



EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE  
TE TARI AROTAKE MATAURANGA

**EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT:  
WADESTOWN SCHOOL**

**NOVEMBER 2006**

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

**1. About the School**

Location	Wadestown, Wellington	
Ministry of Education profile number	3055	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1-8)	
Decile rating <sup>[1]</sup>	10	
Teaching staff:		
Roll generated entitlement	14.3	
Other	1.0	
Number of teachers	16	
School roll	295	
Number of international students	8	
Gender composition	Boys	53%

	Girls	47%
Ethnic composition	New Zealand European/Pākehā	94%
	Asian	5%
	Māori	1%
Review team on site	August 2006	
Date of this report	2 November 2006	

Previous ERO reports	Education Review	May 2004
	Accountability Review	July 2000
	Effectiveness Review	November
	1996	
	Assurance Audit	September
	1994	

## 2. The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Wadestown School provides education for students in years 1 to 8 and is situated on two sites in the Wellington suburb of Wadestown. The Main School is built on several levels of a hillside with attractive trees, shrubs and native birds providing a natural environment. The Side School, which caters for students in year 1, is located on a previous school site, and is a few minutes drive from the Main School. The Side School is valued for its rich history and the secure emotional environment teachers create for new entrants. Senior managers are committed to maintaining strong communication between the two sites so that the school has a unified vision, culture and purpose.

The 2004 ERO report noted the strong sense of partnership between families and the school, and the high expectations of parents for students' learning and progress. It also commended the Board of Trustees for its capable leadership and the high level of skill and expertise brought to the governance role. This review finds that these positive features continue to be evident. The school enjoys active and practical support from its local community. The board, management and staff foster a strong relationship with parents to enhance learning opportunities for students. The board has conducted comprehensive parent surveys regarding a range of school operations including curriculum implementation and assessment. Responses have been collated and well analysed to inform ongoing planning and direction. The board continues to ensure that buildings are well maintained. Since the 2004 review, the staffroom has been renovated and is now an inviting area for staff and visitors.

At the time of the 2004 review, teachers were beginning to engage in professional development to strengthen literacy teaching and learning across the school. Specific areas for improvement from that report continue to be addressed by staff, and the board's recommendations for ongoing development have been diligently implemented and monitored. Professional development in 2004 and 2005 focused on literacy and, along with staff numeracy training, this has been targeted as a continuing emphasis in 2006. Staff changes since the previous review have had implications for sustaining the impact and momentum of literacy professional development. This report, therefore, identifies areas for improvement and includes a recommendation agreed by ERO and the board to address this issue.

ERO and the board agreed that this review should evaluate the quality of the school's self review with an emphasis on school-wide literacy, along with provisions for students in years 7 and 8, and a positive learning environment at all year levels. The report also includes reviews of provision for students who are underachieving, health and physical education for year 8 students, and the pastoral care and education of international students. Compliance relating to regulatory requirements was investigated, and several areas to be addressed are identified.

The board and staff continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to monitoring and improving student achievement in writing. The charter provides direction for the development of teaching and

learning programmes that will realise the academic and social potential of disconnected learners, improve literacy achievement, and continue to develop children as independent and self-directed learners. It emphasises success for all and improving outcomes for students at risk. The annual plan includes a target for improving achievement in written language, which has been identified as an area of underachievement for some students. The board has begun to receive collated and analysed information about school-wide achievement in writing and spelling.

Teachers use national assessment tools to determine student achievement in writing. Information collected in 2005 showed that most students were achieving curriculum levels at or above those expected for their age groups. However, information collected and analysed at the beginning of 2006 indicates lower achievement than last year for some year groups. The board receives information about spelling achievement, which demonstrates similar patterns. School staff are seeking to interpret this information and to address the needs of students requiring extra assistance.

Teachers demonstrate a commitment to improving teaching and learning. They regularly affirm their students and seek to implement practices from professional development to extend the effectiveness of their literacy teaching. High quality literacy teaching is evident in some classes. Features of this teaching include establishing integrated, interesting and authentic contexts for instructional writing along with differentiated planning and assessment to ensure that individual learning needs are being addressed. Teachers in junior classes continue to create literacy rich, stimulating and attractive classrooms to encourage and motivate their students.

