

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HAMILTON



**Marian Catholic School
Hamilton**

**ĀHUATANGA KATORIKA KAUPAPA AROTAKE
TE PŪRONGO AROTAKE O WAHO**

**CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER
REVIEW REPORT**

3 - 5 March 2020

REVIEW OF CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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Review Report

Marian Catholic School

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. This is the evangelising mission of the Church, in which the school participates.

In the review, schools are asked to consider the ways in which they provide for their students:

- an encounter with Christ,
- growth in knowledge, and
- the development of Christian witness.

The review also investigates stewardship of the relationship with the Church and the State. Reviewers encourage and commend best practice, and, working with the school, provide indications of opportunities to further strengthen and develop the Catholic culture.

School Details:

School Type: Full Primary (Yr1-8)

Maximum Roll: 600

School Roll at 5/03/2020: 612

Non Preference: 48 students (8%)

Non-preference Number: 16

Decile Rating: 7

Board of Trustees 2020:

Debra White (Principal)

Proprietors Representatives

Wayne Bates (Chairman).

Andrea Savage

Sue O'Brien.

Malcolm Barr.

Staff Representative

Nicole Higby

Elected Representatives

Bart Karalus

Catherine Ellice

Nerrolly Hay

Matthew Iremonger

Angus McKenzie

Rowena Moore

Date of on-site review: 3 - 5 March 2020

Progress with the previous recommendations – 2016

Summary of Recommendations	
<p>1. Develop an action plan relating to strategic or annual targets which could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific expectations around the teaching and assessment and evaluation of Religious Education in the classroom • Opportunities to be observed and to observe best practice 	<p>Team teaching within the school - opportunity for teachers to model lessons and for new teachers to feel part of the Religious Education Programme that their class is involved in. This makes it easier for them to build on during other parts of the day. Instills good practice in Religious Education. A Buddy teachers system is in place too as well.</p>
<p>2. A Proprietor's Appointee suggests that more regular reporting to the Board by the Director of Religious Studies on Catholic Character matters would be beneficial</p>	<p>Director of Religious Studies reports are prepared each month and presented to the Board of trustees on Special Character. These include updates on events within the school. Director of Religious Studies and members of the RE team have spoken at BOT meetings each year outlining the Charism Journey to them. This has been very thorough.</p>
<p>3. The Board of Trustees and school Leadership Team need to revisit the NZCBC publication "<i>The Catholic Education of School Age Children</i>" to increase their understanding and use of this document by incorporating its intentions into the future actions and strategies of Marian Catholic School</p>	<p>The work done in Special Character suggests that the Leadership Team have a clear understanding of the Bishop's Document and are actively putting many of the recommendations into practice. The exemplary work on the Charisms clearly supports this.</p>
<p>4. There is an annual requirement that the Board of Trustees, through their Proprietor's Appointees complete a report to the Proprietor as stipulated in the handbook for Boards of Trustees of NZ catholic Schools Appendix 2.2 pp 82-85. The Board should schedule this for completion each year using the checklist provided in the Handbook</p>	<p>This is now carried out as a matter of course each year. There was a delay in the year of reporting in 2016.</p>

TE TUTAKI 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?

The Vision of the school is: "Our vision is to bring our motto, 'Bring Christ into the World, by being the Hands, face and voice of Jesus' to life in the daily interactions of life at Marian." What it means to be a Catholic in the 21st century' (Principal). The impact of this is that the students have a very clear understanding of the Motto, they clearly embrace it, and apply what it means in their everyday lives. This is also clear for the Board of Trustees and the parents who we spoke to.

Staff prayer is shared among staff on a daily basis. The opportunity is given to pray for others. The review team witnessed a real depth of personal witness in the prayers shared which reflected the high level trust amongst staff. Besides this depth of reflection, it is customary for staff to include intentions in a book which are then included in the prayer time each day.

