

**ĀHUATANGA KATORIKA KAUPAPA
AROTAKE ME TE AHU WHAKAMUA**

**CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Report on an external review of

**TE KURA Ō CARDINAL McKEEFRY
CARDINAL McKEEFRY SCHOOL
WILTON**

OCTOBER 2018

Review conducted on: 30th October – 1st November 2018

Review Team:

Zita Smith (Lead Reviewer)

Christine MacDonald (Accompanying Principal Reviewer)



SCHOOL DETAILS

Name Cardinal McKeefry School

Address 66 Albemarle Road, Wilton/Northland, Wellington

School Type Co-educational Years 1-8

Decile 10

Ethnic Composition (actual number and % to the nearest whole)

Maori: 3 (3%)

Pasifika: 6 (7%)

Pakeha: 34 (40%)

Other European: 15 (18%)

Asian: 19 (23%)

LAAA: 4 (5%)

Principal Tania Savage

Director of Religious Studies (Acting) Laura Thomsen

BOT Chairperson Duncan Scott

Parish Priest Father Ron Bennett and Fr Sanele Finau

Date of on-site review: 30th October – 1st November 2018

Date of this report: 19th November 2018

The Catholic special character review of Cardinal McKeefry School was conducted by the Wellington Catholic Schools Education Service review team of:

Zita Smith
Reviewer

Christine MacDonald
Accompanying Principal Reviewer

THE AIMS AND FRAMEWORK OF THE CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference wishes the review to show how effective the school is in handing on the faith and forming a new generation of Catholics, and how students have grown in faith as a result of the Religious Education programme.

The External Review process is based on the requirements found in the document, *"Catholic Special Character Review for Development", Aotearoa NZ Catholic Integrated Schools, NZ Catholic Office Ltd, 2017 (Draft)*.

The written report looks at Catholic Character using the four key dimensions:

- Encounter with Christ - *The Tūtaki ki ā Te Karaiti*
- Growth in Knowledge – *Te Whakatupu mā Te Mātauranga*
- Christian Witness – *Te Whakaatu Karaitiana*
- Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character - *Te Kaitiakitanga me te Whakapakari i te Tuakiri Katorika*

Reviewers encourage and commend best practice, and, working with the school, provide recommendations to further strengthen and develop the Catholic culture of the school.

REPORT SUMMARY

Cardinal McKeefry School is a small school of just under 90 students, located in Wilton. It was blessed and opened by Peter, Cardinal McKeefry, and re named in his honour in 1970, having been founded by and named for the Marist Brothers many years prior.

St. Teresa's and St. Thomas More parishes are now merged into the Catholic Parish of Otari which includes Cardinal McKeefry School and St. Thomas More Church in Wilton and St Teresa's School and Church in Karori.

Cardinal McKeefry School is currently undergoing the process of reviewing its vision and mission and integral to this has been the decision to return to its original Marist values.

It is described by parents as a nurturing family where everyone knows and cares about others in a genuine way. It is referred to as a close knit, inclusive, welcoming "village school in the city," and like a second home for children.

Positive and respectful relationships between students and staff and among students are evident. Students describe their school as a calm place where teachers provide many opportunities for them and help them to be the best they can be, where everyone is respectful, and where prayer is important. They experience a variety of ways to pray. They are very familiar with the school values of respect, responsibility and resilience which influence their behaviour and attitudes.

The NZ Religious Education Curriculum is being implemented and all teachers use a variety of creative ways to engage students in their learning. The Acting DRS supports teachers in their role and runs regular staff meetings to support teacher development.

Prayer is a strength of the school. Each week, whole school prayer is held in the Hall. Teachers model a variety of prayer styles to their students, who benefit from these rich prayer experiences. Students take leadership roles in prayer in their classrooms and assemblies and for seniors, in whole school prayer. The staff prays together regularly.

The principal, appointed towards the end of 2015, demonstrates effective and passionate leadership of the Catholic Character. The Board of Trustees and the principal are committed to being effective stewards of the school in terms of building a strong legacy that is faithful to the Catholic Character. The recommendations at the end of this Report will assist them to continue to do this.

