



ĀHUATANGA KATORIKA KAUPAPA AROTAKE ME TE AHU WHAKAMUA

CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW FOR DEVELOPMENT

Report on an external review of

TE KURA KATORIKA Ō HATO HOHEPA ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL UPPER HUTT

JUNE 2019

Review conducted on: 24th – 26th June

Review Team:

Zita Smith (Lead Reviewer)

Mary Cook (Accompanying Reviewer)



SCHOOL DETAILS

Name	St Joseph's Catholic Primary
School	
Address	Pine Avenue, Upper Hutt
School Type	Co-educational Years 1-8
Decile	7

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

Maori:	90	(19%)
Pasifika:	68	(15%)
Pakeha:	156	(34%)
Asian:	108	(23%)
MELAA:	26	(6%)
Other	14	(3%)
Total	462	

Principal	Andrew Herrick
Director of Religious Studies	Bridget Connor
BOT Chairperson	Ruth Jones
Parish Priest	Maleko Api-Tufuga

Date of on-site review: 24 – 26th June 2019

Date of this report: 5th July 2019

The Catholic special character review of St. Joseph's School was conducted by the Wellington Catholic Schools Education Service review team of:

Zita Smith
Lead Reviewer

Mary Cook
Accompanying 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 Education Office, 2018 (Draft).

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

- Encounter with Christ - *Te 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

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is situated in the heart of Upper Hutt and caters for students from Years 1-8. The school was founded by the Sisters of Mercy and is over 100 years old. It is proud of its rich history and constantly seeks to further enhance its Catholic character. The parish church and presbytery are adjacent to the school, enabling the school to use the church for most of its Masses and liturgies.

Currently the roll is 460 with students coming from all over the Upper Hutt catchment. The school has a capacity roll of 580 students, within which 5% non-preference children can be enrolled. The majority of students complete eight years at St. Joseph's, most of whom go on to Catholic colleges.

The school vision is *Faith in the Future, Love of Learning, Love of Life*. The five school values are evident in classrooms, in the staffroom and foyer, and in teacher and student conversations. Students are familiar with these values and can describe what they look like in terms of positive expectations for their behaviour in the school.

In the last year there has been significant staff turnover. A new principal was appointed in 2018, and nine new teachers have been appointed within the last year. The leadership team and staff are enthusiastic and committed to ensuring students receive quality education in a sound pedagogical framework.

The mandated NZ RE Curriculum is being implemented across the school and teachers use a range of strategies to engage students and give them agency over their learning. The school's integrated approach to teaching RE across the school, using a range of curriculum areas, gives students an authentic experience of faith from their own worldview. The effect of this approach is that students can see ways that they can make a positive difference to their world.

Relationships between staff and students are respectful, positive and supportive. Students are welcoming and helpful. The principal and DP ensure staff and student well-being is safeguarded, and staff are sensitive to the needs of one another and their students. Pastoral care is seen as the responsibility of all and is responsive to need.

The school leadership, together with the Board, demonstrate effective leadership and stewardship of the school. 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 2015 Review

- 1. Develop a school-wide understanding of curriculum integration to ensure adequate coverage of the achievement objectives of the Religious Education programme and expectations for consistency of practice.***

Since the end of 2017 there has been a significant turnover in staff numbers at St Joseph's School, many with little experience teaching in a Catholic School. School leadership have enlisted ongoing teacher PD with CSES. As a result a clear, schoolwide planning structure is in place with increased consistency in teaching practice.

- 2. Ensure that all teachers are aware of the school's expectations for them to uphold the Catholic Character of the school. Include a section in the Teachers' Handbook that includes prayer, religious education, professional development, pastoral care etc.***

The development of a new 'Letter of Offer' includes all of the information with regard to the expectations of teachers within Catholic Schools and all teachers who are currently working in a permanent or fixed term role have personal copies of this. Ongoing expectations have yet to be included in the teacher handbook.

- 3. Encourage staff to deepen their own understanding of Catholic faith and practices by undertaking papers such as TH101. This would be very beneficial as the school works towards the successful implementation of religious education integration.***

Due to the large number of new staff, all teaching staff completed TCI paper RE 502 in 2018. All new teachers to St Joseph's School since the last review have completed RE 501. In 2019 the principal is completing RE 502. This year all teachers are attending professional development in Catholic Māori Spirituality.

- 4. To further enhance the Catholic Character of the school, increase the number of icons and art work in the foyer, corridors and classrooms.***

As part of setting up the classroom, there is an expectation that teachers provide a prayer space with candles, crucifix and Catholic icons. The school foyer has a central display with the school vision, mission and charism in it. In some classrooms, particularly the junior area, children's work in RE is displayed.



5. The school has in place very good processes for pastoral care and these need to be included in the pastoral care policy.

There is no evidence that effective pastoral care practices of the school have been written into the pastoral care policy or procedures.



