

School Report – Ardgowan School 3704 – Unconfirmed

About the school

Ardgowan School is in Ōamaru and provides education for students in Years 1 to 8. The school's vision of *Whaia te iti Kahurangi | Be the best that you can be* is underpinned by the values of *Whakanuia | Respect, Panekiretanga | Personal Excellence, Hōnore | Integrity, Māia | Confidence, Hapori | Community Involvement* and *Akoranga | Love of Learning*. These values guide learning, relationships and participation within the school community.

The Board appointed a new principal from Term 3 2026.

Ardgowan School: Snapshot

ERO makes judgements on 14 areas. The Snapshot below shows how many of ERO's judgements for this school are *Excelling*, *Doing well*, *Working towards* or *Improvement required*. The judgements are based on the ERO School Improvement Framework and evidence gathered by ERO during the evaluation.

Judgement	Number of areas													
Excelling														
Doing Well														
Working Towards														
Improvement required														
Student health and safety	Meets expectation. Ardgowan School is taking reasonable steps to ensure student health and safety.													

Ardgowan School: Overview

The Overview below shows for each of the 14 areas ERO's judgements on whether this school is Excelling, Doing well, Working towards or Improvement required and why. This provides more information about the judgements in the Snapshot.

School conditions for success

Leadership	Doing well	Leadership is well-placed to drive improvement and raise student outcomes.
Teaching	Doing well	Learners benefit from good teaching practice that supports progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
Curriculum	Doing well	Students have good opportunities to learn across the breadth and depth of the curriculum and to gain skills in literacy and mathematics.
Assessment	Doing well	Assessment information is used effectively to inform teaching and support learner progress and achievement.
Provision for students with additional needs	Doing well	Most learners with additional needs receive targeted support that enables progress and achievement of their learning goals.
School improvement	Doing well	School planning and conditions to support ongoing improvement in the quality of education for learners are well-established.
Governance and the school board	Doing well	Governance practices are well-established and support ongoing improvement and the monitoring of progress against strategic goals.

Outcomes for students

Student achievement	Doing well	Most students experience success and achieve well in core areas.
Student progress	Doing well	Most students make expected progress and are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.
Reading and writing	Doing well	Most students meet or exceed curriculum expectations for their year level in reading; a large majority do so in writing.
Mathematics	Doing well	Most students meet or exceed curriculum expectations for their year level.
Attendance	Doing well	A large majority of students attend school regularly.
Engagement and belonging	Doing well	The school promotes inclusion and wellbeing effectively for all students. Most students participate positively in learning and school life.
Equity	Doing well	Outcomes are broadly equitable; some inequity remains in writing achievement for boys.

Ardgowan School: Full Report

Tēnā koutou e mau manawa rahi ki te kaupapa e aro ake nei, ko te Tamaiti te pūtake o te kaupapa. Mā wai rā e kawē, mā tātou katoa. We acknowledge the collective effort, responsibility, and commitment by all to ensure that the child remains at the heart of the matter.

Doing Well

Achievement

Most learners meet or exceed curriculum expectations for their year levels. Achievement outcomes are generally consistent across year levels, and most learners are well prepared for their next stages of learning.

Progress

Most learners make expected progress to remain on track to meet curriculum expectations. Schoolwide monitoring identifies learners requiring additional support and tracks their progress over time. Current rates of progress contribute to reduced disparities in mathematics; however, writing remains an area where further improvement is needed to achieve equitable outcomes for boys and girls.

Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics and literacy and numeracy

Most learners meet or exceed curriculum expectations in reading and mathematics, and a large majority do so in writing. Achievement has improved over time; writing remains the area of lowest achievement and greatest inequity.

Attendance

A large majority of learners attend school regularly. While rates of regular attendance vary over time, chronic absence has reduced. The school has an Attendance Management Plan that includes clear expectations, tiered intervention strategies, monitoring processes and regular communication with whānau. Although regular attendance remains below the Government target, the school has established systems to identify attendance concerns early and respond in a timely manner.

Engagement and belonging

Students experience inclusive learning environments that promote wellbeing and belonging. They report feeling accepted, connected and well supported by staff. Positive relationships contribute to student confidence and participation in learning. Most students engage well in learning and school life, reflecting a strong sense of belonging to the school community.