Trustees and school managers are aware that students in years 7 and 8 have specific and recognised academic and developmental needs. Accordingly, this age group has been the subject of recent consultation with parents and students. A literature review has also been undertaken to guide the direction of future policy, programmes and teaching practice at years 7 and 8. The results of these reviews provide a sound basis for continuing to improve programmes and outcomes for students.

Many teachers develop explicit expectations for values and behaviour that emphasise respect and inclusion. They employ united approaches to managing student behaviour within their year-level bands. Interactions between teachers and students are positive and respectful. To ensure continuing school-wide consistency, teachers have identified a need to review shared understandings of values and behaviour management.

Students are friendly, courteous and articulate. They appreciate opportunities for participation in sports teams and events, education outside the classroom and cultural activities. They are aware of well-established routines and high expectations for classroom and playground behaviour. Student councillors take their leadership roles seriously. There is a settled and compliant tone across the school.

### ***Future Action***

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

## **3. School Specific Priorities**

### ***The Focus of the Review***

Before the review, the board of Wadestown School was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Wadestown School.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus areas for the review:

- the quality of self review.

ERO's findings in these areas are set out below.

## ***The Quality of Self Review***

### **Background**

The 2004 ERO report identified a number of areas for improvement and recommendations for ongoing development relating to literacy teaching and learning. Since that review, managers and teachers have engaged in significant professional development relating to literacy teaching and assessment. The board, therefore, requested that ERO evaluate progress associated with this training. The board was also interested in an investigation of why some students appear to underachieve in writing, when they are achieving well in other subjects.

In addition, the board requested focuses on provisions for year 7 and 8 students and a positive school environment at all year levels. ERO agreed to evaluate these focus areas under the umbrella notion of the quality of self review. In carrying out this investigation, review officers observed writing lessons on both school sites, talked to trustees, managers, teachers and students, and reviewed relevant documentation.

### **Student progress and achievement**

The school uses national assessment tools to determine student achievement in writing. Information collected in 2005 showed that most students were achieving curriculum levels at or above those expected for their age groups. However, information collected and analysed at the beginning of 2006 indicates lower achievement than last year for some year groups. Teachers are seeking to interpret this discrepancy and to address the needs of students requiring extra assistance.

The board also receives information about spelling achievement, which demonstrates similar patterns to the writing results. Teachers are investigating strategies to improve spelling levels for those students who are underachieving in this area.

### **Areas of good performance**

#### ***Self-review processes***

The board and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to monitoring and improving student achievement in writing. The charter provides direction for the development of teaching and learning programmes that will realise the academic and social potential of disconnected learners, improve literacy achievement, and continue to develop children as independent and self-directed learners. It emphasises success for all and improving outcomes for students at risk. These focuses are supported by the results of community consultation.

The annual plan includes a target for improving achievement in written language, which has been identified as an area of underachievement for some students. The board has begun to receive collated and analysed student achievement information about school-wide achievement in writing and spelling. It has a schedule for reviewing policies and curriculum.

Recent consultation with the community, staff and senior students has been comprehensive and useful. Survey responses from parents and senior students have been extensively analysed and summarised. The results provide a basis for continuing to review teaching programmes, including those for literacy, information gathering, and problem solving. Responses indicate that the school's assessment practices should also be the subject of ongoing review.

Members of the senior management team have recently developed a school-wide literacy plan, which gives clear guidance for implementing writing programmes that reflect the national curriculum. This

document contains benchmarked achievement expectations for student in years 2, 4, 6 and 8. As these become more closely aligned with national assessment indicators, they are likely to assist the board in interpreting achievement information in writing, and in identifying strengths and weaknesses when allocating resources. The literacy plan should provide a sound basis for ongoing monitoring of classroom planning, teaching and assessment practices.

