

Statutory Interventions Scoping Report

Key Intervention Details

Statutory Intervention: Limited Statutory Manager appointed under section 180 of the Education and Training Act 2020

Board: Hokitika Primary School Board

Intervention Effective From: 12 June 2023

Name of Limited Statutory Manager: Gabrielle Wall

Note to Statutory Providers: All information produced in this document (and any other document relating to this intervention including emails) may be accessible by the public under the Official Information Act 1982. Personal information about individual employees at the kura/school may also be accessible under the Privacy Act 1993. You may seek advice from New Zealand School Trustees Association [Advisory and Support Centre](#)¹ and/or look at the [Ombudsmen Guidelines](#)² to understand what can be withheld.

Situation Background

Hokitika Primary School is currently facing several issues relation to the effective operation of the school. These issues include the effectiveness of operations and their sustainable implementation across the school, a breakdown in effective communication between the board, senior leadership and school staff, and corresponding concerns and complaints raised against the Board in their capacity as the employer of school staff. There are also concerns around human resource management and ensuring that the policies, procedures, and documentation in place at Hokitika Primary School are effective, robust, and fit for purpose.

The appointment of a Limited Statutory Manager with responsibilities for all functions, powers and duties of the board as an employer and advising the board about communications and policies and procedures will support the school to be governed effectively to the benefit of the school's students and wider community. Providing support and advice to the Board of Hokitika Primary School will support them to consistently and effectively implement robust, fit for purpose policies, procedures, and systems to support the effective and sustainable governance of the school over time.

The Evidence for this Scoping

In compiling this report, I have been informed by discussions with the following stakeholders:

- Principal

¹ NZSTA Advisory and Support Centre: For governance advice contact 0800 782 435 (option 1) and for employment advice contact 0800 782 435 (option 2).

² Ombudsmen Guidelines: <http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources-and-publications/guides> .

- Current Board members
- Current staff members (teaching and support)
- Past staff members (teaching and support)
- Whānau
- Office Manager

I have also reviewed the following documents:

- ERO progress and outcomes reports
- Board governance documents
- SchoolDocs policies and procedures
- Hokitika Primary School Strategic Plan
- Hokitika Primary School Annual Reports (draft)
- Hokitika Primary School Charter 2022
- Assorted emails and letters
- Current and previous concerns and complaints

Identified Strengths

Hokitika Primary School is a Māori and English medium co-educational primary school for students in Years 1 – 6. The school is an important feature of the Hokitika community with the Friends of Hokitika Primary School fundraising group working hard to provide additional opportunities for ākonga. Its membership of the Westland Kāhui Ako has further supported Hokitika Primary School to proactively build and utilise relationships with other schools and has provided them with greater access to educational resources and development opportunities.

Hokitika Primary School is proud to offer Level 2 Māori immersion education with three mixed-level Rūma Rumaki Reo supported by teachers, language experts, and support staff for students from Years 0 – 6. The school also participates in a number of programmes including Toki Pounamu (in partnership with the Manaiakalani Trust) and Enviroschools. They also provide a range of extra-curricular activities for students and support for students with additional learning needs.

The board is well equipped to govern Hokitika Primary School, with a range of newer and longer-term members. They are committed to the school and are enthusiastic about improving their governance capabilities to the benefit of the school and community. Iwi representatives from Kāti Māhaki ki Makaawhio and Ngāti Waewae ensure that the school continues to strengthen its relationships with local iwi for the benefit of ākonga.

The Principal, Board and school staff are working collaboratively to support positive outcomes for all students. This has resulted in significant progress against the areas for improvement identified in the 2019 ERO report, namely increasing student achievement, curriculum responsiveness, and ongoing evaluation and improvement of governance, leadership and operations.

In ERO's most recent report of Hokitika Primary School (2019) the following strengths were identified:

Relationships with the school community

- Continued representation of local iwi on the board.
- Ongoing strengthening of relationships with the local marae.

- Strengthening of relationships and trust between the school, staff and whānau to grow their sense of belonging to Hokitika Primary School.

