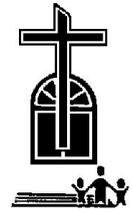


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Catholic Integrated
Schools Office

Review and Development Report

St Mary's Catholic School, Tauranga

The aims and scope of this review are in accordance with the Aotearoa New Zealand Catholic Integrated Schools 'Catholic Special Character Review and Development Document'.

Aims:

- to enable St Mary's Catholic School, to demonstrate acceptable standards of the Catholic Special Character dimensions:
 - Catholic Community
 - Pastoral Care
 - Religious Education
- to provide an assurance to the Proprietor that St Mary's School is authentically Catholic and compliant.
- to enable St Mary's Catholic School, which is essentially the parish community assisting its parents to provide for the faith formation of their children, to show that it does this in a collaborative relationship.

School Details

School Type: Primary (Yr1-6)

Maximum Roll: 500

School Roll Term 3, 2017: 464

Non-Preference: 4 %

Non-preference Number: 35

Decile Rating: 8

International Students: 12

Date of on-site review: 13-15 August 2017

Board of Trustees 2017:

Proprietor's Appointees:

1.Katie Wealleans

2.Tony Lenton

Catholic

yes

yes

Elected:

1. Claire Stotts(Chairperson)

2. Shay Hulsebosch(Secretary)

3. Anne Young

4. Shem Banbury

5. Antoine Coffin

no

yes

yes

no

no

Principal: Ben Fuller

Staff Representative: Donna Vincent

Student Representative: N/A

yes

yes

Ethnicity of Students: NZ European 64.44%; NZ Maori 13.79%; Korean 3.88%; Filipino 3.66%; Indian 3.66%; British/Irish 1.94%; Other South East Asian 1.51%, Tongan 1.29%; Chinese 1.29%; Australian 0.81%; Other European 0.86%; Samoan 0.43%; Khmer/Kampuchean/Cambodia 0.43%; Fijian 0.43%; Other Pacific Island Isl group 0.43%; African Origins 0.22%; Cook Isl Maori 0.22%; Other Asian 0.22%; Japanese 0.22%

School Response to the previous 2014 External Review Recommendations.

1. The Behaviour Plan and the Pastoral care programme are readily available for parents from the office and the school website.
2. It's pleasing to see classroom R/E displays reflecting the current strand being taught. Some displays may be kept on display for longer if they also connect with the next strand.
3. More consistency in team Long Term planning is occurring across the school but the unit/weekly planning requires more work. Teachers who were observed were competently using the digital resource and some were combining it with other resources.
4. Team leaders lead Religious Education team meetings which foster reflecting and evaluating as a team. Teacher evaluations have started to become the expectation in planning documents. Individual assessment of R/E still requires

work and the DRS has action plans to address this. Student knowledge and understanding of important strand concepts need to be identified and this will lead to next learning steps.

5. Professional development is continuing. Staff have attended R/E and Catholic Character professional development. The staff have joined a group of Catholic schools to form a faith Community of learning(COL.) There are 4 teachers with leadership certification, and 4 with classroom certification. Two teachers have also completed CAT studies. Two teachers have completed the Understanding Sexuality programme.
6. The school newsletters do contain information for parents about Catholic Character events and Feast Days. It was great to see the school syndicates and class newsletters also keeping parents informed about coming Special Character events. Consider adding more R/E information.
7. The school's phone number, e mail address are a regular insert in the parish newsletter. The DRS also contributes "St Mary's School News" in the parish bulletin "The Anchor".

Areas of Success

Catholic Community – Te Iwi Whanau Katoriki

Spirituality

The School provides on-going Catholic Formation, assisting individuals to deepen their personal relationship with Christ.