Teachers' roll books demonstrate that they have been diligent in maintaining well-ordered and detailed assessment records. They have used national assessment tools, including the assessment tools for teaching and learning (asTTle) and writing exemplars to assess student achievement for school-wide aggregation and analysis. Assessments have been moderated within and across planning teams. "Pupil history" files provide a cumulative record of each student's progress through the school. These are supported by portfolios containing samples of writing collected in each year of attendance at Wadestown School. The planned introduction of a computer-assisted assessment system is likely to streamline record keeping and data analysis while increasing efficiency and manageability for teachers.

Teachers use analysed achievement information to identify students in need of specialised learning assistance. During an annual two-day staff retreat, teachers take time to identify students who are at risk of not achieving. The learning support teacher provides extensive support to students, teachers and staff. Programmes and assessments are regularly monitored in individual files. The board provides generous funding to employ teacher aides and provide extra reading recovery tuition. A number of at-risk students have demonstrated progress as a result of these interventions.

### ***Writing programmes***

Teachers collaboratively develop unit plans for writing within planning teams. This planning is generally consistent with the school's expectations for achievement objectives, learning outcomes and planned learning experiences. In some classes, teachers plan differentiated outcomes for identified groups of students. This planning provides direction for students to be taught according to their individual needs and achievement levels and is likely to ensure appropriate interest, challenge and motivation to write.

The emphasis on developing written language teaching strategies is positively influencing teaching practice, in spite of recent staff turnover. In classes where teachers have thoroughly embraced the principles of recent training, students were observed to be motivated and actively engaged in their writing tasks. Features of this high quality teaching include:

- establishing integrated, interesting and authentic contexts for writing instruction and practice. In a few classes, writing lessons are effectively linked to reading, topic work, art and information gathering;
- sharing learning intentions with individuals and groups to focus their learning;
- developing success criteria to provide a basis for self, peer and teacher assessment;
- providing specific and meaningful oral and, in some cases, written feedback against learning intentions with next learning steps;
- grouping students for planned and focused instruction;
- withdrawing groups for monitoring, discussion and incidental teaching;
- providing an appropriate emphasis on both the deep and surface features of writing;
- modelling writing skills;
- developing students' confidence in using the writing process;
- effectively using information and communication technologies (ICT) as a tool for learning in a few classes;

- conferencing to assist learning and monitor progress;
- providing opportunities for students to share their work with others and receive guided oral feedback from peers; and
- maintaining print-rich learning environments, especially in junior classes.

Teachers have appreciated opportunities to observe lessons in other classrooms. Continuing this practice, along with ongoing professional dialogue and monitoring, is likely to assist in developing high quality teaching in all classes.

Senior managers and teachers recognise the need to sustain the momentum of improved teaching practice initiated by professional development undertaken in literacy and assessment. As a result, staff meetings that continue to focus on literacy have been planned to ensure teachers maintain their knowledge, use and moderation of assessment against the national writing exemplars. The appraisal process requires teachers to have personal development goals associated with literacy teaching and learning.

### ***Provision for students in years 7 and 8***

Trustees and school managers are aware that students in years 7 and 8 have specific and recognised academic and developmental needs. Accordingly, this age group has been the subject of recent consultation with parents and students. A literature review has also been undertaken to guide the direction of future policy, programmes and teaching practice at years 7 and 8. The results of these reviews provide a sound framework for continuing to improve programmes and outcomes for students.

Teachers understand the need for senior students to experience opportunities for student council leadership, education outside the classroom (EOTC), and tuition in foreign languages. A well-taught French lesson was observed during the on-site stage of this review.

### ***Provision of a positive school environment***

Teachers model positive interactions and collaborative working relationships. Minutes from planning team meetings indicate that they employ united approaches to managing student behaviour within their year-level bands. In many classes, teachers develop explicit expectations for values and behaviour that emphasise respect and inclusion.

There is a settled and compliant tone across the school. Students were observed to be working well independently and in groups. Interactions between teachers and students are affirming and respectful. Students are well aware of established routines and high expectations for classroom and playground behaviour. They are able to articulate how they should behave and understand the consequences for choosing not to comply with expectations.