Sustainability and ongoing development of practices

- The school is well placed to continue to review and improve its performance across key indicators.
- The Principal is working to develop and implement systemic and cohesive schoolwide practices.
- A strategic and coherent approach to staff appraisal has resulted in increased collective capacity to use inquiry and build professional knowledge across teaching staff.
- Ability to evaluate the impact of programmes and interventions to identify common learning areas for improvement. This is an outcome of ongoing improvements to assessment practices, developing reliable student achievement reporting, and developing schoolwide expectations for teaching practice.
- Coherent alignment between the school's strategic goals and professional learning and development, appraisal, and teaching and learning programmes.
- Effective integration of the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa with curriculum values and key competencies strengthened by the teaching of PB4L.

Governance and leadership

- The effective implementation of high expectation-based systems for learning, teaching and behaviour across the school.
- Board awareness of their roles and responsibilities.
- Senior leadership and board members development and implementation of interventions in response to identified issues, including ERO areas for improvement.
- Reflection and review processes, including the development of internal evaluation processes.

Issues Analysis

| Identified issue | Severity and scope |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Performance management | |
| Principal appraisal | 9(2)(ba)(i) |
| Staff performance management | <p>There are several concerns raised regarding the performance management of current school staff. This raises concerns around internal performance management procedures and how they are implemented at Hokitika Primary School.</p> <p>A review of the performance management processes should be undertaken to confirm whether they are effective and consistent with relevant legislation and guidelines, and that they are being effectively and consistently implemented.</p> |

| Human resource operations | |
|--|--|
| Human resource management policies, procedures, systems, documentation | <p>Current performance management related issues raise concerns around the human resource management policies, procedures, and systems in place at Hokitika Primary School.</p> <p>A review of human resource management policies and procedures will be important to ensure that the school is operating effectively and consistently with relevant legislation and guidelines. This review should consider current human resource management documentation to ensure that it is aligned with relevant legislation, guidelines, and Hokitika Primary School practice. It will also be important to identify and resolve any issues or gaps in current documentation, policies and procedures.</p> |
| Policies and procedures | <p>Hokitika Primary School uses SchoolDocs for its policies and procedures. However, current issues at the school require the board to determine whether they can be assured that policies and procedures are implemented effectively, especially policies relating to human resource management and the Board's duties and responsibilities as the employer of school staff.</p> |
| Outstanding concerns and complaints | |
| Outstanding concerns and complaints | <p>There are a number of outstanding concerns and complaints raised by staff and community members. Some of these concerns will require further information to be gathered from the complainants before next steps can be determined.</p> <p>The processes used by the board to address concerns and complaints will need to be reviewed to ensure that they are implemented consistently and effectively, and are aligned with current legislation and guidelines. The extent to which concerns and complaints are addressed once delegated to management will also require scrutiny and potential review and strengthening.</p> |
| Effective relationships between the board and Principal | |
| Breakdown in the relationship between the Principal and the Board | <p>The relationship between the Principal and the board is still effective however, ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} [REDACTED]</p> <p>Further, concerns recently raised particularly by and about staff have surfaced issues around the implementation of human resource management policies and procedures that are creating pressure on this relationship.</p> |

Issues Not Apparent at Outset of Intervention

Escalation of concerns

Since the outset of the intervention period previously raised concerns raised to the board are being escalated into formal complaints. These concerns relate the school fulfilling its obligations as an employer and will require consideration of current employment and human resource management policies and procedures, and how well these are being implemented.

The currently outstanding concerns and complaints relating to employer responsibility need to be resolved to ensure the effective governance of the school alongside robust, fit for purpose human resource management policies and procedures.

Financial management

There is concern about the financial management of the school and whether the financial systems and processes in place at Hokitika Primary School are robust, effective, and consistently followed. A review of current finance policies, procedures, and systems will be required to ensure that the school is effectively managing its finances, and that the individuals performing roles relating to finance are appropriately skilled and supported.

Overall Assessment of Risk Level

It would appear that the overall risk level is slightly higher than what was anticipated by the Ministry. The factors that occurred prior to the Ministry's scoping and what make it slightly higher than previously anticipated are:

- The escalation of concerns relating to the school as an employer to formal complaints.
- Concern around the financial management of the school.
- A weakening of the relationship between the Principal and Board.

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