- The school is visibly Catholic from the entrance "Blessed be Jesus Christ True God and True Man" a quote of the Cluny Sisters, to the sacred space in the school grounds.
- All teachers are Catholic and this united faith community is able to enhance spirituality as part of the everyday life of the school.
- St Mary's school is a very welcoming faith community who live in the essence of prayer, scripture and God's love" (staff).
- Retreats are an excellent way to grow staff spirituality.
- This environment nurtures both staff and student prayer and the spirituality of all.
- The gospel is presented in various ways in weekly liturgies e.g. liquid pictures, chorus plays and videos.

Evangelisation

The School facilitates an encounter with Christ, and spreads the Good News to both Churched and un-Churched members of the community.

- Evangelisation is an important way the school activates “be Christ-Like”.
- At the time of the review 80% of the students were baptised Catholics.
- A successful parish/school sacramental program (confirmation, Reconciliation and Eucharist) is organised by some of the staff e.g.2015/2016 (67) students, 2016/2017(51) students.
- The school also offers a Baptism course and in 2017 (4) students were baptised.
- The staff and students experience mass and liturgies regularly e.g weekly class masses, a school/parish mass each term, and liturgies.
- Students are becoming more involved in ministries during the mass e.g. offertory, prayers of the faithful.

Partnership

St Mary’s School recognizes that Education is a collaborative responsibility.

- The staff encourage and welcome parents so they share the education and the faith of their child e.g. open door policy.
- The school “reinforces what we teach at home and for us as adults it keeps us active in our faith as we engage in liturgies and/communion (parent).
- 23 community surveys were returned and some comments form part of the report.
- The parish of St Thomas Aquinas and St Mary’s share newsletter inserts. The parish priests are available for Catholic events. Some staff have roles in the parish and these strengthen partnerships.
- The founding sisters of St Mary’s school are the St Joseph’s sisters of Cluny and that is visually evident. They live next door to the school and still have a presence at school events e.g. Mass, liturgies, Feast Days, and staff retreats. The school uses two of their values Truth and Mercy, and use their motto “Do a little good”.
- Aquinas College has frequent activities with St Mary’s school. They are invited to school masses, and past pupils are sometimes involved in the masses.

Values

Growth and understanding in the core values of Truth, Mercy, Faith and Wisdom is part of the school’s strategic plan for 2016-2018.

- The school values are Tika (truth), Aroha (Mercy), Whakaponono (Faith) and Maramatanga (Wisdom). The first two “Verex et Clemens” are from the Cluny sisters and the last two were decided upon by an earlier staff.
- They can be seen around the school, on the school crest and on school documents
- This year the school is focussing on Scripture and the DRs will run staff meeting to link the values with Gospel stories e.g Truth, John 14:6: Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me”.

School Culture

Through specific faith based teaching actively develop and honour each student as a unique individual as is promoted by the Charism of Blessed Anne Marie Javouhey.

- “An open, friendly and inclusive culture amongst staff and students alike”. (staff)
- The founding order of the Cluny Sisters erected this quote “Blessed be Jesus Christ true God and true man”. It is still at the entrance to the school and shows just how important God is, from 1942 and continues at the school today.
- There are numerous Special Character displays around the school. The foyer has large rosary beads, the cross, House banners and the enlarged vision statement.
- Large, bright student made mosaics, feature students’ impressions of faith, and show visitors the importance of Catholic Character e.g. wall pictures and totem poles.
- Courtesy and good manners are the norm in the daily interaction between staff and students.
- Interviewed students commented on the kindness of staff.
- The school is to be congratulated on the hospitality shown to students, parents, parishioners and reviewers.

Leadership

“Leadership effectively shapes the faith-based vision, direction values and outcomes of a Catholic School.

- The principal is hard working, passionate about student learning and innovative e.g. word art, “be inspired” displays. He ensures that there is R/E input in Teacher Only Days.
- He participates in Special Character professional development. He attends Catholic Convention, Diocesan principal’s meetings and staff R/E meetings.
- He attends class masses and takes his turn to lead staff prayer. He attends school liturgies where he “provides input and reflection, often drawing on personal examples”.(staff)
- He supports the DRS and leads the Leadership and Senior management teams.
- He supports the Catholic Character by regular updates on R/E in his principal’s report e.g. (Board)
- The leadership team lead their teams in all curriculum areas including R/E.
- Student leadership includes House leaders and peer mediators.

