



# New Operating Model

# Your Go-To-Guide

## THE EDUCATION REVIEW OFFICE

The Education Review Office (ERO) is the New Zealand government department that reviews and reports on the performance of early learning services, kura and schools.

ERO's reports are accessed by parents, teachers, early childhood education managers, school principals and trustees, and by government policy makers.

ERO focuses on equitable and excellent outcomes for all learners and our approach is driven by our whakataukī *Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa | The Child – the Heart of the Matter.*

We believe that quality education is a right for every New Zealand child and young person.



## How we are changing

**ERO maintains a regular review programme to evaluate and report on the education and care of young people in schools.**

Under our new Operating Model, ERO will shift from event-based external reviews to supporting each school in a process of continuous improvement.

This more differentiated approach will use a developmental evaluation that reflects individual schools' context, culture and needs. It aims to strengthen the capability of all schools through embedding a continuous improvement approach, strengthening schools' own engagement with and accountability to whānau.

ERO will become an evaluation partner alongside each school, to support every school to be a great school and every child a success.

What doesn't change is our commitment to putting the child at the heart of everything we do.



## The new Operating Model

**ERO is shifting to a more developmental approach to evaluation, supporting each school's improvement over time.**

An ERO evaluation partner will work alongside each school. The evaluation partner will build a professional relationship with each school over time.

ERO's evaluation role will connect with each school's strategic planning and reporting cycle as part of an ongoing improvement journey. ERO is supporting schools to build and sustain high-quality evaluation as part of their planning for improvement focus.

Consideration of a school within its wider network and community is woven throughout the new Operating Model, which will also identify an opportunity to undertake evaluations at a community level.



## Our test and learn approach

**Starting in Term 4, we have been piloting our new model with 75 schools from across New Zealand.**

We are including schools of varying sizes and types, to achieve a cross-section of the New Zealand school system. This is allowing us to learn as we go and gain real-time feedback from schools and our evaluators. The detail will be key, and we will use our collective insights to get this right.

ERO's approach to the development of the model is iterative – if issues arise, adjustments can be made along the way for the implementation phase. Key sector stakeholder groups will be working with us to provide feedback loops.



## Engaging with your school

**Our approach is to build trust and confidence in the new Operating Model and in ERO by engaging the sector in working out how best to make the model work in practice.**

Your school will understand:

- The advantages the new model will deliver
- The main features, and how they differ from what ERO has done previously

We will work with your school to refine and operationalise the new model, so that it can be introduced with the least disruption.



## Your new evaluation partner

An ERO “Evaluation Partner” will be assigned to work with a school’s Board, Principal and Leadership Team.

Evaluators will have an ongoing relationship and work with a school over time.

The evaluation process will be collaborative and respond to the school context.

At the completion of an evaluation for improvement phase, your school and ERO will work together to report and plan key actions and next steps in your school’s improvement journey.



## What we are aiming for

- **A collaborative approach**  
We will work with each school to strengthen its systems, plans and practices through evaluation.
- **A tailored approach**  
Understanding each school’s individual contexts, culture, strengths and needs.
- **A flexible approach**  
We will work with each school to ensure the way the model works is practical and can be refined and improved over time.
- **A targeted approach** to allow ERO to direct more resource into working with the schools that will benefit most and to focus more on system evaluation and improvement.
- **An evidence-informed approach** that focuses on the things that we know from research and practice make the biggest difference, and that ensure schools are better supported to monitor and assess the impacts.



## What we have heard

ERO staff continue to work hard around the country to engage with the sector on our new model, to listen and to act on the feedback received.

We’re continuing to develop and evolve our model based on that feedback and this will continue throughout the piloting phase.

We are hopeful that the sector sees the opportunity, value and the potential that the new model will deliver.

- Some comments from those we have engaged with include:

*“A promising start and a good concept. Finally, I will be able to tell my school’s story in full.”*

*“Collaboration, differentiation and linking everything to our strategic goals is pure genius.”*

*“New approach to evaluation and building relationships over time and school-led will prove beneficial in improving outcomes.”*

*“Really like the idea of having a reviewer to work with over time.”*

*“A positive move.”*



## Our commitment to your school

In partnership with your school, ERO is working to support improvement in your school and in the system as a whole.

We want to ensure that the intent and main features of the new operating model are widely understood.

We’d like to earn broad support for the new model and an enthusiasm for its implementation.

We’re keen to understand sticking points or concerns so they can be addressed early and efficiently.

We’ve ensured that key sector stakeholder groups are working with us to provide feedback loops to ensure successful implementation.



## **We are listening**

**Schools have told us that our previous approach hasn't worked well: we have heard, listened, and have developed the new operating model as a result.**

We are moving from a 'one-size-fits-all' approach with reviews that are a point in time to an approach based on your school's individual needs.

This approach is built on a relationship focused on helping your school make improvements in the areas that deliver the greatest improvements to learner success.

We are beginning in the same spirit of co-operation that underpins the new model: by working with schools to refine the model and develop the best ways of implementing it through a prototype process.



## **Our commitment to equity and excellence**

**ERO is committed to supporting improved outcomes and achieving equity for all learners, particularly Māori and priority learners. The principles that underpin the new model give priority to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi through a focus on partnerships to achieve desired outcomes.**

The model has a focus on understanding the cultural context of each school in order to best serve its needs. By building differentiation into the model, we have given ourselves the flexibility to work with the wider community where it is desired and appropriate.

We're committed to continuing to work with the sector. This will require goodwill and professionalism from all.

## **Thank you for your support**

At ERO, we know what great schools do – and we will support your school to be a great school.

We hope that you see the opportunity, value and the potential that ERO's new operating model will deliver.

We look forward to partnering with you on your improvement journey.

**Every school a great school,  
every child a success**

**Kia angitū ia tamaiti, kia angitū ia kura**