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE PREVIOUS EXTERNAL REVIEW

Key Recommendations from the 2014 Review

1. *Ensure that 12 hours professional development is provided for staff annually.*

Professional development in RE has been a strong focus since 2015. Staff have completed 12 hours or more PD since then in a range of areas including Cluster meetings, a TCI paper and PD provided by both CSES and external facilitators (e.g. Monica Brown).

2. *Enrol current staff members in the Understanding Sexuality programme*

All teachers who were in the school in 2015 completed this programme.

3. *Use the Catholic Character Review development resource to guide self-review over a three year cycle.*

Cyclic Internal Evaluation of Catholic Character has been part of the Board Three Year Work Plan over last two years.

4. *Further develop the use of Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori by accessing appropriate professional development and community support for the staff. Also consider accessing a course on Māori Spirituality as requested by staff.*

Since the review all but one teacher and two support staff members have left the school. The current principal is committed to developing Tikanga Māori in the school, initiating several practices. In the absence of a course in Māori spirituality, the school will attend a Cluster meeting on Māori spirituality in 2019.



- 5. Revisit the school-identified values and align them with Gospel values, Marist Values and scripture. Ensure that the values are unpacked for the students and display them in classrooms corridors, school documentation and in Newsletters.***

The school charter is currently under review, and as part of this the five Marist values will be adopted.

- 6. Continue to revisit the school's charism in some way at the beginning of each year so that students are aware of and can appreciate the history and values of the Marist Brothers who were the main founders of the school.***

In 2017 the staff undertook PD to unpack the Marist Charism. The school now regularly participates in School Prayers with Marist Br Kevin Dobbin, and events from Marcellin Champagnat's life are a regular focus for school prayers. Students are more aware of the Marist history of the school and are learning about the Charism. The school has a strong connection with the Marist Community in Wellington.

- 7. Continue to develop integrated units by inviting feedback and further input from the religious education adviser.***

The revised Religious Education Curriculum implementation plan is linked to the redevelopment of the whole school curriculum. PD run by CSES in 2016/17 helped staff to plan student learning experiences that integrated Religious Education, students' real life experiences and other curriculum areas.

- 8. Allow opportunities for students to lead prayers in classrooms and at weekly school prayer.***

Students lead prayer in their own classrooms from Year 2-8. They are rostered, usually with a buddy to plan and run classroom prayer and over the course of a term all students will have run it at least once. Senior students are also part of the roster to organise and run whole school prayer.

TE TŪTAKI KI A TE KARAITI – ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST

How does the school encourage and facilitate the development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ who reveals the transforming love and truth of the living God?

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Spiritual Formation

Spirituality is very evident in the school. Students have sound knowledge about Marcellin Champagnat, the founder of the Marist Brothers, and links to the Marist Brothers have strengthened since the last Review. Wellington based Marist Brothers are regular visitors in the school and have provided staff development around the school's charism in the last year. The pillars of the Marist Charism, presence, family spirit, simplicity, in Mary's way and passion for work will be readopted as the school's Gospel values as part of the current review of the mission and vision, with a launch planned for 2019.

Students learn about different forms of prayer by experiencing them. Examples are praying in colour, mandela prayer, liturgical movement prayer, meditation, weekly prayer intentions book, praying with Gospel stories. Classrooms have weekly class prayer rosters for student-led prayers. Senior students are articulate about their faith and see prayer as an integral part of their school and their lives.

All meetings start with prayer (including IEPs) and staff pray together regularly, with each person rostered weekly to organise and lead.

Each week the school gathers to pray together. Staff, the two parish priests and Year 8 students are on a roster to lead this and it is viewed by all as an important opportunity to focus on Jesus.

Fr. Ron Bennett is a valued presence in the school, visiting classrooms and leading weekly school prayer as part of the roster.

All Year 7 and 8 students participate in the Servant Leadership day run by CSES as a way of developing their spirituality, and bring their practical learning back to the school to use when they lead prayer.

Evangelisation

The principal is proactive in inviting families and their children to participate in the Parish sacramental programme, including Baptism. This is done through a personal approach, often at enrolment, as well as prior to the programme starting each year, via the weekly newsletter.