Stewardship

“St Mary’s Catholic School accepts responsibility for delivering education with a Catholic Special Character.”

- This year’s Special Character action plan is to focus on “Scripture’. They aim to “use scripture in creative, relevant ways to develop the key teachings of Jesus Christ in how we live daily”. (annual plan 2017).
- The charism of the founding sisters is strong and evident e.g. Cluny chapel, Blessed Anne Marie Javouhey hall.
- With all teaching staff and some support staff being Catholic, the Catholic Character is in safe hands.

- Each year students learn the stories of their House names (Pompellia, Cluny, Ryan and Viard) e.g Monsignor Ryan was instrumental in helping build the Catholic Church in Tauranga.

Worship and Prayer

“A culture of prayer and worship is promoted in St Mary’s School and makes the school authentically Catholic.”

- Prayer is given priority and is a “valued” time of each day. Whole school prayer starts the week, class prayer starts each day and all meetings start with prayer. The parish priest helped staff to write and develop a school prayer.
- Students and teachers gain confidence in participating in prayer. They appreciate their chance to grow spiritually and develop skills to lead prayer in their class and with the whole school.
- Numerous teachers explained in their surveys that “Prayer is not only talking to God but also listening”. This is very good practice.
- The Cluny chapel is a great asset for the school and is used weekly.
- Students and staff are regular participants in school Masses and liturgies. The DRS provides support for class masses. She assists the teachers in the planning and supports on the day. Students are becoming more involved in ministries.
- Exposition and Benediction occurs each term and this fosters an understanding of traditional Catholic practises.
- Some staff have ministries in the parish e.g. reading, singing.
- A number of parent surveys stated, “We love the class masses”.
- The Special Character annual plan for 2017 is to use scripture in creative and relevant ways.
- Students and staff with Andrew Chin’s assistance created their own school song, which all students sing with gusto after only 2 weeks.

Service/Social Justice

“The School recognises that each person is called as a responsible Christian, to take care of others and work for justice and equality.”

- Caritas Lenten programmes are used during Social Justice week.
- St Mary’s school is very proactive and has a range of service and outreach opportunities e.g. Meals for those in time of need, uniforms, and money for children to attend events or join activities.
- The office staff “keep their eyes and ears open” to listen to families’ needs and they do a remarkable job.
- The Young Vinnies group is very active e.g. raising funds from baking, sausage sizzles, Wig Wednesday (Child Cancer) and welcome baskets for refugees.
- They raised funds for St Joseph’s school Whakatane after the Edgecombe flood. They supplied a shared lunch, library books and Christmas presents for the local Merivale school.
- The school provide opportunities, specific assistance and financial help for students with Special Needs and ESOL requirements.

- One survey “I am truly overwhelmed by the prayers, kind words, meals and support that the teachers, support staff and wider community showed towards my family”. This is faith in action.
- The PTA works hard to build community spirit by organising fundraising events e.g. Fireworks and Outdoor Adventure day.
- A new initiative is the “Student Volunteer Army” which will mirror the activities of the Christchurch group and activates their motto “Do a little good”.

Collaboration with Parish

“Both the School and the Parish work together to reflect the face of Christ.”

- Weekly class masses at the school and whole school masses at St Thomas Aquinas parish show that some parishioners and school families worship together.
- Both the parish and the school add inserts into each other’s newsletters.
- The sacramental programme is organised by the parish and the staff.
- Some staff have regular ministries in the parish e.g. reading, offertory and Eucharist.
- The school choir “Sursum Corda” participates in parish masses once a month.

Pastoral Care – Manaakitanga

“The School creates a safe, nurturing environment where Pastoral Care reflects the love of God.”

