EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

School Report – Solway School 2991

About the school

Solway School located near Masterton caters for students in Years 1 to 6. The school's mission, *together we will inspire a love of learning,* acknowledges the aspirations and strong well-established partnerships with whānau and the wider community. The school's values of *Pono: honesty, integrity and inclusiveness, Manaakitanga: kindness, respect and responsibility* and *Manawanui: resilience, tolerance and diversity,* shape and guide expectations for students, staff and the wider community.

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.
Workings 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.

Solway 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.** Solway School is taking reasonable steps to ensure student health and safety.

Solway 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	**Doing well**	Overall achievement is generally strong with the majority of learners achieving at expected levels.
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 learners meet or exceed expected levels in reading, and a large majority do so in writing.
Mathematics	**Doing well**	A large majority of learners are meet or exceed expected levels in mathematics.
Attendance	**Working towards**	Regular attendance has improved over time and is approaching the target.
Engagement and belonging	**Doing well**	The school promotes inclusion and wellbeing effectively for all learners.
Equity	**Working towards**	Achievement gaps persist, particularly for in boys' writing. Reading and mathematics outcomes are becoming more equitable between Māori and New Zealand European/Pākehā learners.
Leadership	**Doing well**	Leadership supports improvement and contributes to raising the quality of teaching and learning.
Teaching	**Doing well**	Teaching is effective, consistent and supports the engagement and progress of learners.
Curriculum	**Doing well**	Learners experience a broad and responsive curriculum that strongly supports progress in literacy and mathematics.
Assessment	**Doing well**	Assessment practices are consistent and support teaching and learning across the school.

Provision for students with additional needs	**Doing well**	The school has well-established systems to identify and support learners with additional needs to enable them to progress in their learning goals and experience success.
School improvement	**Working towards**	Leaders are beginning to use data to inform planning, but further work is required to evaluate, align and strategically embed these practices.
Governance and the school board	**Working towards**	Governance practices are emerging, but not yet consistently applied across school operations.

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.

Solway 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 kawe, 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

Achievement at Solway School is generally strong; most learners achieve at expected levels and make expected progress. Most learners meet or exceed expectations in reading, a large majority in writing, and a large majority in mathematics. Achievement is becoming more equitable between Māori and New Zealand European/Pākehā learners in reading and mathematics, while boys' writing remains an area for improvement.

Progress

Achievement data shows clear progress over time in reading and fewer learners needing intensive support. Gains are stronger in the middle and senior school in reading. Teachers monitor progress regularly using Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), a set of short, standardised assessments used to measure the foundational skills needed for ongoing reading success and use this information to identify targeted support where it is needed early.

Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics

Most learners meet or exceed curriculum expectations for their year levels in reading, and a large majority do so in writing and mathematics. Over time, reading has improved and writing achievement has remained stable. Achievement in mathematics has been more variable since the previous ERO review.

Attendance

A large majority of students attend school regularly. Attendance has improved and chronic absence has reduced. The school's Attendance Management Plan includes the goal to reach Government targets by the end of 2026 through early identification, whānau partnership, daily monitoring, prompt follow-up, attendance support plans, and external agency referrals where needed. The school board reviews attendance trends and impact of interventions to guide next steps.

Engagement and belonging

Learners experience a strong sense of belonging and connection with peers and teachers. A wide range of learning, cultural, sporting and leadership opportunities supports engagement and participation. The school systematically monitors wellbeing, engagement and attendance, using this information to identify needs and respond appropriately.

Parents and whānau report high levels of trust in the school and value its inclusive, caring culture and effective communication. Māori whānau value the school's commitment to manaakitanga, positive relationships, kapa haka and te reo Māori, while also identifying opportunities to strengthen localised cultural learning. Student feedback is actively gathered and informs ongoing improvement.

Equity

Persistent inequities remain for Māori learners in reading and mathematics compared with New Zealand European/Pākehā learners. Girls continue to achieve at higher levels than boys in writing, with this disparity showing little improvement over time.

School conditions for success

Leadership

Leadership focuses on improving outcomes for learners. Leaders use achievement, attendance, and wellbeing information to guide planning, staffing, and resourcing. Leaders are developing systems for monitoring and tracking achievement. Parents and whānau report high trust in school leadership. Leaders communicate regularly with the board through principal reports and use community feedback to inform the school's direction. A next step is to strengthen evaluative practices so leaders can show the impact of interventions and initiatives on learner outcomes.