Classroom prayer starts and ends each day, allowing students to enrich their own prayer life. The review team witnessed high levels of student engagement and saw great opportunities for students to lead prayer. Children gathered in a circle around a lovely prayer foci that reflected the current season of Lent. There was a range of styles and ways of praying in the classrooms; action songs and dance, which encouraged a developing relationship with Jesus. Scripture/Bible stories were included as well as traditional Catholic prayers and opportunities were given for children to share their own special intentions. Links were made to the Charism focus that was shared at the weekly Gospel Liturgy and children discussed what that would look like in action. The Director of Religious Studies is working with the Leaders of Learning Communities to continue the development in this area.

Each week the whole school gathers for a liturgy where the Sunday Gospel is shared and reflected upon. This Liturgy is lead by four students from a different senior class each week. There is high student involvement in the presentation of the liturgy. A staff member shares a reflection which unpacks the Gospel for the students and makes it relatable for all levels. The one the Review Team witnessed was most impressive. A particular aspect which is highlighted is the Charism focus for the week. The final statement in this Liturgy was "Together we can be the hands, face and voice of Christ, to learn, grow and be happy. Have a wonderful week." The impact of this is that this liturgy is referred back to throughout the week and the Charisms remain in the forefront throughout the week. Staff reported "that they love the fact that the reflections are not just relatable to them but to students at all levels."

The school actively encourages attendance for both staff and students at Sunday Mass. A significant number of the staff actively practise their faith and act as strong role models. They see it as important to show commitment to the parish by being active role models

such as Readers, Leaders of Children's Liturgy and Ministers of the Eucharist. Two staff members were received into the Church last Year.

Whole School Masses are celebrated at the start and end of term as well as for important liturgical events. In addition, two Buddy classes attend the Parish midday Mass each Thursday. At each of the School Masses and the School parish Mass, students bring items of grocery which are presented at the Offertory. These are then collected by The Combined Christian Food bank. A new initiative is the introduction of Sunday School/Parish Masses with a learning team focus for each term. These have been particularly successful in encouraging active student participation and leadership as well gathering parents to join. It also works for the parish as well in that if the whole school was there would be no room for the parishioners. This makes it manageable for all.

Connection to the Parish is very strong. The Sacramental Programme is a very successful feature of the school-parish partnership. Strong leadership from the Pastoral Assistant helps maintain a strong connection to the school. She leads the Sacramental Programme and is assisted by three teachers from the school. As well as this there is a RCIC programme which has had a significant number of students from the school participate in. The Director of Religious Studies and Parish Pastoral Assistant look for students who are eligible and supply the parish with information to invite the students through their parents to become involved. The parents have opportunities to be included in the programmes. One parent commented "I do know they invite students to continue their sacramental journey through notices in the newsletter, invitations to Mass for the family, School Masses for children" "The principal's reflections in the weekly newsletter is an awesome way the school invites us to continue growing our Faith." (Parent)

The Director of Religious Studies has been at the forefront in developing the dual Charism of the school, underpinning the values and strategic direction of the school. The Charism has undergone a huge amount of revisiting over the last two years, because the origin of the school has come from the amalgamation of a Marist School and The Mission Sisters School. The basis has been the charisms of the Marist Tradition from St Marcellin Champagnat and from the Founder of the Mission Sisters, Euphrasie Barbier. The full staff have had a huge input into the development of the Charisms and are very proud of the outcome. The students we spoke to were very familiar with the charisms of the school and where their origins. The impact of this has been that students, staff, parents and the community know the charism well and own it. There is a great deal of pride and interest from students, staff and parents in the new Charism Garden as a visual sign, which is an outstanding witness to those who come to visit.

The motto is well embedded in the school and the students clearly understand what it is about. "The encouragement and emphasis the school gives my children to 'Live the way of Christ in their day to day life i.e. "To be the Hands, Face and Voice of Christ" is wonderful. (parent) It is very evident that students understand this and are able to link it with how they behaved and the various service outreaches.

