

# Managing National Assessment Report

## Dilworth School

June 2019

## What this report is about

This report summarises NZQA's review of how effectively Dilworth School:

- has addressed issues identified through NZQA's Managing National Assessment review and through the school's own internal review
- manages assessment practice for national qualifications
- manages internal and external moderation
- makes use of and manages assessment-related data
- maintains the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicates them to staff, students and families.

The summary section evaluates the school's overall effectiveness and provides a broad overview of the review's key findings for all readers. The remaining sections provide detail of these findings for school managers.

## Why we review how schools are managing national assessment

The purpose of a Managing National Assessment review is:

- to confirm, in combination with the most recent Education Review Office report, that schools are meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011* (CAAS) and its *Guidelines* (CAAS Guidelines) in order to maintain their consent to assess; and
- to help schools achieve valid, fair, accurate and consistent internal assessment according to the requirements of the *Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019* (Assessment Rules).

## What are possible outcomes

Outcomes may include NZQA:

- requiring action from the school where an issue is identified that significantly impacts on the school meeting the requirements of their *Consent to Assess*
- agreeing action with the school where an issue has been identified that could become significant if not addressed
- making suggestions for the school to consider to enhance good assessment practice.

## What this review includes

The review has three components:

- The annual external moderation of the school's internal assessment.
- A check on specific aspects of assessment systems on an annual basis.
- A check on the school's assessment systems at least once every four years.

## How we conducted this review

The review includes examination of documentation from a range of sources and interviewing key stakeholders.

Prior to the visit the school provided the following documents:

- information on their actions and self-review since the last Managing National Assessment report
- *Dilworth Assessment Quality Assurance Systems Manual*
- *Dilworth Staff Guidelines 2019* (Staff Handbook)
- *Dilworth NCEA Handbook for Students*
- *Report on the Performance of Dilworth Boys in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement 2018*
- a sample of course outlines for Years 11, 12 and 13.

The School Relationship Manager met with:

- the Principal's Nominee
- Deputy Principal - Curriculum
- Heads of Faculty/Department for:
  - Commerce
  - English
  - Performing Arts
  - Physical Education
  - Social Sciences
- Teacher in Charge of:
  - Media Studies
- three students.

There was a report-back session with the Headmaster, Head of Campus, Deputy Headmaster - Curriculum and Principal's Nominee at the end of the review visit to highlight good practice and areas for improvement, with suggested strategies, next steps and to agree on any action required.

# SUMMARY

## Dilworth School

20 June 2019

### Consent to assess confirmed

This review found that the school is meeting the requirements of the *Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards Rules 2011*. No significant issues with the school's management of national assessment were found. The school's own review mechanisms allow them to identify and respond to most issues. Therefore, it is anticipated that the next Managing National Assessment review will be conducted within three years.

### What the school is doing well

Dilworth School expects consistent teacher practices so that student achievement is the result of credible assessment. Notwithstanding their consistently high rate of attainment of qualifications, to support the school's aim to help students to identify and realise their qualifications goals and thus transform their lives, the school has continued to focus self-review on improving student achievement.

Self-review is underpinned by the effective use of data to identify patterns, and to set and measure achievement of school goals. Building teacher capacity and confidence to lead and manage assessment has been an important review focus for the last two years, resulting in middle management having greater ownership of assessment policy and process. Teachers value the experienced Principal's Nominee for her leadership and support of assessment.

Senior management responds promptly and effectively to address issues identified in external feedback. Responses include their development of a robust system to monitor internal moderation and encouragement of purposeful selection of student work to verify teacher judgements, leading to robust quality assurance processes that are consistently followed. The increased confidence of teachers in their understanding and application of internal moderation is evident from the improvement in external moderation outcomes.

The school credits their special character as a significant factor in supporting the strong achievement of all students, and Māori and Pacific students in particular. This special character sees the school provide all students with access to digital tools for learning and assessment, and additional academic support outside of school hours for students needing support. Students value that teachers are responsive when they seek help and adapt to their needs.

Data practices ensure that entries and results provided to NZQA are accurate and timely. The school has strengthened their tracking and support of student achievement along with improved reporting to students and parents, which in turn has contributed to their improving attainment.

**Areas for improvement**

There are no agreed action items.

Kay Wilson  
Manager  
School Quality Assurance and Liaison

28 August 2019

**NZQA**

**0800 697 296**

**[www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)**

# FINDINGS OF THIS REVIEW

## How effectively has the school responded to external and internal review?

### External review

*Evidence for external review actions having been appropriately and effectively addressed. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iv, 3iv-3v)*

**Action Items from 14 April and 6 May 2016 Managing National Assessment Report** The school acted promptly to address a significant issue and ensure that senior management adequately monitors internal moderation. Evidence of these actions was noted during a follow-up visit on the 17 May 2017, and this year's review can confirm that the issue is fully resolved. Details of the actions the school took are noted in the Moderation sections of this report.

In 2016 the school also agreed to clarify the selection of work for grade verification and ensure work for external moderation was selected in line with NZQA requirements. These have both been actioned.

