



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATION SERVICES

Te Ratonga Mātauranga ki nga Kura Katorika

Catholic Special Character Review and Development
Ahuatanga Katorika Kaupapa Arotake Me Te Ahu Whakamua

A report on an external review of the Catholic Special Character at

Sacred Heart School Petone

Review conducted on: 29 June 2016

Reviewers: Alan Fleming

**Karolina Surynt-Tapiki
Accompanying Principal**

School Information

Name	Sacred Heart School, Petone
Address	33 Britannia Street, Petone
School Type	Co-educational primary, years 1-8
Decile	7
Actual Roll	146
Maximum Roll	165
Non-preference Maximum	8 (5%)
Actual non preference	2
Roll based staffing entitlement	8.3 FTTE
S65 Tags Required	5
S65 Tags Actual	5
Principal	Elizabeth Heatley
Director of Religious Studies	Fo'i Bell
BOT Chairperson	Tane Wilson
Parish Priest	Fr Marlon Maylon

Ethnic Composition	
Ethnicity	% of Roll
Filipino	3
Indian	1
Maori	9
NZ European	47
Other Asian	1
Other S E Asian	1
Samoaan	11
Tokelauan	24
Tongan	3
Vietnamese	1

Student Numbers for Each Preference Criterion and Non-preference		
Preference Criterion	Number of Students	% of School Roll
5.1	133	91
5.2	1	1
5.3	6	4
5.4	4	3
5.5	0	0
Non-preference	2	0
Total	146	99

All data as at the date of the review. Percentages to the nearest whole number. Some totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Report Format

The External Review process is based on the requirements of the National System of Review and Development of Catholic Special Character that came into effect at the end of 2003 and was reviewed in 2013. This document reports on Catholic Special Character using the four key dimensions: Catholic Community - Te Iwi Whānui Katorika, Pastoral Care – Manaakitanga, Religious Education - Te Whakaakoranga Whakapono, and Statutory Requirements - Nga Whakaaetanga me nga and Stewardship - Kaitiakitanga.

The report also includes information about the school, a brief summary, a report on achievement of recommendations from the last external review and recommendations arising from this review.

Report Summary

Sacred Heart School is a community of learners that can be justly proud of the way it expresses its Catholic Special Character. Through diligent effort by many, the school and the Sacred Heart faith community are entering a renewed and strengthened relationship which is enhancing evangelisation opportunities for many.

The school is very well led in Catholic Character by its Principal and Director of Religious Studies, both of whom receive full support from the staff, students and community. The school's RISE Values successfully guide interactions and behaviour to ensure the school is a happy and friendly place.

Religious Education is taught with passion, and students and parents appreciate the learning opportunities offered through the programme. There is opportunity to refine and develop an Inquiry approach to the teaching of Religious Education and to strengthen assessment procedures in this key curriculum area.

The Board of Trustees governs the school from a faith based perspective and all decision making is centred in the Catholic Character of the school. Policies and guidelines are well documented, particularly in Pastoral Care, so that the school operates effectively and achieves success.

School Response to the Previous External Review Recommendations

Key recommendations from the 2012 Review

1. Undertake a review of prayer in classrooms in order to identify best practice to share with all staff.

A development programme has been put in place to refresh the experience of classroom prayer. Outcomes include the introduction of meditation, more variety in prayer experiences for students, an emphasis on student leadership in prayer and teaching staff undertaking The Catholic Institute professional development paper RE102 which focuses on spirituality and prayer. Prayer is an integral part of school life and significantly contributes to the strength of the Catholic Special Character.

2. Identify ways of including an RE component into Inquiry Units.

The school Curriculum Manual includes separate guidelines for the structure of delivery of Student Inquiry units and Religious Education. In 2016 a beginning of year Student Inquiry unit included elements of integration of Religious Education with Health. The school has decided that some parts of the Religious Education programme are better suited to integrated units and others to stand alone lessons, and plan and teach according to this. *An area of development is to continue to explore ways of integrating identified curriculum areas with RE to create a holistic approach to student learning through Inquiry.*

3. Continue to build up IT capacity to enable staff to utilise the digital resource.

All classroom teachers have ready access to IT equipment to enable use of the digital resource.