Staff Induction is carried out very thoroughly and professionally. At the start of the year all staff attend an induction session. The Director of Religious Studies leads the first hour outlining the difference between a state and our Special Character Catholic School. A number of teachers reported that their induction had been very thorough and that they felt at home very quickly. They felt enthusiastic about the motto and the Charism development that had been happening. Staff are buddied and mentored with more experienced Catholic staff to help them understand the procedures and approaches to teaching in a Catholic School and the Special Character activities. Teachers new to Catholic Schools attend an RE501 course which begins their journey towards a Certificate in Christian Studies. Student induction is also a very thorough process with junior students being buddied with senior students and similarly with new students coming into the school.

Opportunity for Development

The Leadership Team will continue to develop consistent expectations of prayer across the school.

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?

The Principal and Director of Religious Studies are faith-filled role models who are both active in ministry in their Parish. There is a good connection between the Principal Director of Religious Studies and Leadership Team. The Principal and Director of Religious Studies collaborate to ensure teachers have comprehensive faith formation opportunities in Religious Education and Catholic Character. The Director of Religious Studies provides outstanding leadership for the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum and ensures that teachers have the resources, knowledge and skills they need. She works well with a team of teachers who support her in her role. She has an eye on them and encourages them for succession planning also. One teacher said "You can never ask Nicki a dumb question. You feel safe to be totally honest."

Catholic spiritual formation for staff is a real strength in the school. The Principal and Director of Religious Studies work collaboratively to lead the development of Catholic Character. They are both active in the living of their Faith and committed to their own Professional Learning in a variety of ways. For the Principal Spiritual Formation is a strong focus of the leadership of the school. Opportunity is provided for staff to build their own capacity as witness to students. There is much encouragement to do papers through the Catholic Institute Aotearoa. Recently four teachers completed two papers from the Institute. This allows them to be more active and supportive in the delivery of the Religious Education Programme. Teachers are well supported in working towards a qualification in Religious Education and Catholic Character. Currently most of the teaching staff are undertaking an "Understanding Sexuality" paper in order to prepare them for the delivery of the programme in Term Three. Prior to commencement there was Staff consultation on how best to study

the sexuality programme. The school has been creative in its support for these teachers by facilitating time for them to do the papers through freeing them from afternoon school and providing extended time including a nice meal for them. Those who have completed the programme look after the students for that afternoon. Teachers have been given a half day release as well. The impact of this is that the full school will be part of delivering a coordinated programme throughout the school. Two teachers have also recently received a Diploma in Religious Education. The Board of Trustees and the PTA are outstanding in their support of this work. The result is that there is a culture around expectation to continue teacher development in Catholic spirituality

Each staff member completes at least 12 hours of formation through RE staff meetings, strand meetings and visiting speakers. Sister Anne, as a Charism and Prayer coach, comes in regularly to support the teachers, students and leaders of learning. Father Darren has been active with input also.

The Religious Education Programme is given high status in the school. The review team witnessed a number of lessons across the year levels. In the lessons observed, students were fully engaged, either in discussion, collaborative work, or activities to consolidate the learning. In addition, some classes have creative activities that made explicit links to the Charism focus for the week. Wall displays of student learning in Religious Education. and the liturgical season of Lent were evident in most classes. All classes had a focus on the school's Charism on their wall, as well as a prayer table, and crucifix reflecting the Lenten season. Traditional Prayers were displayed on the wall. Some were in Te Reo Maori.

The Religious Education programme is very soundly managed. The Director of Religious Studies sets up the general direction of the Religious Education Programme over a two year cycle. Each team plans their Religious Education units collaboratively to ensure coverage of the current strand and looks for opportunities to integrate and extend the learning. The school is very well resourced to deliver the programmes. Faith Alive forms a good backbone for their programme. There is strong teacher commitment to Religious Education. Most of the Programme is taught by catholic teachers who are buddied with other teachers who are still aspiring to teach Religious Education. There is clearly strong support for one another.

As part of their Religious Education programme the students are focusing on the environment as part of God's creation. Many students have a real interest and take great pride and joy in valuing the growing of plants. "The school has done some work on aspects of Laudato Si and Tikana Maori concepts as a means of linking the work they do in the environment to higher spiritual value. The various class levels have been focussing their study on different aspects of the environment and planning alternative practical things to do e.g.zero waste lunchboxes, vege patches, no plastic and other possibilities.