### ***Areas for improvement***

Although reports to the board on student achievement in writing are based on national assessment tools and identify strengths and weaknesses for groups of students within year level cohorts, the board has not set annual targets to improve achievement for identified groups of students who are at risk of not achieving or for students who are gifted and talented. While the board is required to give priority to literacy and numeracy, especially in years 1 to 4, teachers have not, until recently, had national assessment tools to provide annual data in literacy and numeracy to demonstrate how well students have progressed throughout the year. Nor have year-level cohorts been tracked to demonstrate trends and patterns of achievement over time, and more closely monitor progress for groups who are underachieving.

It is not clear how the analysis of self-review information is improving outcomes for students. Although detailed reports on students' writing achievement have been presented to the board along with broad recommendations for addressing deficits, these have not included specific teaching

strategies for addressing identified weaknesses.

While recent professional development in literacy has had a positive impact on teaching practices, it is not clear how the sustainability of improved practice will be monitored and reviewed. There is a need to clearly designate responsibility for ongoing literacy leadership to maintain the momentum of progress. This role should include accountability for continuing to monitor the implementation of effective literacy teaching practices. There is insufficient procedural documentation to guide the induction of new teachers to the school in order to ensure that they can fully embrace the principles and practices of recent professional development initiatives.

Although some teachers demonstrate high quality teaching practices in instructional writing, there is a need to ensure that in all classes there is an integrated approach to literacy teaching that provides challenging, relevant, individual and authentic opportunities for students to develop their writing skills. In some classes, writing planning is not differentiated, and there are no planned groupings to address the range of learning needs within the class. Providing students with meaningful and specific written feedback and next learning steps related to their literacy learning is still an area for development in most classes. In many classes, self and peer assessment are in the beginning stages of development. There is little evidence of opportunities for students to engage in personal goal setting and monitoring to foster independent learning.

Many unit plans do not provide specific planning and success criteria for assessment tasks. It is not clear from teachers' records how the writing exemplars are continuing to inform assessments through the year. There is little evidence of the evaluation of achievement in units of work to identify students' strengths and weaknesses for ongoing planning to address learning needs. It is timely to review the continuing development of shared understandings about:

- best teaching practices within an integrated literacy programme;
- assessment practices that continually improve student achievement and record individual writing achievement against the national curriculum objectives and levels; and
- teaching strategies for gifted and talented students within classroom programmes.

As noted in the 2004 ERO report, the school has not yet developed a programme for teaching information gathering and ICT skills progressively through the school. As the new school literacy plan provides broad expectations for teaching information gathering and critical thinking within writing programmes, it would be timely to review how these expectations should be specifically implemented and monitored progressively through the school.

In the light of recent professional development, there is a need to review the school's processes for reporting to parents. At present neither written reports nor portfolios of students' work indicate achievement against curriculum levels or expected learning outcomes. There is little formal opportunity for parents to engage with teachers and students in formulating and monitoring next steps for learning. During the board's recent consultation process, significant groups of parents and senior students expressed the opinion that they were not receiving sufficiently robust or pertinent information about academic progress and achievement. Ongoing development of reporting processes is likely to be facilitated by the introduction of computer-assisted assessment systems and a planned parent meeting to discuss this issue.

It is timely to review the school's programmes and practices in year 7 and 8 classes, against the research it has gathered for this age group. Such a review should include investigating ways to provide further leadership responsibilities for senior students and explicit expectations and programmes for developing independent learners.

Managers and teachers have not yet documented shared and explicit understandings of school-wide values to consistently influence student attitudes and behaviour. Although there has been specific values teaching in some classes, it is not clear that there is a consistent approach to values teaching and expectations across the school. While student behaviour was observed to be compliant during this review, teachers have identified the need to review their understanding and implementation of the school's behaviour management system.

## **4. Areas of National Interest**

### ***Overview***

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to Government to be used as the basis for long-term and systemic educational improvement. ERO also provides information about the education sector for schools, parents and the community through its national reports.

