

School Report – Aoraki Mount Cook School - 3442

About the school

Aoraki Mount Cook School is a rural primary school located in the heart of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. The school provides education for students in Years 1 to 8 and primarily serves whānau who live and work in or near the National Park. The school underwent a significant rebuild, with new facilities opening in March 2023.

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, and 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.

Aoraki Mount Cook 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 judgments 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. Aoraki Mount Cook School is taking reasonable steps to ensure student health and safety.													

Aoraki Mount Cook 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.

Student achievement	Excelling	All students experience high levels of success.
Student progress	Excelling	Almost all learners, including those who need extra support, make expected or more than expected progress. Progress is sustained across year levels.
Reading and Writing	Excelling	Almost all students meet or exceed curriculum expectations for their year-level.
Mathematics	Excelling	Almost all students meet or exceed curriculum expectations for their year-level.
Attendance	Doing well	The school is at the target for regular attendance.
Engagement and belonging	Excelling	The school successfully promotes learners' engagement and wellbeing, with embedded practices that support participation, and success for all learners.
Equity	Excelling	Results are equitable for all groups of learners.
Leadership	Excelling	School leadership is strategic and focused on student wellbeing and achievement, using evidence to drive improvement.
Teaching	Excelling	Teaching practices are consistently high quality and contribute to high levels of student success.
Curriculum	Doing well	Students have good opportunities to learn across the breadth and depth of the curriculum.
Assessment	Excelling	Assessment information is used very well to adjust teaching practices to ensure ongoing improvement in teaching and student progress.
Provision for students with additional needs	Excelling	The school has robust systems to support students with additional needs.

School improvement	Excelling	School planning is evidence-based, purposeful and drives ongoing improvement in outcomes and conditions.
Governance and the school board	Excelling	Governance practices are very well established and support ongoing improvement and they monitor progress against strategic goals.

How do we report percentages?

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%

Further information about this school and report can be found on the last page.

Aoraki Mount Cook 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 tātau katoa. We acknowledge the collective effort, responsibility, and commitment by all to ensure that the child remains at the heart of the matter.

Outcomes for students

Achievement

Learners experience consistently high achievement. All students currently at the school meet or exceed year-level expectations in the core learning areas. Achievement remains stable over time, supported by reliable assessment practices and well-designed learning programmes.

Progress

Learners achieve well and make positive progress over time. They make meaningful gains from their starting points, with improvement sustained for those working at and above expected levels.

Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is sustained, with outcomes similarly positive for all groups. Learners are well prepared for the next stage of learning.

Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics

Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently high. All students meet expected levels, and outcomes have improved over time. Teaching programmes in these core learning areas are deliberate and responsive, using assessment information to guide next steps.

Attendance

Attendance meets the Government's target. All students attend regularly, with rates improving and sustained. Clear processes, including monitoring and communication with parents and whānau, promote regular attendance.

An attendance plan sets clear goals, actions and review processes, and is regularly reported to the board to sustain high attendance.

Engagement and belonging

Students experience a strong sense of engagement, wellbeing and belonging. Positive relationships, inclusive practices and clear expectations encourage active participation in learning. Wellbeing is monitored through everyday interactions, clear behaviour expectations and responsive support. Identity, language and culture are affirmed, and partnerships with parents and whānau strengthen wellbeing and involvement.

Equity

Outcomes are equitable across all groups. The school identifies and reduces barriers through individualised support, early identification of learning needs and close relationships with learners and whānau.

School conditions for success

Leadership

The school is led by a teaching principal. Leadership is effective, collaborative and improvement focused. Leadership works strategically to sustain high expectations for learning and wellbeing and uses evidence to guide decision making.

A shared approach to leadership builds collective responsibility for school improvement and learner success. The principal builds staff capability through professional learning and inquiry and supports staff to take on leadership roles. Feedback from parents and whānau informs priorities and strengthens partnerships.

Teaching

Teaching practice is consistently high quality and contributes to strong learner outcomes. Teachers use structured approaches, clear expectations and responsive strategies to meet individual needs. Teaching is personalised, enabling learners to engage at appropriate levels and make sustained progress.

Students are actively involved in setting learning goals and understanding their next steps. Ongoing professional development strengthens teaching practice.

Curriculum

The curriculum provides broad and meaningful experiences that meet learners' needs. The school has a well-developed curriculum that integrates learning areas and reflects community, environment and whānau priorities. Student engagement is enhanced through the inclusion of outdoor and place-based learning opportunities.

Literacy and mathematics are deliberately strengthened across learning through explicit teaching and integrated contexts.

Assessment

Assessment information is used well to support learner progress and achievement. Teachers use a range of reliable and appropriate tools to build a clear picture of achievement and inform teaching. Regular monitoring and analysis enable staff to track progress over time and adjust teaching responsively.

Students are actively involved in assessment through clear learning goals and shared next steps. Professional learning and review processes are strengthening consistency in assessment practice across the school.

Provision for students with additional needs

Systems and practices support students effectively where additional support is required. Individualised approaches, early identification and close partnerships with whānau ensure needs are addressed. Students are included fully in learning and school life.

Governance

Governance is effective and focused on continuous improvement. The Aoraki Mount Cook School Board uses comprehensive reporting to monitor achievement, attendance and strategic priorities. Board members work closely with school leadership, using evidence to track progress and support ongoing improvement. Strong connections with parents and the wider community build shared understanding and enable well-informed decision making, strengthening effective stewardship of the school.

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	Action within six months	Every six months / annually	Expected outcomes
Fully embed and evaluate the Aoraki Mount Cook School <i>Attendance Management Plan</i> to maximise regular student attendance and support engagement across all demographics.	The principal reviews current attendance tracking data against the newly implemented <i>Attendance Management Plan</i> milestones and identifies specific baseline barriers to regular attendance for targeted student groups.	The principal reports attendance data to the board at each meeting, reviewing the effectiveness of communication strategies and tiered interventions with whānau.	Sustained regular attendance aligned with national attendance targets, ensuring early intervention protocols are consistently applied and community partnerships reinforce a strong culture of school attendance.
Refine the design of the English and mathematics curriculum to align with the refreshed <i>New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)</i> .	The principal reviews and updates literacy and mathematics programmes to ensure alignment with the NZC.	Staff review curriculum alignment and its impact on student progress and achievement, refining literacy and mathematics programmes as needed.	Well embedded structured literacy and mathematics practices aligned to the NZC that enhance learner progress.
Deepen the integration of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori by working with Kōia te Mātauraka to enrich teaching and learning programmes.	The principal engages with Kōia te Mātauraka to set up regular meetings, seeking guidance on cultural priorities, local context, and appropriate approaches.	Staff embed te reo Māori and tikanga Māori meaningfully across learning areas and review the impact on student engagement and progress.	Learners confidently and meaningfully use te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, demonstrating increased engagement and a strong sense of identity.

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

School Improvement

ERO has confidence that Aoraki Mount Cook School can bring about the improvements outlined in this report. The school demonstrates a comprehensive and deliberate approach to improving student attendance, wellbeing and achievement outcomes and foundational school conditions that support students' success.

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

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



Sharon Kelly
Director of Schools

10 August 2026

Further information about the school

Type of school	Full primary school Co-educational
Year levels	Years 1 to 8
School roll	5
Student population	New Zealand European/Pākehā 60%, Pacific 20%, Asian 20%
Equity Index (EQI)	This school's EQI is 411 which places it in the low range. This means less than a third of students at this school face socioeconomic barriers to achievement than average.
Immersion & Bilingual Education	Aoraki Mount Cook 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 educationcounts.govt.nz/home.

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 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.