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

The school vision, *Faith in the Future, Love of Learning, Love of Life* is evident in the staffroom and in Charter documents. The school values of determination, respect, creativity, love and excellence are seen and heard everywhere; in classrooms, in the conversations between staff and students and in the expectations for behaviour. Students are very familiar with these values and can describe what they look like in practice. Each week the principal leads a whole school *Monday Motivator*, which focuses on one of the values and relates it to a Gospel story. Teachers then lead an activity with their students around this value some time during the week. Teacher discussions with children about the current value were common.

Prayer is an integral part of the daily routine of school life with classes praying together every morning. Prayer spaces are evident in all classrooms. Students experience a variety of prayer styles: traditional, spontaneous, student-led, singing, using clips from YouTube, reading scripture and children drawing what it meant to them, personal prayer, prayers from the Mass incorporated into the prayer circle, sharing what happened in the playground and how the current value could be seen in student actions. Some classes are also practised in mindfulness or meditative prayer. One classroom has a Prayer Wall where students can paste their special prayer intentions to be included in class prayer. In the month of October some syndicates come together to say the Rosary and children are taught about the Mysteries of the Rosary with tagged teachers leading and modelling this.

Staff pray each week before their afternoon staff meeting. They take turns on a roster to organise and lead this. Teachers model Gospel values in their interactions with colleagues, students and whanau.

The spiritual formation of students and staff also occurs in a regular programme of liturgies and Masses that are appropriate for the age and culture of participants. Every Wednesday, one syndicate is rostered to attend the local parish Mass in the church, often leading singing as well as reading Scripture and prayers of the faithful. Twice a year, a whole school and parish Sunday Mass is held, with an expectation of students and their families attending. The most recent, on Trinity Sunday, had much higher attendance than in the past, due to the clearer expectation of the school through word of mouth, newsletters, emails and involving as many students as possible.



Other opportunities for whole school Masses or Liturgies include St Joseph's Day Mass followed by a day of celebration, Ash Wednesday Mass, Holy Week ceremonies, Mass at the end of each term, end of year Leavers Mass, classroom liturgies and assembly prayer.

Each year there is an opportunity for Reconciliation with a group of priests enlisted by the parish priest.

This year, the twelve student leaders attended a day for Student Leaders in Catholic Schools (SLICS) with students from St Peter and Paul's School in Lower Hutt. Students we spoke to are clearly being formed to understand Catholic Social teaching and are able to articulate a spiritual, Gospel-based response to societal issues based on their learning through integrated RE.

Evangelisation

The school supports and promotes the parish-based programmes for the Sacraments of Initiation, which include adult formation. Parents from the school are involved in supporting this programme. This year for the first time, the parish led a baptismal programme with about 40 students either currently attending or about to start at St. Joseph's.

School communication, especially the weekly newsletter which is also posted on the school website, is used as a way of informing, educating and evangelising members of the school community. Parents talked about their own children as evangelisers to them, in what they talk about at home from their learning in RE, and in bringing home their prayer routines. Through SEESAW online, teachers connect with whanau about student learning, including RE.

Faith Based Leadership

The principal, new to principalship last year, leads by example. In the last year nine new teachers have been employed by the school. He is effectively bringing together a new staff and has been proactive in organising good quality PD to enable all staff to understand better the Catholic Character of the school and to deliver the RE programme within this environment.

The Principal is very open to growing as a Catholic leader, and with the DP is aware of the need to look at the school's values and vision in the light of specifically *Catholic* spirituality. The weekly *Monday Motivator*, to better link the school values with the Gospel is one such example of steps towards this.

The DRS demonstrates leadership as an active member of the local parish, supporting the sacramental programme and leading school music and school singing.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to grow the Baptism process
- Aim for a greater presence of student work in RE displayed on classroom and corridor walls.
- Continue to be explicit about the Catholic Character (see Recommendations)



- Consider meeting regularly before school as a staff for the sole reason to pray together.
- Display Teacher Certificates in RE in the school foyer to show how this is valued.

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 ensures that teachers are provided with professional development in order to understand and teach in a Catholic school. He is building a staff that is open to and unified in this.

The DRS supports teachers in a variety of ways: by providing a prayer focus for the week on the daily notices, by providing helpful resources and information to use in RE teaching and in the use of the *Faith Alive* website. She encourages teachers to involve students in the Masses and religious celebrations. The DRS plans all whole-school Masses and leads all school singing, teaching new songs in both English and te reo Māori. She has helped guide staff to understand Catholic social teaching for the current theme.

Religious Education

The school implements the nationally mandated Religious Education curriculum, delivering its achievement objectives with integrity. Teachers use the Religious Education Bridging Document (REBD) to support their planning and teaching. The Senior Leadership team developed a two year integrated plan with support from CSES advisor Alan Grant. Planning documents are thorough and show clearly the RE themes at the heart of the learning. The schoolwide planning structure developed in collaboration both within, and across, syndicate teams has improved the consistency of teaching practice.