4. Provide release time for the DRS for classroom observations, organization of professional development and monitoring of the programme.

Since the 2012 external review, the then acting DRS has been permanently appointed to the role. She is released to observe in classes, work beside teachers in order to offer support and guidance, and to plan liturgies and celebrations.

5. Continue to foster links with the parish.

Following the 2012 review, a strategic goal and annual targets were developed to strengthen the school and parish relationship. This has been successfully achieved and a strong link has now been established between the school and the Petone faith community. The school relationship with the newly amalgamated Holy Spirit-Te Wairua Tapu Parish is developing as parish and school leadership adapts to the new setting.

Catholic Community – Te Iwi Whānui Katorika

Through the activities and displays of Sacred Heart School it is clear that everyone is aware that they are in the presence of God and are members of God's kingdom. The school's Catholic spirituality is promoted through regular liturgies and celebrations, prayer, frequent reference to the RISE Values and a knowledge that all are learning in a faith focused school. The school is unified by its foundation of the Catholic Faith and, by its actions and outreach, spreads the gospel message to the wider community. Daily life in the school is marked by a sense of partnership, trusting relationships, transparent communication and a spirit of collaboration.

The school is an evangelising presence in its community. Its Catholic Christian environment continues to inspire people's faith and provides opportunities for them to deepen their faith. Many of the Catholic Special Character activities undertaken in the school have an element of evangelisation such as learning of and experiencing the place in their lives of the Sacred Heart faith community, and the opportunity for senior students to lead in ceremonies and liturgies and model their faith to younger students. Although only 8% of the school roll is in the preference categories of 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4, *an evangelisation opportunity for development exists to invite those families and students to take part in a Baptismal preparation programme so that they can begin their sacramental journey. An additional opportunity is to investigate the 5.1 preference list to ensure that all those students have had the opportunity to receive all the Sacraments of Initiation appropriate to their age.*

Strong relationships are fostered through a high trust and shared leadership approach. Everyone is expected to use their talents to lead where they can. Board members, staff, adult community members and students all tell of a strong commitment to the school that is fostered by the feeling that they have a stake in the school and its success. Communication is free flowing between the Board of Trustees and school staff. A programme has been established to enhance the transition of new entrant students and their families into school life. A priest from the parish and the Principal attend one of the programme sessions to talk about the Catholic Special Character of the school, the Religious Education programme and the connection between Parish and school.

The school ethos is based on the RISE Values (Respect, Integrity, Sense of Community and Excellence). All aspects of school life have the values inculcated into them and they are understood and followed at all levels of the community. The Rise Values are founded in ideals of faith, living good lives, respect and achievement. The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference document 'Catholic Education for School-aged Children' encourages schools to ensure that their Virtues or Values can display a direct link with the gospel teachings of Jesus so *an opportunity for development is available, when the current values are reviewed, to develop that focus while retaining the best aspects of the current values.* To assist a review to focus on the teachings of Jesus, the Sacred Heart Charism statement "What Would Jesus Do?" could be used as an Inquiry question.

There is an open door for all at Sacred Heart School and the welcome is inviting and warm. The reviewers were welcomed with a student led prayer liturgy followed by a proud display of the performance prepared for Polyfest. Public areas contain displays which reflect, in turn, feast days, liturgical celebrations, the current Religious Education strand, Catholic symbols and a statue of the

Sacred Heart. To acknowledge the Year of Mercy there are displays of a Door of Mercy in each class.

A recent development in the school has been to include senior students in parish service activities. An example of this was a highly appreciated liturgical celebration at a neighbouring rest home which was jointly led by senior students and parishioners. The success of this outreach has led to more interaction between students and the rest home residents. Regular feedback from the wider community praises the students for their integrity and good behaviour. Opportunities are also provided for students to learn about and participate in the activities of Caritas and to undertake support for mission projects. Working with Caritas people and resources is enabling students to develop their understanding of the principles of Social Justice.