The Principal's Nominee noted that the processes the school developed in response to the required and agreed actions has given greater visibility of overall assessment practice and provides an evidence basis on which to identify areas of good practice or need.

**Response to external moderation outcomes** The school effectively manages any issues with assessment quality identified by external moderators. The Principal's Nominee follows up on every moderation report with the Head of Faculty or Teacher in Charge. Where concerns are identified she works alongside subject leaders until she is confident that these are resolved. Examples of actions taken include teachers partnering with subject experts in other schools, having all assessed work checked by a third pair of eyes, attending Best Practice Workshops or linking to external subject matter experts .

The actions taken to strengthen internal moderation practices and monitoring have contributed to the school's improved external moderation outcomes.

**Response to data issues** In 2017, the verification process for externally assessed Visual Arts identified issues with teacher judgments for one standard. Investigation by the Principal's Nominee identified the reason. The Head of Department sought outside assistance to ensure results were credible, and in 2018 the teachers concerned reviewed their portfolio marking with the Principal's Nominee before provisional grades were reported to NZQA. This response resolved the issue.

### Internal review

*Evidence for the school using its self-review and evaluation processes to identify areas for on-going improvement in assessment practice and procedures, which are then actioned. (CAAS Guidelines 3iv)*

The school's internal review focus is on ensuring that policies and processes effectively guide credible assessment practices, promote high student achievement and enable them to be good and useful citizens. Their aim is to provide excellent, all-round, fully funded, modern, boarding school education in a Christian environment.

Senior managers credit their unique context as contributing to their consistently strong achievement in qualifications.

An evidence-based approach is used to both identify areas for review and evaluate the effectiveness of changes made. Several areas of assessment practice have been reviewed since the last Managing National Assessment visit, two of which are described below to illustrate this approach. The school expects their emphasis on review to further increase, given their aim to continue to raise student achievement and plan for the school's future.

**Faculty structure introduced to build capacity** In 2017, a review of middle management led to the introduction of a faculty structure with the aim of ensuring consistent, credible assessment practice across all parts of the school. Clarifying the responsibilities of Heads of Faculty and providing them with professional development has led to them feeling more confident, better informed and taking a more collaborative approach to assessment and learning. Head of Faculty meetings occur more frequently and include review of policy and practices. All minutes are viewed by the new Principal. The Principal's Nominee attends to provide advice on assessment for qualifications and reflect on any issues identified or matters raised. Teachers and students value the Principal's Nominee for her experienced leadership and support of assessment practice.

Strengthened middle management puts the school in a good position to ensure their academic success is underpinned by quality assessment practices. For example, in response to student and teacher inquiries, Heads of Faculty reviewed the resubmission and further assessment processes and then worked with teachers in their faculty to build understanding and consistent practice. This review visit found teachers have a consistent approach to both processes.

**Better tracking improves student achievement** Use of data, including tracking and reporting on student progress, has been strengthened to support the school's goal that students be given every opportunity to be successful. Following review of achievement in 2017, several systems were refined, and others introduced, to ensure that the school was able to confidently identify the progress of every student and provide appropriate interventions where needed. The overall increase in the school's achievement data is evidence of the success of the improvements made.

#### **No action required**

No issues with the school's response to NZQA external reviews and its self-review of assessment systems and practice were identified during this review.

## How effectively does the school's assessment practice meet the needs of its students?

*Evidence for assessment practice meeting student needs. (CAAS Guidelines 2.5v-vii, 2.6i & ii and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019 5.5)*

### **Dilworth School has effective processes and procedures for meeting the assessment needs of their students by:**

- providing appropriate courses tailored to their aspirations and goals, including individualised programmes
- having weekly opportunities for boys to catch up on work for assessment on request or because they are identified as needing support, supervised by senior managers
- offering individual tuition in *prep time* to boys who want help to develop or extend their understanding in a subject
- teachers adapting programmes and providing support when students seek help
- giving every student a digital device so they can easily access resources and provide evidence of achievement
- assisting their examination centre manager to provide a quality external assessment experience
- the timely return of marked work
- the increased use of digital tools, which broadens the range of evidence that boys can provide and helps teachers track their response to formative feedback
- using school evidence to apply for special assessment conditions.

### **Dilworth School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- ensuring that student work is authentic by teaching students how to reference, checking that there are no anomalies in the digital history of a student's evidence file, the use of *Turnitin* to identify plagiarism, and weekly checkpoints when gathering evidence over time
- managing missed and late assessment by providing students with an assessment calendar to help their planning, supporting them to meet deadlines or providing extensions where appropriate
- providing resubmission where a student has made a minor error that they can discover and correct
- offering a further assessment opportunity where a resubmission is not possible because the evidence requires a practical activity to be repeated
- ensuring evidence provided for derived grades is authentic, subject specific and quality assured
- reporting *Not Achieved* when a student presents no evidence for an assessment despite having been given the opportunity
- meeting the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1993*.