Teaching

Teaching is purposeful, well organised and relationship focused. Learners experience calm, settled classrooms with clear routines that support high levels of engagement. Teachers use explicit instruction, modelling, questioning and differentiated tasks to support progress in literacy and mathematics. They use assessment information to identify learners below expectation, adapt programmes and monitor progress over time.

Professional learning is aligned to school priorities, including structured literacy, the curriculum refresh and new assessment tools. Strengthening the consistency of highly effective practice across classrooms is an appropriate next step.

Curriculum

The curriculum provides a broad range of learning opportunities, including literacy, mathematics, sport, trips, kapa haka and te reo Māori. Teaching and learning programmes are increasingly aligned with the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum and Solway's local context and values. Literacy and mathematics are key priorities, supported through structured literacy, including Better Start Literacy Approaches (BSLA), phonics grouping, targeted mathematics programmes, Student Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting Tool (SMART) and planned assessment check points.

Teachers adapt programmes and use achievement information to identify learners needing support or extension. Community consultation strongly endorses the school's focus on literacy, numeracy, culturally responsive learning environments, and a safe, inclusive culture.

Assessment

Teachers use a range of assessments including achievement data, teacher knowledge, SMART snapshots, and learner registers to identify and respond to the learning needs of students. Support is planned through a five-tier response, including classroom adaptations, teacher aide support, school-based interventions, targeted literacy support, oral and English language learning, and external agency support where needed.

Provision for students with additional needs

Learners with additional needs are well supported and included through planned, tiered provision. ORS learners are supported in mainstream classes. English speakers of other languages receive targeted support, as to learners with specific learning needs. Teachers, specialists, and leaders monitor and review progress and provision regularly. Parents are kept informed through reports, conferences, and HERO communication, and whānau are involved in support planning and external pathways where needed.

Governance

Governance practices are developing. The board has a strategic and annual plan focused on achievement, wellbeing and sustainable school improvement. Board members receive principal reports, achievement, attendance, and wellbeing information to inform decision making, resourcing and planning. Further work is needed to strengthen how the board uses evidence to systematically monitor progress, evaluate the impact of actions, and support sustained improvement in learner outcomes.

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 every six months	Action annually	Expected outcomes
Improve equity in achievement for groups of learners through scrutiny of data and targeted, explicit teaching.	Leaders report to the board on the impact of targeted teacher practices on accelerating all learners' progress in literacy and numeracy.	Leaders and teachers analyse and report on the impact of targeted teacher practices on schoolwide achievement in literacy and mathematics to set strategic and improvement targets.	Reduced achievement gaps between groups of learners through increased scrutiny of achievement information and targeted, explicit teaching.
Leaders use a range of quality evidence to set a small number of targeted and coherent improvement goals, including the accelerated progress for those learners at risk of underachievement.	Leaders monitor, evaluate and report to the board on progress made to achieve strategic learning targets. Adjust these if necessary.	The board and leaders use a range of high-quality evidence to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to improve learner outcomes and wellbeing.	High-quality evidence informed planning, review and evaluation leading to increased rates of success for all learners.

Improve and sustain high rates of attendance	Board and leaders review the impact of attendance planning in improving attendance. If needed make changes to better target these strategies.	Leaders, teachers and the board analyse and report on the impact of attendance initiatives, annual attendance trends and identify next steps for improvement.	Increased and sustained high levels of 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 regularly and legislative requirements in the following areas:

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

Action for compliance ERO and the board have identified the following area of non-compliance during the board assurance process:

- strengthen risk assessment practices for education outside the classroom (EOTC)
  [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015]

The Solway School Board has since addressed the area of non-compliance identified.

School Improvement

ERO has confidence that Solway School can bring about the improvements outlined in this report. The school demonstrates a comprehensive and deliberate approach to increasing student attendance, improving achievement outcomes and school conditions that support student success.

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

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



Sharon Kelly
Director of Schools

31 August 2026

Further information about the school

Type of schools	Contributing school Co-educational
Year levels	Years 1 to 6
School roll	240
Student population	European/ Pākehā 60%, Māori 36%, Other ethnic groups 4%
Equity Index (EQI)	This school's EQI is 463 which places it in the moderate range. This means a small majority of students at this school face more socioeconomic barriers to achievement than average.
Immersion & Bilingual Education	Solway 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 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.