- Pastoral Care is a real strength of this school by supporting students and families in a respectful and sensitive way. Practical support is available when required e.g. meals, baby care parcels.
- Some parent surveys commented that “pastoral care at St Mary’s is genuine and supportive”.
- The school is to be commended on the hospitality shown to the parents, parishioners and students after each class mass.

Relationships

“Relationships built on trust and collaboration are essential in building the School Community.”

- “The joy of working with people who share the values of the Catholic faith” (staff).
- “Offering a supportive learning environment and fostering strong relationships with students so each member of staff becomes someone the students and their families respect, confide in, and listen to”. (staff)
- All graduates of the school receive a Catholic icon e.g. wooden rosary beads. This practice reminds students of their continual faith life.
- Staff have joined a Community of Learning (COL) with other Catholic schools. This is an opportunity to share best practice.

Safety

“Ensure St Mary’s school is a safe and secure environment for all those who utilise our school.” (Strategic Plan)

- The school is a safe environment with all procedures being documented.
- All staff ensure that all students’ needs are being met physically, emotionally, social, spiritual and cultural.
- The Board has policies on Bullying and one on Cyber Bullying.
- All students and parents/caregivers sign a ICT Digital Technology Agreement so all are aware of the expectations at school.

Behaviour Management

“Principles of justice and consistency are components of positive behaviour”

- “People treating each other in a Christlike manner” (student).
- The plan is about “students developing a conscience” (staff).
- Since the last review all staff have attended the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) seminars. The principles of PB4L and the principles of restorative justice have been linked in the revised Behaviour Management plan.
- The school “be Christ like, be reflective” values are also used in the new plan.
- There are tiers of staff involvement e.g. peer mediators, duty teacher, team leader, DP, and Principal.
- Positive “be “tokens are awarded for good behaviour and these go into an end of term draw.
- The plan is available on the school website and in the teachers’ handbook.

Bi Cultural Awareness

“St Mary’s Catholic school embraces Taha Maori and recognises and responds to the wider cultural heritage of students and their families”. (Strategic Plan)

- Special visitors are welcomed with a powhiri.
- Staff are encouraged to use Te Reo in their classrooms. E.g. karakia, and Waiata.
- All students attend Kapahaka group weekly.
- Te Reo responses to the prayers of the faithful are used in some masses.
- Students learn about the Maori Myths and legends e.g. Maori Creation story.
- There are regular opportunities for the staff to meet with whanau groups and provide information about the school.
- The school hosted the local combined schools “Re Whakangahau” (Maori) festival.
- Matariki is celebrated at the school.

Multi-Cultural Awareness

“Staff ensure student names are pronounced correctly and it is appreciated”.

- The Samoan group have sung and taught the school hymns as part of Mass. With the increased diversity of cultures, different cultures are encouraged to join in cultural masses using their own languages and customs.
- St Mary’s school has 12 international students from Korea.
- International Families afternoon teas are held once a term which is a great way to ensure they build social networks.
- It is sound practice that their families have meetings with staff with a translator present.
- One staff member and the principal are responsible for their welfare but the whole community are supportive and welcoming.
- There is a pastoral care visit to homes once a year and homes are visited when children require health services.

Organisation

“Sound management and governance strengthen the Catholic Character.”

- Procedures and organisation are explained and available to students and parents.
- The Board/Principal and team leaders ensure the smooth running of the school day to day.

Pastoral Care of the Principal and DRS

“Education occurs in a safe, nurturing environment supported by a strong pastoral care network.”

- The Board is very supportive of the Principal and DRS.
- The Board Chairperson meets weekly with the principal.
- The Cluny sisters, Diocesan staff, parish priests and staff are very supportive.
- The Board funded the Principal and eight staff to visit and observe some Melbourne schools and one was a Catholic school.
- This year the Principal, with the support of the Board, is going to France to learn more about the Sisters of Cluny (founding order of the school) and their Charism.
- The DRS, Principal and DP meet regularly to share ideas and concerns.
- The Parish Priests, Cluny Sisters and some parishioners provide support for the DRS.
- The DRS release is adequate to accomplish her key tasks.
- The previous DRS and the current DRS work well together sharing best practice.