To do this ERO decides on topics and investigates them for a specific period in all applicable schools nationally.

During the review of Wadestown School ERO investigated and reported on the following areas of national interest. The findings are included in this report so that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

### ***Providing for Students who are Underachieving***

ERO is currently evaluating how well schools are providing for those students in their school who are not achieving as well as they should. ERO's findings for Wadestown School are summarised below.

The school is developing its knowledge of the progress and achievement of its students overall and has reliably identified those students who are not achieving as well as they should. The following responses and programmes have been provided by the school to support those students who are underachieving.

- The deputy principal undertakes the role of learning support teacher. She organises interventions and programmes to address needs identified by teachers, and maintains detailed individual records of students receiving specialised assistance.
- Reading recovery for all students who require this intervention is funded by the board. At present seven students are benefiting from this programme.
- The board employs experienced teacher aides to assist students who require learning support, particularly in junior classes.
- The board ensures that small numbers are maintained in junior classes, while minimising disruption due to transition between school sites.
- The learning support teacher utilises suitable external agencies to assist as required. These include resource teachers: learning and behaviour, a resource teacher: literacy, and speech language therapists.

The school is developing its knowledge of the impact of these programmes and interventions on the progress and achievement of the students involved.

### ***Recommendations***

To improve the achievement of students in the school who are underachieving, ERO recommends that the school continue to develop greater knowledge of the progress and achievement of its students overall and that as part of its self-review programme, the school evaluate the extent to which the programmes and interventions it currently provides for these students are improving their progress and achievement.

The development of a centralised special needs register would strengthen the monitoring of groups of underachievers across the school. The register should include achievement levels at the beginning of the year, records of frequent monitoring to demonstrate ongoing and interim progress, and achievement levels at the end of the year. This would assist the recommended review of programmes and interventions. The proposed computer-assisted assessment system is likely to

facilitate this development.

### ***Quality of Teaching for Year 8 Students: Health and Physical Education***

Health and Physical Education is one of the seven curriculum statements covering the essential learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum. During the on-site stage of this review, ERO observed a physical education lesson for year 8 students, reviewed relevant documentation and talked to students and staff. The year 8 teacher was new to the school during the week of this review.

#### **Areas of good performance**

Teachers plan to provide regular fitness sessions and physical education lessons. Health programmes are integrated into physical education when appropriate. Health is studied as a minor focus in integrated subjects such as social studies. Resources are plentiful and readily available. Suitable outdoor spaces are available and the hall provides a venue for physical activity in inclement weather. Students generally speak positively about their experiences in physical education.

Students are encouraged to improve their physical activity by extra curricular participation in sports teams. Parents display an active interest in students' involvement in a variety of sports codes, and assist by taking responsibility for teams in local competitions. As a result, a large number of students are challenged to extend their interest in sport and regular physical fitness.

#### **Areas for improvement**

While individual teachers, and sometimes groups of teachers, plan to deliver the curriculum as stated in the school's expectations for health and physical education, it is difficult to see that planning offers a progression of learning and a balanced coverage of strands across all curriculum levels. Teachers with responsibility for this curriculum area have identified a need to review the health and physical education policy and implementation plan. The revised documentation should provide guidance for teachers in providing balanced and sequential programmes for all classes over time.

Assessment of student achievement is not used to inform future planning, provide information to parents or to report to the board on the delivery of the curriculum. Establishing guidelines for the collection and analysis of student achievement data is likely to assist in providing next steps for students within programme planning, provide a framework for reporting against national achievement objectives, and assist trustees in considering future achievement targets and resourcing.

### ***Provision for International Students***

#### ***Compliance with the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students and the Provision of English Language Support***

Wadestown School 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students. Wadestown School has a group of eight South Korean students on its roll. The group is selected, brought to New Zealand and enrolled through a South Korean agent, who is also a homestay host for some of these students.

The school complies with all aspects of the Code.

#### **Areas of good performance**

The school complies with all aspects of the Code relating to welfare.

