to ten. Decile one schools draw their students from low socioeconomic 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.