Religious Education-Te Whakaakoranga Whakapono

Leadership

“The Principal promotes leadership and sound management in Religious Education through his support of the DRS.”

- The new DRS and the parish priest keep in constant communication through weekly meetings and emails. She ensures that the school has a high presence in the parish.
- She lives her faith each day and is passionate about nurturing student/staff and community faith.
- She brings new “up to date” ideas and is gradually introducing these.
- Staff appreciate that she is always available to help and guide them. She is a “valuable” staff member.
- The DRS keeps good records on Special Character and R/E planning, evaluation and professional development.
- She also provides an R/E curriculum report to the Board e.g. Term 3 2016 focussed on key achievement objectives of three strands (God, Church, and Communion of Saints).

Religious Education Curriculum

“The Religious Education programme is evident in the School.”

- Religious Education is taught from the National programme as prescribed by the NZ Bishop’s Conference and is given appropriate status in the overall teaching programme.
- “Curriculum personalisation to St Mary’s is developing well using the digital resource and changing it with examples from our school” e.g. slides of local churches. (staff)
- The very positive Atrium programme “Catechesis of the Good Shepherd” It is a Montessori based programme led by trained facilitators and is a delight to observe. Pre-school to year 2 children are guided in the foundations of our faith e.g. practising the sign of the cross, discussing and learning scripture. This is reinforced by using icons and symbols to act out the readings.
- At the end of each year there is a Special Character reflection for the Board and community e.g. 2016 students focussed on writing and listening to prayers and reflections.
- The strand evaluation is gradually being developed e.g. What has gone really well in student learning?
- The DRS has planned a trip for the fourth student Learning team around the local churches. This is the history Catholicism where faith has been nurtured.

Integrated Curriculum

“Every effort is made to integrate the Special Character with other curriculum areas.”

- Reviewers observed that staff are integrating the faith with the key competencies and other curriculum areas. These practices provide real life connections to link student knowledge and understanding, and to “be Christ-like”.
- R/E is interwoven across the curriculum e.g. focus in writing, part of reading activities. This is evident in the senior rooms.

Resources

“Board of Trustees is responsible for adequately resourcing the Special Character of the School”.

- The board ensures there are adequate funds available for Special Character and R/E resources.
- The school is well resourced.
- The resources are kept in numerous places e.g. classrooms and hubs, Centre and Chapel, R/E office and teacher resource room.
- Teachers are encouraged to seek new resources.

Professional Development

“Regular Professional and Spiritual development opportunities are required for all Staff.”

- It was pleasing to see that in 2016 staff attended “Spirituality” by Fr Bernie and “Encountering God” by Gerard Aynsley. The new DRS led staff meetings on Charism, Catholic Education, Strand Theology and Planning to Engage.
- In 2017 up to the review date all staff, including support staff, attended two of Fr Richard Leonard’s Special Character sessions and have had Fr Stuart and Diocesan staff leading staff meetings on Scripture.
- Each teacher has met the DRS to develop their skills in mass and liturgy planning.
- Eleven attended the 2015 NZ Catholic Convention including one Board member and the parish priest.

Communication

“Regular communication with Whanau develops good relationships and enables Faith conversations.”

- Newsletters “be informed” from the school, and parish newsletters, are available for families e.g. invitation to join Sacramental programme.
- The school website is also very informative especially for new families.
- Student led conferences are part of the school’s reporting system.
- The introduction of Home learning sheets for each term include R/E and SP/C activities. Interviewed parents commented positively about these.
- There is student online R/E work for the middle and senior school e.g. personal and creative prayer.
- Teams provide parent letters each year e.g. 2017 Maramatanga team focus on Caritas Lent unit, “Just Water-Caritas in the Pacific”.