Students have a high level of participation in Masses and liturgies, and families are always invited to participate in Masses that the school attends e.g. to celebrate a special occasion or Feast Day. Liturgies for Shrove Tuesday, Holy Week, Christmas, school leavers, as well as special liturgies to respond to illness in the community or events in the world are valued and very well attended by families. Integral to its inclusive environment, students and parents who are non-preference and/or non-baptised are always invited for a blessing during school Masses, and are included in all aspects of the spiritual life of the school.

The weekly newsletter leads with an aspect of Catholic Character penned by the principal. This is often based on the current feast day or special occasion in the Church's year, or on one of the school's values.

Faith Based Leadership

The principal leads by example as an active and committed role model of the Catholic Character. She is explicit about the purpose and mission of the school and articulates this at every opportunity. She is described as someone who consistently "walks the talk" in the way she encourages and promotes a faith-based vision for the school. She is currently demonstrating this in the way she, in conjunction with the Board, is driving the review of the school vision and values to better express the school's Catholic Character.

All teachers and staff are seen as role models, by living out their faith in their behaviours and attitudes. They are prayerful and frequently include the needs of the community in their prayers.

NEXT STEPS

Plan for Baptism as an annual, programmed event to which non-baptised students and their families are personally approached and invited. See Recommendations.

Consider classroom Masses followed by a morning tea for a particular purpose e.g. to celebrate learning in RE, with students sending a personal invitation to their whanau.

In weekly school prayer, ensure teacher and class *together* lead the prayer and students invite their parents especially in the week their class is leading.

As planned, re-launch of school's vision, mission and Marist values. See Recommendations.



TE WHAKATUPU MĀ TE MĀTAURANGA – GROWTH IN KNOWLEDGE

How does the school assist its community to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ, his teachings and the Catholic Church?

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Leadership

The Principal leads the Catholic Character in all she does, and is of particular support to the DRS who has recently taken up this role in an acting capacity.

The Acting DRS is growing into her role, demonstrating an openness and enthusiasm for this responsibility. She leads staff development twice a term with an aspect of RE. She plans and organises whole school liturgical celebrations and Masses, and supports teachers in what they need to teach RE effectively.

The school Librarian, who is a long serving staff member as well as parishioner, is greatly valued in the community. She was described as a “bridge” between parish and school and someone who actively supports the school’s Catholic Character in practical ways e.g. training altar servers, helping prepare readers for Mass.

Religious Education

The school implements the nationally mandated NZ Religious Education Curriculum. Use of the *Faith Alive* digital resource and RE Curriculum manuals are in evidence as well as many other creative sources teachers discover for themselves.

Whole school planning is carried out as a staff around an overarching theme (e.g. Change in 2018), where the integration of curriculum areas is explored. Teachers then take responsibility for integrating the big theme into their RE topics appropriate to their students’ level of understanding.

There was clear evidence of a variety of different teaching experiences that engage students. Links to prior knowledge, clarity of purpose of the learning, think-pair-share, Scripture search, workbooks with brainstorm, interactive cooperative thinking and discussions, working through movement, some use of te reo Māori, integration with writing and in one class, student self-reflection on their thinking, were all seen in action. The teaching of RE is dynamic and students show a high level of interest and engagement.

There are positive and natural relationships between teachers and students and among students. Students demonstrate very respectful behaviour, are focussed, engaged and very settled. Teachers give positive affirmations and use non-verbal cues to support students. Teachers are well organised, with well thought out lessons that take into



account students' prior knowledge. Students have the opportunity to share real life experiences of their faith during classroom lessons and weekly school prayer.

Regularly updated wall displays that reflect what is being taught, along with traditional prayers and children's work are in evidence, as well as the Marist charism values. Prayer tables were apparent in all classrooms.

RE assessment, carried out after each RE topic either in written form or in conversations with students, is used to gauge knowledge and participation as well as attitudes, behaviours and relationships. This is reported to parents in a special Catholic Character section of student reports.

Professional development in RE has been a strong focus since 2015. Cluster meetings, curriculum workshops, a course for teachers new to Catholic schools, the DRS Conference, Catholic Principals' Conference and DP day were all attended.

Catholic Curriculum

The principal ensures that all staff understand what it means to be part of a Catholic culture, and this is evidenced by the willingness and ability of staff to effectively integrate a Catholic perspective in and out of the classroom.

Because most teachers who had completed the *Understanding Sexuality* programme have now left the school, Alan Grant from CSES was invited in to support staff in the design of an holistic sexuality unit, *Made in the Image of God* and this has been successfully implemented.