The strategic goal and targets of developing a stronger relationship with the Sacred Heart faith community have had much success. The students are fully aware of the role of a church community in their faith lives through regular use of the church for prayer, Masses and celebrations. School newsletters contain information about important Church celebrations and strong encouragement for families to attend these ceremonies. School staff are active in the parish Sacramental programme through leadership of sessions and organisational support. One of the priests of the Holy Spirit-Te Wairua Tapu is a Proprietor's Appointee on the Board of Trustees and another Proprietor's Appointee actively works to help students and their families to make connections with the parish. Parishioners have noted the changes and expressed appreciation for them.

Pastoral Care - Manaakitanga

Sacred Heart School has a strong community focus which is strengthened by its relationship with the Sacred Heart faith community within the wider Parish of the Holy Spirit – Te Wairua Tapu. All interactions are collaborative and centred on ensuring that students receive the best opportunity in their learning and school life. The Principal models her leadership on 'Jesus as a servant and teacher' and she brings an openness to her role which enables school and community members to communicate with her easily and confidently. Safety and the wellbeing of the staff are paramount for the Principal and staff believe that they are affirmed and appreciated in their work and contribution to the school. The principal's care for the staff is reflected in the way staff members encourage and affirm each other.

The principal has a viewpoint that "no child misses out" and this belief motivates support for students at all level of need, from targeted learning support to provision of practical support using the resources of the school, church community and outside agencies such as St Vincent de Paul or Catholic Social services.

The pastoral care programme of the school is well documented in a handbook which is distributed to families at the start of each year and parents noted that it is easy to read and use. In practice, the Principal is the pivot point for any pastoral care and any action required is delegated to the most appropriate agency. All support is provided in a subtle and confidential way and provides practical and spiritual help as needed. The Board of Trustees is to be congratulated for realising

that there was an issue and undertook a review of its donations policy. This resulted in a change in the way donations were requested from families to better suit the capacity of community members. This action acknowledges the aspect of Catholic social teaching 'the dignity of each person' and reflects the intentions of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference noted in the Resourcing and the Common Good section of The Catholic Education of School-aged Children. Targeted learning support is provided for students with identified needs and the school employs Teacher Aides to support high needs students. The school accesses assistance from a range of Church and State agencies.

The school's commitment to its responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi is evident in all aspects of school life. There is an energetic Whanau Support Group which communicates with the Board of Trustees at a strategic level and is also very supportive of tikanga activities in the school. At the time of the review Matariki was celebrated with a hangi, and marae visits are planned for term three.

People from all cultures are welcome in the school. There is an active Pasifika Parents Group which the school consults with on a regular basis. The spirituality of different cultures is included in liturgies and celebrations through ceremonial traditions and prayers offered in a variety of languages. The school's participation in the regional Polyfest demonstrated the teamwork of staff and community working together to successfully achieve a common purpose.

The RISE Values underpin the behaviour management documentation and processes of the school and help create an atmosphere of calmness, cooperation and respect. Students are expected to self-regulate their behaviour. There is no tolerance of violence at Sacred Heart School and if an incident occurs teaching staff respond quickly using a clear framework of behaviour expectations. In the playground student Peer Mediators provide first step assistance to solve playground problems and this is supported by teaching staff who use a fair, listening-based procedure to investigate more serious conflict. Each classroom has a co-constructed treaty which guides student behaviour. If a student acts against any part of it they are given the opportunity to reflect on it and use the treaty statements to redirect their behaviour. Descriptions of behaviour intervention actions by staff, if required, included aspects of restorative actions but *an opportunity for development is to document restorative practices in the school behaviour management plan so that an agreed process is readily available should a serious incident occur.*

Religious Education – Te Whakaakoranga Whakapono

The teaching of Religious Education is well led by the Principal and Director of Religious Studies. The DRS supports teachers in planning RE units, planning for prayer, preparing liturgies and celebrations, aspects of knowledge and general advice about Catholic Special Character. She brings a personal spirituality to the role which inspires and motivates staff in Religious Education and Catholic Special Character activities.

