

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION REVIEW REPORTS

The Ministry of Education's Planning and Development division evaluates and reports on the education and care of students in schools and early childhood services.

Education Review reports are used by parents, teachers, early childhood education managers, school principals, school associations and by Government policy makers.

The Ministry of Education formally designates individual review officers to investigate, report and publish findings on the provision of education to all young Cook Islanders.

TYPES OF REVIEWS

P and D carries out different types of reviews - education reviews, supplementary reviews, special reviews and national evaluations on educational topics.

Education Reviews

Schools and early childhood services are reviewed on average once every two years. Reviews will be more frequent where the performance of a school or centre is poor and there are risks to the education and safety of the students, or less frequent where a school has a stable reporting history and demonstrates good self review processes and use of its assessment information. P and D uploads the executive summary on individual schools and early childhood services on the Ministry of Education's website; www.education.gov.ck.

Supplementary reviews

P and D carry out supplementary reviews on the performance of specific teachers or principals after concerns are raised at the education review. These reports are not published on the public domain; they remain confidential to the school and staff members concerned, with a copy furnished to the Secretary of Education and the CEO of Human Resources.

Special Reviews

From time to time new initiatives or programmes funded by the Ministry of Education are to be evaluated and reported on that are separate to the Education Review process. A school may request a special review for a particular area or programme at any time.

Evaluation reports

P and D publishes national reports on specific education topics that are a national focus area using evidence from its reviews. These are available under National Reports on the Ministry website.

REVIEW PROCESS

The P and D division will draft a proposed programme of school visits at least a term in advance. Some flexibility needs to be available due to the infrequent opportunities to visit the Northern Group Islands. Schools will receive advance notice about the proposed areas of national focus for the following year's review visits.

TIMELINE

1. A term before visit, CEO advises school of upcoming visit via email, listing all the documentation required.
2. Four weeks prior, Lead Review Officer to contact the school principal regarding the required documentation to be ready and any areas of interest the school would like the review team to focus on.
3. School to plan a timetable of visits, leaving the first day free for review officers to work through documentation and ensuring a fair spread of the national focus areas is covered (ie. do not have all teachers observed in the same ELA).
4. Review Team on site at school.
5. Two weeks after the visit a draft report is emailed to the school principal and chairperson of the school association (if possible).
6. Two weeks after the draft report is sent, if no feedback has been received by P and D, the report will be finalized.
7. An executive summary will be uploaded to the Ministry of Education's website.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

All documentation required for reviews can be found on the Ministry of Education website.

EXPECTATIONS OF REVIEW OFFICERS

Through their work, Review Officers have a particular relationship with schools and early childhood education services. They hold a Ministry of Education position that gives them responsibilities and powers that must be used wisely, prudently and with due consideration for the people who participate in the evaluation. In choosing to do this work Review Officers express their commitment to helping improve education for Cook Islands children.

Code of Conduct

The Cook Islands Ministry of Education Policy and Development (P and D) *Code of Conduct* is underlined by the principles of fairness, impartiality, responsibility and trustworthiness.

Rationale

The Code of Conduct reinforces high standards of performance by:

- having clear principles which guide Review Officers in the performance of their duties
- maintaining the confidence in the reputation and authority of P and D with those people with whom Review Officers come into contact professionally
- indicating to other stakeholders that they can have confidence in the quality of service provided by P and D as a division of the Ministry of Education

Review Officers

Review Officers accept that they must be able to justify their actions and decisions in the light of current legislation, educational knowledge and standards of practice.

Review officers must:

- perform their professional duties in accordance with the law, P and D standard procedures, recognised standards of agreed practice and educational knowledge
- base conclusions on data that can be verified as being accurate, valid and reliable
- prepare reports and recommendations which are based on appropriate analysis of relevant and reliable data
- maintain a high level of professional competence through ongoing development of their own knowledge and skills

Impartiality

- Review Officers have a duty to apply objective consideration and judgement to their work at all times. They will remain free of any conflicting interest or improper influence and should avoid any situation which may be construed as constituting a conflict of interest or which may impair objectivity
- Review Officers must be impartial when undertaking reviews and interpret and present evidence fairly. They will resist any pressures that would influence their impartiality.
- Oral and written reports will be open, direct and honest. Review Officers will not knowingly prepare or certify as true any statement that is false, incorrect or misleading.
- Review officers will recognise and communicate any professional or personal limitations or other constraints that would prevent responsible judgement and successful performance of reviews

Conduct during a Review

- Review Officers have the right of entry and inspection and are entitled to receive such information as they consider necessary for the purpose of review
- Review Officers receive information on the basis that it will be used without prejudice only for the purpose of review
- Review Officers respect the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of their duties
- Review Officers handle the disclosure of any information lawfully
- Review Officers have a responsibility to respect the powers vested in them by legislation
- Review Officers listen to individuals or groups and value and respect their integrity