The Acting DRS manages the RE curriculum and PD delivery, supported by the principal. In 2017 all staff attended the cluster meeting on *Amoris Laetitia* led by Chris Duthie-Jung and a Teacher Only Day was devoted to the Marist Charism which created the starting point for the review of school values.

NEXT STEPS

Write an RE Curriculum implementation plan. See Recommendations.

As in the past, ensure that the overarching idea for any Integrated Unit is based on the Catholic Character.

Continue to explore a variety of ways to inform and include parents in a celebration of what students are learning.

TE WHAKAATU KARAITIANA- CHRISTIAN WITNESS

How does the school provide a hope fill-filled Catholic Christian witness which empowers its community members to integrate their faith and life?

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Catholic School Community

Staff, parents and students spoke of the culture of the school as being characterised by warm and open relationships, effective communication and a deep sense of respect. They experience hospitality and belonging in the school environment.

The behaviour guidelines of resilience, respect and responsibility are very familiar to the students and provide the basis of all behavioural expectations, recognised through a whole school rewards system.

The Friendship Bench in the school grounds provides an opportunity for students to reach out to others who might be feeling sad or alone, and either sit with them or invite them to join a game.

Symbols and icons in the school entrance way and foyer, as well as visuals and posters on classroom and corridor walls, demonstrate clearly the Catholic identity of the school.

Partnership & Collaboration

Cardinal McKeefry School is part of the recently formed *Kahui Ako* (Community of Learning) which involves 13 Catholic schools in the central Wellington area. St Mary's and St Patrick's Colleges liaise each year with Cardinal McKeefry senior students, encouraging them to transition into a Catholic college. The two schools in the Otari Parish work together in a way that is mutually supportive, including the joint celebration of Catholic Schools Day.

The principal actively networks with other Catholic principals; she consistently attends the local Wellington Catholic Primary Principals' Association and is part of a Catholic Professional Learning Community with four other principals.

The school taps into the expertise of CSES and ADW for ongoing professional development, as well as attending the Catholic Schools biennial Conference.



Some parishioners have been trained as *Side-by-Side* mentors, and are developing ways to support school parents with young children.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The school shows commitment to Tikanga Māori. Whole school kapa haka, led by the principal, takes place regularly. The use of te reo Māori in prayer, liturgy and waiata has increased. An example of the integration of Tikanga Māori into the school this year was through Mātariki, a whole school community celebration which was very well attended. For this, students who are part of the *Garden to Table* initiative, cooked kumara soup, after which whanau assembled in the Hall for Mātariki songs and stories.

Students are developing their pepeha and mihi. The principal starts all her speeches with her mihi which is a powerful example of the value of te reo Māori to students and community. The school sees the integration of Tikanga Māori as a way to welcome its diverse community.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care in the school is seen as a strength. The DP, in her role as SENCO, raises awareness with staff about students who may extra support. As an ex RTLB she coordinates educational needs. At every staff meeting discussions are held about the needs of particular students and their families. Parents of children with particular needs were very positive about the way teachers support their children's progress not only in their learning but also in helping to build their self-esteem.

An example of pastoral care in the school was the establishment of an on-line meal roster which invited members to contribute meals for families or staff experiencing a challenging time. This is well supported and greatly appreciated by recipients. "All the staff consider the well-being of each individual - teachers, support staff, principal, students etc. They go out of their way to help those who are sick or struggling in some way - providing encouragement, support, time, and release."

Staff describe pastoral care shown towards them as being supportive. "We have had meetings around the importance of a work-life balance and the leaders in the school model this and help staff know the significance and how to achieve this."

Parents spoken to, were very grateful for the way staff supported them through prayer in times of need. They placed value on the way staff reached out to them, and said that this type of care has nurtured their spirituality.



Service and Outreach

The *Garden to Table* programme, which began recently, is already a feature of the school. Adult helpers, including parish volunteers, support a teacher and the Year 5/6 class who look after the school garden and prepare a shared meal from food harvested each week. Other classes and visitors are invited guests. Through this programme, students are learning much about Christian service; they are learning the value of working together for a common good, of serving others and of sharing food around a table.