The school Charter contains strategic aims that were formulated following community and staff consultation in 2013. The annual targets developed from the aims are focussed on broader Catholic Special Character actions such as strengthening the school relationship with the Parish,

and do not contain specific targets for Religious Education. Inclusion of Religious Education aims and targets in the next strategic plan will ensure that this curriculum area receives appropriate strategic consideration in the same way that other key curriculum areas do. ***It is recommended to specifically include Religious Education, as an identifiable aspect of Catholic Special Character, in the consultation and review processes leading to the development of the next Strategic Plan.*** While aims and targets for Religious Education could be identified from this external review, including the parish, school community, staff and students in the review would add authenticity to the identified aims and resulting targets.

The Sacred Heart Curriculum Manual contains structural guidelines for the delivery of Religious Education and a Sacred Heart Model for Inquiry Learning. These provide useful overviews of school expectations but to inform teachers of school expectations in the teaching of RE and to assist them in the integration of other curriculum areas into RE, some additional guidance would be beneficial. *An opportunity for development is to include a statement about how Religious Education is to be included in the Inquiry structure and the Religious Education statement should be strengthened by including expectations for teaching practices in RE.*

Religious Education is taught with passion and knowledge in most classes. Lessons were delivered from well prepared unit plans. When interviewed, members of the student council showed a clear understanding of the purpose of Religious Education. They stated it is a time when “they learn to understand about God, Jesus, the Spirit, scripture and their faith”. Most lessons observed involved whole class teaching with the students given an opportunity to answer questions and complete response activities. Some cooperative learning activities were included in lessons. Changes in pedagogy, introduced to schools in recent years through professional development in other key curriculum areas, have guided teachers to use techniques of self-directed student learning, with a resulting improvement in student engagement, ownership of learning and fostering of student independence. *An opportunity for development is provide teaching staff with professional development to enable recent pedagogical understandings to be adapted and used in planning and teaching the Religious Education programme.*

The Director of Religious Studies has introduced a comprehensive planning template which is used in the junior school and would strengthen school-wide Religious Education planning if it was used in all classes. *An opportunity for development is to strengthen the use of the assessment part of the template in line with the recommendation below.* An Inquiry unit ‘Poumanawa: The Me I Want To Be’ was planned and taught at the beginning of the year and linked Religious Education and Health Curriculum learning outcomes. A useful action at the completion of the unit would have been for teachers to review the integrated approach contained in the unit to see how well it mapped against the school Inquiry Learning model and to identify development steps for preparing the next integrated unit.

End of strand assessment records were observed in most classes and there was also some evidence of evaluation of units taught. Evaluation comments generally focussed on student responses to what was taught in the unit and some on success in growing student knowledge. This matches, in an elementary way, assessment in the affective domain (how learners respond to what has been taught) and cognitive domain (what knowledge has been learned). There was no evidence that assessment contributed to planning for next steps or that assessment information was accumulated for reporting to school leaders or the Board of Trustees as it normally would be in a key curriculum area. A Proprietor’s Appointee expressed a desire for such reporting to be introduced to inform the Board of Trustees on student achievement in Religious Education. ***It is***

recommended that the school undertake a Teacher Inquiry into the assessment and evaluation of Religious Education including assessment in the cognitive and affective domains, and develop methods of gathering achievement information to identify next learning steps and for reporting student achievement in Religious Education to learners, parents, school leaders and the Board of Trustees. This will give surety that Religious Education assessment, evaluation and reporting procedures are as effective and professional as those in other key curriculum areas.

The Religious Education programme receives generous budget support both for the purchase of resources and for professional development. The whole teaching staff enrol in The Catholic Institute papers such as RE 102 and the CSES paper 'Understanding Sexuality'. Cluster meetings are attended when they are offered. Undertaking this level of professional development reduces the amount of staff meeting time available to discuss and prepare for the teaching of RE strands and modules prior to teaching *so an opportunity for development exists for the DRS to develop innovative ways to assist teachers to prepare for each strand or module.*

The requirements for New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference Religious Education teaching times are clearly stated in the school Curriculum Manual, and classroom timetable information confirmed that the requirements were being met. The school has maintained strong links with the CSES Advisory team attended professional development to meet teacher development needs.