TE WHAKAATU KARAITIANA- CHRISTIAN WITNESS

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

The staff are a powerful witness to the students and the community by the fact that a significant number are openly practising their Faith. The culture of the school is characterised by a feeling that people are important. There are positive respectful relationships at all levels, as well as friendly communications. The Marian smile is evident throughout the school. Staff provide strong support for one another and the community. This has been particularly evident recently with the bereavement of a staff member and another who is going through a journey with cancer. Staff have rallied with prepared meals and other kinds of emotional support and care.

There is a very healthy link between the school and the parish. A significant number of staff are active in various Ministries in the Parish. The priests have a very visible presence in the school. Father Darren has a special way with reaching out and pitching to the level of students in his homilies. He has a great sense of gentleness and caring and the students, parents and staff find him very approachable and supportive. Father Matt has been particularly good in visiting classrooms in support of teachers. The connection with the parish is particularly enhanced by the outstanding contribution of the Parish Pastoral Assistant who frequently visits the school and is a member of the Board of Trustees team.

Connection with other Catholic Schools is very active. There is effective leadership from the Principal who is an active member of the Hamilton Catholic Principals' Association as well as being a member of the Executive of Catholic Principals nationally. Marian Catholic School is an active member of the Waikato Catholic Kahui Ako. All staff are part of the Professional Development provided which includes Special Character. The School is always keen to host other catholic schools.

The school recognises the responsibility of increasing the awareness of the bicultural reality in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Korowai group (whanau group) is continuing to build strength. There is an active Kapa haka group who perform as part of welcoming new people to the school as well as participate in competitions. One teacher is a fluent speaker of Te Reo. Each Friday a teacher of Te Reo comes into the school and models the teaching of Te Reo to the teachers in an effort to support them in their ongoing confidence in teaching the language. The school is continuing to incorporate Te Reo in Masses, school liturgies, prayers in the classroom as well as use of phrases and greetings of welcome to visitors entering a class. In the past two years the school has senior students attending the Rangiaowhia Commemorations at Kihikihi. (2020 all 6 classes). A new Maori leadership opportunity is at present being developed for students to offer leadership assistance in promoting Manaakitanga (hospitality) and Kaitiakitanga (guardianship).

The school takes the opportunity to celebrate the multicultural makeup of its community. There are teacher aides who take a lead role in supporting students from India, South America, and Pacifika. They support language growth, and encourage the students through creating pride in their cultural practices. The IT Application Dojo is also a most useful

connection with parents and translates messages for parents whose level of English is not great.

The Leadership Team and Board of Trustees display a firm commitment to providing high levels of support staff. This is a special feature of the Marian Pastoral Care system. This means that students with special needs are highly supported in classrooms by teacher aides. Students commented that they felt safe in the school. They recognised that there were some students who had particular needs but that the school was putting in the necessary support to help such students. Students who may not have lunch are easily identified because each class has their lunch together (first 10 minutes) with their teacher. If a teacher observes that someone does not have lunch the office has systems to ensure lunch is provided with discretion.

The buddy system is well supported by the students and staff. Senior classes are buddied with students from the junior school. This is a means of giving leadership opportunities to senior students. The junior students clearly value this connection. Peer mediators play a role in leadership as well as in building relationships in the school. Some senior students set up games for junior students at lunch time. A special feature are the buddy chairs set up in the playground where students sit who are feeling a bit lonely and/or need a friend on a particular day. Other students respond and come to join them. The students expressed enthusiasm in being able to support each other in this way..

The Pastoral Care worker has a key role in supporting families who are struggling as well as students who need support. Second hand uniform items are available at a very affordable price. She liaises with the diocese to assist those who struggle to pay the Diocesan fee. She aids in the counselling of students. She works closely with the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and the Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) to see how they can work together to support families. Staff take the opportunity to talk with her and she both encourages and supports them to see the Principal who readily offers half a day release if requested. The outcome of this is that the staff do feel very supported by the leadership team at the school.