Students have opportunities to serve and reach out to others in a variety of other ways; they can train as Altar servers in the local parish church of St Thomas More, run *Play PALS* where students organise and run lunchtime games, become Peer Mediators in the playground, and senior students can enter the William Pike Challenge which calls for participation in community service like SPCA and Forest & Bird.

The school also takes opportunities to fundraise for causes that arise, locally or nationally; this can be as a Mufti Day, bringing a can to contribute to a Food Basket, or supporting Caritas initiatives.

NEXT STEPS

As identified by teachers, review and update the reward system for positive behaviour.

Continue to work towards the establishment of a whole school powhiri to welcome new students and their families each term.



**TE KAITIAKITANGA ME TO WHAKAPAKARI I TE TUAKIRI KATORIKA-
 SAFEGUARDING AND STRENGTHENING CATHOLIC CHARACTER**
*How does the school, in its stewardship, and its compliance with legal obligations,
 safeguard and strengthen its Catholic identity?*

School: Cardinal McKeefry School

Actual Roll: 85

Maximum Roll: 270

Non-preference Maximum as per Integration Agreement: Actual: 27 (10 % of max roll)

Actual non preference: 25 (9.2 % of max roll)

TOTAL staffing entitlement: 4.95

No. S464 positions required based on TOTAL staffing entitlement: 2

No. actual S464 positions: 2

Preference Criteria	Number of Students	% actual roll
5.1	34	40
5.2	0	
5.3	20	23.5
5.4	5	5.8
5.4 Special	1	1
5.5	0	
Preference with no criteria		
Total of signed preference roll	60	70.5
Non-Preference Roll	25	29.5
International Fee Paying Students	None	0



AREAS OF SUCCESS

Stewardship

The Board of Trustees demonstrates a strong commitment to the school's Catholic Character. They are currently reviewing the school's mission and vision through consultation with staff, students and community, and recently approved a return to the school's original values that reflect the Marist Brothers' charism. In the last year they have undertaken training with Frank Wafer from ADW.

The Board has supported the decision for the school to opt into the Catholic Community of Learning rather than the local one, in order to grow and develop its links with local Catholic schools. This may also support the natural transition into Catholic Colleges for their students.

All Board meetings begin with prayer and Catholic Character is an agenda item against which the principal reports at each meeting. All discussion and decisions are viewed through a Catholic Character lens and the Proprietor's Appointees include parish priest, Fr Ron Bennett.

The Board Chair and principal meet regularly and have a positive, productive relationship.

Legal Obligations

The school is meeting its obligations under its Integration Agreement in terms of staffing, tagged teacher positions, and preference/non preference students.

NEXT STEPS

Ensure all documentation is explicit in its reference to Catholic Character. See Recommendations.

In marketing the school, consciously reach out to families who have a strong Catholic connection and would meet the Preference criteria.

Consider how the school might provide a regular invitational process for Baptism to the 30% non-baptized preference students and their families. Non-preference students could also be included in this invitation at the school's discretion. See Recommendations.

Be aware that as the school's staffing entitlement increases to 5 FTTE (currently 4.95), the next permanent teacher appointment will need to be a tagged position.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Encounter with Christ

- 1. Embed the new vision and Marist values into all aspects of school life**
 - Website and all promotional material, including enrolment pack
 - Focus for assemblies and whole school prayer
 - Visuals, displays in classrooms, hallways and foyer, as well as outside the school
- 2. In partnership with the Parish, initiate a regular invitational process for receiving the Sacrament of Baptism as part of the school welcome and culture.**

Growth in Knowledge

- 3. Finalise the school Integrated Curriculum Delivery Plan, ensuring the RE curriculum is woven into it.**
 - As in the past, ensure that the Catholic Character is explicit in the overarching theme and continues to be visually represented.

Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character

- 4. As they are reviewed, ensure all policies reflect the Catholic Character and vision of the school.**

The review team is confident that the Cardinal McKeefry School leadership (Board, Principal and DRS) have the willingness and ability to address the recommendations of this report. They have already begun to work on several of the recommendations with the support of the CSES team.

In concluding this report, the review team wish to thank the Cardinal McKeefry School community for their aroha and manaakitanga during our visit and for the opportunity to observe and the privilege to experience the Catholic Character of the school.



Zita Smith
Lead Reviewer