Statutory Requirements- Nga Whakaaetanga me nga and Stewardship - Kaitiakitanga

Stewardship

Governance of the school is undertaken by a committed Board of Trustees which ensures that the Catholic Special Character of the school is at the center of all decision making. The Board's three year strategic plan is widely consulted within the community and contains Catholic Special Character goals and targets drawn from community input as well as internal Catholic Character reviews. The Board is to be congratulated for including reports on progress and achievement of Catholic Character targets in its Variance Report to the Ministry of Education. Board policies and guidelines are written for governance of Catholic Character, Board of Trustees Governance responsibilities, enrolment, school safety, behaviour management, pastoral care, staff appointment processes, staff performance management, professional development. *An opportunity for development is to review the Catholic Special Character policy to ensure that it states Board of Trustee expectations for Catholic Special Character (in the main reflecting existing good practice) and Religious Education teaching, assessment and reporting to the Board on student progress.*

Enrolment processes for preference and non-preference students are well managed and correct records are kept, both as hard copy and on the student database.

The recruitment and employment of staff for S65 positions follows most guidelines published in the New Zealand Catholic Education Office Handbook (NZCEO) (2016 edition). *An opportunity for development is to use the NZCEO employment template letters for all teacher appointments to ensure that teaching staff are fully aware of the Catholic Special Character contractual*

requirements of their position. Job descriptions and performance appraisal systems contain Catholic Special Character goals which staff are appraised on. *An opportunity for development is to include Catholic Special Character Professional Standards in performance agreements.* Examples of professional standards for principals and teachers are available in the Certification Handbook. The school maintains a strong programme of Catholic Character professional development for teaching staff. In 2015 remaining teaching staff completed the Understanding Sexuality course so that all have now completed this professional development, and in 2016 the whole staff is enrolled in the RE102 paper on Spirituality and Prayer. As well, teaching staff attend cluster meetings when they are arranged.

Since the previous Catholic Character external review the school has carried out internal self-reviews of Pastoral Care (2013), Catholic Community (2014) and Religious Education (2015). Goals and targets from these reviews were carried through into strategic and annual plans. *An opportunity for development is to strengthen self-review reports to include a brief summary of the review process, (i.e. the inquiry question, who was consulted, the questions asked,) and to indicate aspects of the review focus that are not working well or challenges that exist, as well as the success areas.*

S65 Tagged positions

The school has the correct number of S65 Tagged positions. While there is not a structured programme of leadership development for people who hold these positions, the principal's philosophy of shared leadership encourages growth in confidence and skills and two recent staff members have taken up Catholic Special Character leadership roles.

DRS Management Unit

The DRS holds a permanent management unit and is given release time.

Preference and Non- Preference Students

There are 2 current non-preference students with two more enrolled for 2016 who are siblings of current students. Non-preference enrolments, apart from siblings, are closed as the roll is close to the maximum roll.

Effective Monitoring of Religious Education and Catholic Observances

This is maintained through Catholic Special Character self-reviews and informative reports to the Board of Trustees.

Consultation With the Proprietor

The Board of Trustees and Principal consult with the Proprietor on a regular basis and meets all requirements.

Health Curriculum

All staff have completed the Understanding Sexuality professional development.

Key Recommendations From This Review

It is expected that the Board of Trustees and staff will include the following recommendations in the strategic and annual plans and address them fully before the next external review. Catholic Schools Education Services staff are available to offer any assistance required.

1. It is recommended to specifically include Religious Education, as an identifiable aspect of Catholic Special Character, in the consultation and review processes leading to the development of the next Strategic Plan.

2. It is recommended that the school undertake a Teacher Inquiry into the assessment and evaluation of Religious Education including assessment in the cognitive and affective domains, and develop methods of gathering achievement information to identify next learning steps and for reporting student achievement in Religious Education to school leaders and the Board of Trustees.

In concluding this report, the Reviewers thank the Sacred Heart School community for the welcome extended to them and for the opportunity to observe and experience the Catholic Special Character of the School. It is a privilege to work with the school to identify areas of growth and development in Catholic Special Character and Religious Education

Alan Fleming
CSES Reviewer

Dated: 18 August 2016