Statutory Compliances

- The reviewers observed R/E lessons and are confident that the delivery of R/E is in safe hands.
- The principal and DRS report to the Board and parish on how the school celebrates Catholic observances e.g. Masses, the Liturgical Year and Feast Days.
- St Mary’s school maintains strong links with its founding sisters and their close proximity enables the sisters to be present at numerous events.
- The Proprietor's Appointees and the principal complete the annual report to the Proprietor together e.g. each term new students are introduced and presented with a religious medal. .
- All Board members participate in leading prayer and reflection. The Board fully supports the Catholic Character of the school by providing generous funding for R/E resources, staff professional development and Special Character events e.g. Feast Days and retreats.
- The senior leadership team reviews the Strategic plan and then the Board has input.
- The Board has policies and procedures as guidelines for the school. There are R/E and Special Character policies.
- The Charter and Annual plan link to the strategic priorities e.g. R/E target is that all students will increase knowledge and understanding of the relevance of scripture in their lives.
- New staff are inducted with a handbook that explains Special Character and they all attend the Diocesan course for “New Teachers to Catholic Schools”.

Recommendations

Compliance

Preference

5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	Non-preference	International
367	5	34	11	35	12

- The school is **non-compliant in the number of non-preference students**. This has occurred since 2013. The number of non-preference students should be 4% (20) of the maximum roll of 500, according to the school’s Integration Agreement. The current number is 35. The non-preference roll needs to be closed to all new families. The diocese will only consider siblings of non-preference students already attending the school. No new non-preference students should be enrolled until the school is compliant. Consider collating the evidence of non-preference sibling due dates and non-preference numbers leaving the school. Consider adding this information in the principal’s report to the Board so accurate data will keep the numbers reducing.
- The correct number of **Tagged teachers** for St Mary’s is 14 including the Principal, DRS and DP. This requires clarification for all staff. Tagged teachers will have leadership expectations according to their job descriptions. Support staff are unsure whether they have Tagged positions. The Board and the principal need to clarify this.
- Two new **proprietor’s appointees** are required and this is in hand.

- When the Board is reviewing the **policies and procedures** consider using relevant specific Catholic Social Teachings.

Key Recommendations

- Continue to build and strengthen **parish/school relationships**. “Spending time together” e.g invite the priests as resource personnel for R/E lessons.
- Consider adding information about the **R/E strands for parents** on the school website.
- Some parent surveys would like to **see an R/E lesson and the following activities**. Consider one observation lesson available after a class mass. Consider inviting parishioners and the priests, as the R/E lessons in classrooms these days are much more interactive.
- Some parent surveys indicated they would like **more information at the start of the new R/E strand**. The children will be learning, and also, it would explain our faith at a more advanced level for parents.
- Encourage staff, including the leadership team, to build up their **certification hours** by attending relevant professional development.
- Consider all staff completing the **Understanding Sexuality** to ensure health topics are linked to Catholic teaching.
- Continue “to introduce and expose children to a **wide variety of prayer styles** e.g.music, nature, and scripture”.(staff survey)
- Encourage “All staff to participate in R/E **PD** to align traditional R/E teaching to fit with collaborative practice”. (Staff survey) (Strategic Plan)
- “Knowing more specific examples of how to teach R/E and make it fun, interactive and age appropriate”. (Staff survey)
- On the assessment calendar there is only one strand assessment. Student assessment needs to be regular so that collated data would show best teacher practices and that each child is building an understanding of their faith.
- Grow student and teacher understanding of **Te Reo and Tikanga Maori** (S.Plan). Consider investigating a marae visit.

Conclusion:

The Reviewers would like to thank the Community of St Mary’s School Tauranga for your very warm welcome to us, for your openness to our discussions, and your receptivity of any suggestions. It was a pleasure sharing this time with you, and wish you every blessing as you continue to provide the best Catholic Education.

Lorraine Gordon
Lead Reviewer

Jo Brady
Reviewer

John Coulam
Catholic School’s Manager