Effective orientation processes, organised by the international student manager, assist students to integrate into the school and their classes. Well-established routines and time with the international

student manager, who also provides teacher-aide support for learning programmes, help them to become familiar with the school environment. The school maintains accurate records of each student's family and contact information. Students' weekly discussions with the international student manager ensure she is aware of any concerns as they arise. The school promotes strong links among the students, their parents, host families and the agent. Attendance and pastoral care needs are carefully monitored. Students are in contact with their Korean families every week. A few parents have travelled to New Zealand and visited the school and host families.

The school meets the requirements of the Code relating to accommodation.

Students are well supported in all aspects of their accommodation by the international student manager, who is also the accommodation coordinator. She carefully selects the residential carers to facilitate a good match between the student and the host family. Where possible, she places two students in a homestay so they are company and support for each other. She is available to discuss any concerns with the homestay family and, if necessary, talks with, and seeks advice from, the agent. If either host families or students express a desire for accommodation changes, these are quickly implemented. Host families are provided with all relevant information. Police vetting procedures are understood and used appropriately.

Students spoken with during the review feel safe at the school and are satisfied with their homestay arrangements. They enjoy the opportunities to be involved in a range of activities, particularly sports, while attending school. They also appreciate trips or other experiences undertaken with their host families.

Students spend time with the agent in New Zealand before they are enrolled at the school. This exposes them to some English language and aspects of the New Zealand way of life. They are integrated into classroom programmes and generally attempt to participate in the full range of activities provided. Some teachers make some adaptations to their programmes to support these students to achieve success. Students' English language development is supported by the part-time teacher aide who works alongside these students in both class and group withdrawal situations.

These students also work regularly with their agent to maintain their Korean language and other aspects of Korean education.

### **Areas for improvement**

Addressing the areas for improvement recorded in section 3 of this report is likely to enhance opportunities for international students to receive more individualised learning programmes.

## **5. Board Assurance on Compliance Areas**

### **Overview**

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Wadestown School 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 legislative 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.

### ***Strategies for the Prevention of Bullying***

ERO expects that each New Zealand school will have acknowledged that bullying behaviour is a risk to be managed.

As part of this review ERO discussed with the board and staff how the school organisation and culture supports the physical and emotional safety of students. In particular ERO asked about the strategies the school has put in place to prevent bullying of all types and what they know about the success of these approaches.

The school described the culture of the school as one in which there are high expectations that students will exercise respect and care for others.

The school states that it has done the following to prevent bullying in the past three years:

- ensured there are clear policy and procedural guidelines for behaviour management;
- consulted parents and students in 2005 concerning the safety of the school environment;
- managed student cell phone usage during the school day;
- exercised a low tolerance of unacceptable behaviour; and
- responded promptly to any concerns.

The school believes these have been successful because consultation has revealed a low level of concern about bullying reflecting a lasting change in students' behaviour since a bullying issue was identified in 2001. In addition, student council members regularly discuss the ongoing emotional safety of the school with the principal and he is thereby assured of a positive and supportive environment.

### **Recommendation**

ERO recommends that the senior management team promote opportunities for staff to share understandings about school values and the behaviour management system in order to maintain consistent practice.

### **Compliance**

During the course of the review ERO identified the following areas of non-compliance.

- While the school has documented suitable procedures for providing advice and guidance to provisionally registered teachers, these have not been consistently implemented or monitored to ensure adequate assistance is provided for beginning teachers.
- The board has not recently consulted the community about the school's programme for teaching health.

In order to address these the board of trustees must:

- 5.1 Ensure that quality management processes are implemented to provide advice and guidance programmes for provisionally registered teachers.

*[S77c State Sector Act 1988]*

5.2 Every two years, adequately consult the school community regarding the health curriculum.

*[S60B Education Act 1989]*

In order to improve current practice, the board of trustees should ensure that:

- Support staff are formally appraised. While senior managers meet informally with support staff, a performance appraisal system is not implemented to provide appropriate guidance, professional development, and quality assurance.
- Gifted and talented students are identified and monitored to ensure that their academic requirements are sufficiently addressed.