Equity

Outcomes are broadly equitable. Māori learners achieve at levels higher than overall school achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement disparities in mathematics have reduced and disparities in reading are small. Writing remains the area of greatest inequity, with boys achieving at lower levels than girls.

Leadership

Leadership is effective in promoting learner progress, achievement and equity. Leaders use achievement and progress information to set strategic priorities, monitor outcomes and identify where improvement is needed. Annual implementation planning identifies priority improvement actions; however, measures of success and evaluation of impact are not consistently explicit. With the recent appointment of a new principal, the school is well placed to strengthen the evaluation of specific improvement actions and their impact on learner outcomes.

Teaching

Effective teaching practice supports positive outcomes for most learners. Teachers provide inclusive, respectful learning environments where learners are actively engaged, and learning time is well used. Teachers use explicit instruction and flexible grouping to respond to learner needs and maintain consistent expectations for learning. Achievement and progress information informs teaching programmes and supports targeted intervention and extension where required.

The implementation of the *Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA)* in the junior school is strengthening foundational reading and writing skills. Teaching programmes maintain a clear focus on reading, writing and mathematics, with structured approaches and targeted interventions supporting learners at risk of not achieving curriculum expectations.

Curriculum

The curriculum is coherent and provides learners with opportunities to learn across the breadth of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Schoolwide planning supports consistency and progression across year levels. Local contexts, histories and environments are integrated into learning programmes and contribute to learner engagement. The curriculum increasingly reflects local Māori contexts through the Ngāi Tahu Ākomanga framework and supports learners to develop their knowledge of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori.

Assessment

Assessment systems are consistently applied across the school. Teachers use a range of assessment tools, including BSLA assessments, *Student Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting Tool (SMART)* and *e-asTTle*, to identify learner needs, monitor achievement and progress, and support overall teacher judgements. Assessment schedules and moderation processes strengthen the consistency and reliability of judgements across the school.

Assessment information is used effectively to identify learning needs, monitor targeted learners and inform teaching decisions. Schoolwide data helps leaders and teachers identify trends, strengths and disparities. Evaluation of actions against measurable outcomes is an area of ongoing development, supporting the school to better determine which strategies have the greatest impact on learner outcomes.

Provision for students with additional needs

Most learners with additional learning needs receive coordinated and responsive support. Individual learning plans identify learning goals and are developed with whānau and external agencies where appropriate. Learners are included in classroom programmes and participate alongside their peers. School systems support identification and provision, with ongoing work to strengthen schoolwide evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions and additional support.

Governance

The Ardgowan School Board provides effective stewardship and maintains a clear focus on learner progress, achievement and wellbeing. Board members use achievement and wellbeing information to inform resourcing decisions and monitor progress towards strategic priorities. The board allocates additional resources to support targeted interventions and learners requiring additional support. Governance systems, including policy review and strategic monitoring processes, are established and support ongoing improvement.

Next steps for improvement

All schools look to continue to improve, even those that are excelling. The table below sets out ERO's recommended next steps.

Improvement priority	Actions within six months	Every six months / annually	Expected outcomes
Strengthen annual implementation planning by identifying measurable outcomes and evaluating the impact of improvement actions on learner progress and achievement.	Leaders establish how progress and impact will be monitored against identified outcomes.	Leaders and the board evaluate progress against the identified outcomes and use their findings to inform future planning.	Improvement actions are clearly linked to measurable outcomes for learners, enabling leaders and the board to make informed decisions about future priorities.
Raise achievement in writing and reduce inequity for boys.	Leaders and teachers analyse writing progress and review the effectiveness of teaching strategies and targeted interventions, particularly for boys.	Leaders, teachers and the board evaluate writing achievement and progress over time and adjust targets, teaching strategies and interventions in response to their findings.	Improved progress and achievement in writing, particularly for boys.
Strengthen the ongoing monitoring and review of provision for students with additional learning needs.	Leaders and teachers regularly review and record the impact of additional learning support on student progress.	Leaders and the board evaluate the effectiveness of schoolwide systems, interventions and resourcing for students with additional learning needs.	Students with additional learning needs make progress towards their learning goals through responsive support.