**Year 13 Māori and Pacific students enjoy success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects** Achievement data shows that Māori and Pacific students in Year 13 at Dilworth School are often as, or more, successful than students from all other ethnicities in one STEM subject. The school attributes this outcome to several factors. These include:

- that the school's special character, having small class sizes and students boarding 7 days a week for the whole term, provides an environment that breeds success
- their policy of having students aim for university entrance using traditional courses, which sets high expectations, complemented by the school's processes for tracking student progress and providing support
- providing students with opportunities to see what success looks like, using Old Boys as tutors and as guest speakers in assemblies.

The school's detailed analysis of Māori and Pacific student achievement means that senior management and the Board of Trustees are deliberately monitoring whether their expectations are being met.

**No action required**

No issues with the school's management of assessment for national qualifications were identified during this review.

## How effectively does the school's internal and external moderation assure assessment quality?

*Evidence for internal and external moderation ensuring assessment quality. (CAAS Guidelines 2.6iii & vi, and Assessment (including Examination) Rules for Schools with Consent to Assess 2019 6.4b)*

### **Dilworth School has effective processes and procedures for managing internal moderation by:**

- ensuring all assessment materials are critiqued prior to use
- using subject specialists to verify a purposefully selected sample of student work including teachers from other schools where needed
- requiring that evidence of all internal moderation is submitted in a standardised format in a folder for the Principal's Nominee to check
- requiring teachers to keep annotated moderated work as benchmarks to help with assessing the standard from year to year
- requiring that results be submitted to NZQA only after internal moderation has been completed.

### **Dilworth School has effective processes and procedures for managing external moderation by:**

- selecting samples of student work to NZQA requirements
- ensuring samples of student work are available for submission by being adequately stored
- encouraging teachers to submit their moderation evidence digitally using NZQA's External Moderation Application.

**Improved monitoring strengthens quality assurance** An improved monitoring process has given senior managers increased visibility of internal moderation and feedback on the strength of teacher understanding of assessment. They use a standardised process that also helps teachers to understand and meet internal moderation expectations. A folder contains evidence of the internal moderation process, along with key information about each assessment. For every standard assessed the folder contents are reviewed by the Principal's Nominee before results can be submitted to NZQA.

**Strategic selection promoted** The school is encouraging teachers to select student work for grade verification strategically and reduce oversampling. It is reinforcing that the size of the sample verified should be determined by factors such as assessor experience, feedback from external moderation, the availability of good quality grade boundary exemplars, and the number of students assessed. While the sample size in some faculties exceeds the number sufficient to assure assessment quality, others have clarified their verification expectations and are using this strategic approach.

### **No action required**

No issues with the school's internal and external moderation were identified during this review.

## **How effectively does the school manage and make use of assessment-related data?**

*Evidence for data management and use supporting student achievement outcomes.  
(CAAS Guidelines 2.6v, 2.7i-iii)*

### **Dilworth School effectively uses assessment-related data to support achievement outcomes for students by:**

- fortnightly tracking by deans of student progress towards their qualifications' goals
- tracking and monitoring standards attempted, standards achieved and the grade level, and using this data to identify the need for catch-up support or a modified programme
- carrying out an analysis of student achievement every term to confirm that interventions for those students doing very well or needing additional support are effective
- providing feedback on achievement to teachers and whānau each term
- including ethnicity and decile comparisons in data analysis by faculties when reviewing programmes and outcomes
- Heads of Faculty meeting annually with the Head of Campus and Deputy Headmaster - Curriculum to review and reflect on achievement information
- providing the Board of Trustees with comprehensive and strategic annual reporting on student achievement patterns with appropriate comparisons, to support their understanding and decision making.

### **Dilworth School reports accurate achievement data by:**

- reporting results to NZQA after students sign their agreement of the grade
- submitting regular data files to ensure timely reporting of results and addressing any errors or warnings
- checking that all internal entries have a result reported
- checking processes, which ensure minimal late entries for external examinations.

### **No action required**

No issues with the school's management and use of assessment-related data were identified during this review.

## **How effectively does the school's communication inform staff, and students and their families about assessment?**

*Evidence for school communication promoting understanding of assessment. (CAAS Guidelines 2.4i(f), 2.4v, 2.6vii, 2.7ii(b))*

### **Dilworth School has effective processes and procedures for:**

- students to track their achievement progress by using their course outlines to document their progress
- helping students to be organised by providing them with a 'live' shared digital assessment calendar
- keeping students at risk of not achieving on track, by having the dates of all their internal assessments on a personal calendar on their dormitory noticeboard
- annual review of assessment documentation for teachers and students, to ensure they are fit for purpose and current
- supporting teachers new to the school.

### **Dilworth School assists common understanding of assessment practice by:**

- reinforcing with staff their responsibilities and understanding of key assessment processes through regular communications and at staff meetings
- providing a climate where teachers and students are comfortable with asking questions about assessment and achievement
- checking that teachers and students are following processes
- ensuring students have access to assessment policies and procedures in a handbook and on the school's intranet
- providing a link to the Understanding NCEA video in the first newsletter to parents
- ensuring that students understand what they need to achieve in order to gain a qualification.

### **No action required**

No issues with the way in which the school maintained the currency of assessment policy and procedures, and communicated them to staff, students and families were identified during this review.