## **6. Recommendation**

The board of trustees and ERO have agreed that:

6.1 In order to maintain the momentum of ongoing school improvement, the board and senior managers will include the areas for improvement and recommendations in an action plan with defined delegations and timeframes. The action plan will be incorporated into the board's strategic and annual plans.

## **7. Future Action**

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

*SIGNED*

Lane Mohi  
Area Manager  
**for Chief Review Officer**

2 November 2006

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2 November 2006

## **To the Parents and Community of Wadestown School**

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Wadestown School**.

Wadestown School provides education for students in years 1 to 8 and is situated on two sites in the Wellington suburb of Wadestown. The Main School is built on several levels of a hillside with attractive trees, shrubs and native birds providing a natural environment. The Side School, which caters for students in year 1, is located on a previous school site, and is a few minutes drive from the Main School. The Side School is valued for its rich history and the secure emotional environment teachers create for new entrants. Senior managers are committed to maintaining strong

communication between the two sites so that the school has a unified vision, culture and purpose.

The 2004 ERO report noted the strong sense of partnership between families and the school, and the high expectations of parents for students' learning and progress. It also commended the Board of Trustees for its capable leadership and the high level of skill and expertise brought to the governance role. This review finds that these positive features continue to be evident. The school enjoys active and practical support from its local community. The board, management and staff foster a strong relationship with parents to enhance learning opportunities for students. The board has conducted comprehensive parent surveys regarding a range of school operations including curriculum implementation and assessment. Responses have been collated and well analysed to inform ongoing planning and direction. The board continues to ensure that buildings are well maintained. Since the 2004 review, the staffroom has been renovated and is now an inviting area for staff and visitors.

At the time of the 2004 review, teachers were beginning to engage in professional development to strengthen literacy teaching and learning across the school. Specific areas for improvement from that report continue to be addressed by staff, and the board's recommendations for ongoing development have been diligently implemented and monitored. Professional development in 2004 and 2005 focused on literacy and, along with staff numeracy training, this has been targeted as a continuing emphasis in 2006. Staff changes since the previous review have had implications for sustaining the impact and momentum of literacy professional development. This report, therefore, identifies areas for improvement and includes a recommendation agreed by ERO and the board to address this issue.

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Teachers demonstrate a commitment to improving teaching and learning. They regularly affirm their students and seek to implement practices from professional development to extend the effectiveness of their literacy teaching. High quality literacy teaching is evident in some classes. Features of this teaching include establishing integrated, interesting and authentic contexts for instructional writing along with differentiated planning and assessment to ensure that individual learning needs are being addressed. Teachers in junior classes continue to create literacy rich, stimulating and attractive classrooms to encourage and motivate their students.

Trustees and school managers are aware that students in years 7 and 8 have specific and recognised academic and developmental needs. Accordingly, this age group has been the subject of recent consultation with parents and students. A literature review has also been undertaken to guide the direction of future policy, programmes and teaching practice at years 7 and 8. The results of these reviews provide a sound basis for continuing to improve programmes and outcomes for students.

Many teachers develop explicit expectations for values and behaviour that emphasise respect and inclusion. They employ united approaches to managing student behaviour within their year-level bands. Interactions between teachers and students are positive and respectful. To ensure continuing school-wide consistency, teachers have identified a need to review shared understandings of values and behaviour management.

Students are friendly, courteous and articulate. They appreciate opportunities for participation in sports teams and events, education outside the classroom and cultural activities. They are aware of well-established routines and high expectations for classroom and playground behaviour. Student councillors take their leadership roles seriously. There is a settled and compliant tone across the school.

### ***Future Action***

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

### ***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, <http://www.ero.govt.nz/>.

*SIGNED*

Lane Mohi  
Area Manager  
**for Chief Review Officer**

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## ***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 is based on three review strands.

- **School Specific Priorities** – the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- **Areas of National Interest** – information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements** – assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

### ***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.

### ***Review Recommendations***

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

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[1] Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.