Improvement priority	Every six months / annually	Expected outcomes
Further improve regular attendance to meet the Government target of 80%.	Leaders, teachers and the board analyse attendance information, evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Management Plan and determine next steps.	Increased and sustained regular attendance.

Regulatory and legislative requirements

This section of the report reviews the school's policies, procedures, documentation, and checks that it meets all regulations, maintains a safe environment, and supports students' wellbeing.

During this review, the Board has attested to meeting regulatory and legislative requirements in the following areas:

Board administration	Yes
Curriculum	Yes
Attendance	Yes
Management of health, safety and welfare	Yes
Personnel management	Yes

Actions for compliance

ERO has identified the following areas of non-compliance during the board assurance process:

- Evacuation schemes must be approved by FENZ if the school has 100 or more students or 10 or more staff.
[sections 75 to 79, Fire and Emergency Act 2017]
- The board must notify FENZ of the result of a trial evacuation.
[section 32, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire Safety, Evacuation Procedures, and Evacuation Schemes) Regulations 2018].

The Ardgowan School Board has since addressed the areas of non-compliance identified.

School improvement

ERO has confidence that Ardgowan School can bring about the improvements outlined in this report. The school demonstrates a deliberate approach to improving attendance, strengthening achievement outcomes and sustaining foundational conditions that support students' success.

The next public report on ERO's website will be within four years.

Me mahi tahi tonu tātou, kia whai oranga a tātou tamariki
Let's continue to work together for the greater good of all children

Sharon Kelly
Director of Schools

Further information about the school

Types of school	Full primary Co-educational
Year levels	Years 1 to 8
School roll	131
Student population <i>Students can identify with more than one ethnicity.</i>	New Zealand European / Pākehā 93%, Māori 13%, Middle Eastern, Latin American or African 6%, Pacific 5%, Asian 2%
Equity Index (EQI)	This school's EQI is 453, which places it in the moderate range. This means a small majority of students at this school face more socio-economic barriers to achievement than average.
Immersion & Bilingual Education	Ardgowan School does not offer the provision of te reo Māori in Māori medium settings.
Last ERO report	Profile Report, March 2023

School information

Education Counts provides further information about the school's student population, student engagement and student achievement, school enrolments and school zones [Education Counts Home](#) | [Education Counts](#).

What does EQI mean?

The Equity Index (EQI) is a number assigned to each school, ranging from 344 to 569. It estimates the extent to which students face socio-economic barriers to education and achievement. The higher the EQI, the more barriers students in the school face.

EQI is **NOT** a measure of school quality or performance. It's about funding and support needs for the school.

About the review

Every New Zealand state and state integrated school is reviewed by ERO at least every four years to assess strengths and areas for improvement. The ERO team visits the school, gathers information by talking to students, parents, staff, and school board members, observing teaching in classrooms, and reviewing school information documents such as assessment data and school planning.

What do we review and report?

ERO reviews and reports on outcomes for students, school conditions that underpin success, and steps for school improvement. This report includes a snapshot, an overview and a full report and our School Reports focus on the following areas:

- **Achievement** and progress including reading, writing and mathematics.
- **Engagement** and belonging.
- **Equity**.
- **Attendance**.
- **Leadership** and school improvement.
- The **curriculum** and **quality of teaching**.
- **Assessment**.
- Provision for students with **additional needs**.
- **Governance** and the school board.
- **Health and safety**.

What do our judgements mean?

Excelling	Excelling means this school demonstrates consistently strong performance. This is the highest judgement.
Doing well	This means the school demonstrates mostly strong and consistent practice. Key conditions for success are in place and there is a focus on improvement.
Working towards	There are gaps in performance; aspects of improvement are evident but there is variability.
Improvement required	There are significant and sustained gaps in school performance and urgent improvement is required.

How do we report percentages?

Improvement required > Working towards > Doing well > Excelling					
Less than a third	Less than half	Small majority	Large majority	Most	Almost all
0 to 33%	34 to 49%	50 to 64%	65 to 79%	80 to 90%	Over 90%