The school has a Christ-centred approach to service at all levels. The students were able to verbalise this and link it to both the Motto and their newly developed Charisms. The school prides itself on the opportunities provided for students to be involved in service within and outside the school. Mission day is a special day to outreach locally and internationally. Money is raised and distributed to Tuesday meals at the cathedral for the homeless, Foodbank and donations to Marcellin School in Kiribati. Last year support was given to the Muslim Community in the way of food parcels. Solidarity day held in Lent is a day where Mass is celebrated and a rice meal is eaten in solidarity with the people of Kiribati (this year's focus). Other schools from Hamilton also joined in this day.

Young Vinnies are active in the Community. They have visited local rest homes, delivered shortbread to shoppers in Hamilton East in the build up to Christmas. Groceries have been supplied to Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank. As part of their service outreach one

Learning Community regularly visits a retirement village where each child has a nominated person whom they relate to and communicate with and take much interest in. Ukulele groups also provide entertainment for the community. "On grand parents day we invite the people from the retirement village to join us as well." (teacher) There is a strong link with Jubilee Early Childhood Centre. The little ones are invited to Saints' day to see the older students dressed as Saints.

Opportunity for Development

The school already recognises the responsibility of increasing awareness of the bicultural reality in Aotearoa New Zealand. It has taken a number of steps to develop an understanding of Te Ao Māori and communicates this with all ākonga. An opportunity is there to further strengthen this alongside the development of the localised connected curriculum.

TE KAITIAKITANGA ME TE 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?

The school is meeting its obligations under the Integration Agreement in terms of the number of non-preference students. According to the Integration Act, Marian Catholic School is compliant in all areas for maintaining and strengthening its Catholic identity. The school is ably led by a strong Leadership Team including the Director of Religious Studies who stands out as an excellent role model as well as a living witness and has earned huge respect among the students, staff and parents. Several staff and parents made reference to the huge contribution she has made to the Special Character of the school.

A number of the staff actively practise their faith and there is a culture of knowing they have the support to learn more to deepen their faith. The fact that two staff members have come into the faith over the last two years and four members have done what is necessary to meet the requirements to teach Religious Education is a great testament to this. They have a strong understanding of their responsibilities and use this to support the Principal and Director of Religious Studies in their joint guardianship of the Special Character. The Director of Religious Studies reports on Special Character and what is happening in Religious Education and Special Character at every Board of Trustees meeting. The website and newsletters are both impressive in their proclamation of the Gospel.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To use Religious Education as the central core for their localised connected curriculum to develop an effective framework for the school. The emphasis here is to make the Religious Education programme even more central to the whole curriculum.
2. To strengthen the home-school partnership, ensure that there is consistency across the school in communicating to parents what is being learned in each Religious Education strand. To update the school website regarding the R.E. programme.

The Review Team would like to thank the whole community of Marian Catholic School for their very warm welcome and hospitality and their outstanding preparation and documentation made available to us. The Review Team witnessed a real celebration of their Charism which demonstrates tremendous respect to the founding Orders of the Sisters of the Mission and Marist Brothers. Through a very thorough process of bringing the community on board they have captured the spirit of Euphrasie Barbier and St Marcellin Champagnat. The pride shown by students staff and parents in the new Charism garden is a very fitting expression of the work that has preceded.

Preference Audit

School: Marian Catholic School Hamilton

Review Date: 3 - 5 March 2020

**Reviewers: Terry Consedine, Wendy Consedine,
Jane Rutherford, Rhonda McFarlane and Pauline Schmidt**

Roll: (maximum roll 600) Actual 610

5.1: 494 80.7%

5.2: 13 2.1%

5.3: 59 9.6%

5.4: 20 3.3% _____

5.5 : 11 1.8%

Non Preference pupils : 16

Foreign Fee Paying (FFP): 17 (6 are Preference)

Refugees: 3



MARIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Empowered to Learn, Inspired for Life