The focus for the current theme, Catholic Social Justice, is spread over two years, with the inclusion of appropriate achievement objectives from the Religious Education Curriculum. Through integration students make links between their own life and the message of the gospel which makes learning authentic. All classrooms learn through an inquiry approach. With RE as the driver and other curriculum areas linked into it e.g. literacy, science, art, drama, and the social sciences, teachers are clear that the *purpose* of the learning always links back to the RE theme.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education reflect good practice in current pedagogy and teachers use a range of strategies to engage students and give them agency over their learning. During observations in classrooms a variety of ways of learning were



evident, from teacher initiated, students working in pairs and groups, students directing their own learning through independent research and projects.

Assessment of knowledge is carried out at the end of each term to gauge what students have learnt.

Students could talk about how their learning in subsidiarity and advocacy was connected to Jesus, particularly around how Jesus spoke up for those who do not have a voice. Students could explain how this includes caring for the environment and some students had already taken action for a cause. They were engaged and passionate about how their causes and projects could make a difference.

Relationships in the classroom are positive and relaxed. Teachers know the students and their needs, and relate to them respectfully. Classroom culture is supportive and students with particular needs are treated with dignity. Students' relationships with one another are positive and accepting.

Catholic Curriculum

All staff members engage in a regular, planned programme of Catholic Character professional learning and development. Teachers have been part of REBD PLD, and most have completed TCI paper RE502. All teachers new to Catholic Schools have completed *Introduction to Catholicism*. With nine new teachers, this has been a powerful way of supporting them to understand the Catholic culture of the school and to effectively integrate a Catholic perspective across the curriculum. This year all teachers are attending professional development in Catholic Māori Spirituality with Deacon Danny Karatea-Goddard. Teachers are all on a pathway to certification in RE and have certification levels appropriate to their length of service in Catholic education.

The school teaches the core principles of Catholic social teaching and their application, as an integral component of a lived faith. Currently, the overarching theme focuses on one the principles of Catholic social teaching each term. At the time of the review, students from Year 1 – Year 8 were learning about subsidiarity. This focus contributes to awareness raising and action for justice within the school and in the wider community, explicitly relating this to the Gospels' portrayal of Jesus' care for the vulnerable and those who cannot speak for themselves. In this way, the school develops student awareness of their responsibilities as global citizens as well as citizens of New Zealand, and students spoken to were very aware of this. Senior students had begun to work and fundraise for projects they were passionate about.

NEXT STEPS

- Make the link between Catholic Social Teaching and Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*
- Continue to build on the integrated approach to learning (See Recommendations).



TE WHAKAATU KARAITIANA- CHRISTIAN WITNESS

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

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Catholic School Community

The school has a positive relationship with the parish and parishioners expressed deep gratitude to the school for the work being done. They enjoy very much seeing classes attending weekday Masses in the church which is a two minute walk from school. The school uses the church for almost all Masses and liturgies. The school and parish Sunday Masses are growing in attendance. The parish priest is part of the Board of Trustees and all three priests are very supportive of the school.

There is a strong Sacramental programme partnership with staff and a large number of students are receiving sacraments this year.

Partnership & Collaboration

St Joseph's has a positive relationship with St Brendan's in nearby Heretaunga, and with St Patrick's College in Silverstream. These relationships are fostered by the principals. This year the three schools shared Catholic Schools Day, swapping students between the schools, with St Patrick's students organising and running activities. This was very successful and the schools intend to build on this.

St Patrick's Year 10 Catholic Service team visits St Joseph's on a weekly basis to work with Y5/6 students in a variety of activities and this is developing positive relationships. The principal noted that former students often return to St Joseph's to visit their old school and interact with current students.

There is no Kahui Ako in the Upper Hutt area but schools have a strong cluster relationship of mutual support. The principal has a natural networking ability and has developed positive relationships with other schools. He attends WCPPA meetings and has no hesitation in seeking advice from CSES when needed.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The school has a commitment to, and educates for, a deeper understanding of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the bicultural history of Aotearoa New Zealand. Strong staff leadership in Tikanga Māori supports the school to use a kaupapa Māori lens in its approach to being Catholic.

There is a commitment to learning about local Māori and pakehā history in the Upper Hutt area through a localised curriculum. This is evidenced in the current overarching theme *Turangawaewae* which has a clear focus on the identity and sense of belonging of all students, staff and whanau.

Whole school pōwhiri and mihi whakatau are part of the welcoming culture in the school, led by students through karanga and korero.

In classrooms, teachers use te reo Māori phrases and words with students.



The incoming Board Chair, who has a passion for ensuring that the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are honoured, is leading this at Board level.

Consultation with Maori whānau about the school direction and meeting the needs of Māori students occurs through the Kaitiaki (Maori and Pasifika whanau) group. At the last hui upwards of 60 whanau attended, representing many of the school's cultures.

The Tuakana Teina programme where children are buddied as new entrants with older students is successfully embedded across the school.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care in the school is very important to school leadership and staff who are aware of and responsive to the needs of students. When a need is noticed, the school will address it, whether it is to fund a student's Camp fees, provide stationery, provide uniform or wash and dry a uniform. The school has purchased a clothes washer/dryer to ensure all students have clean uniform. Second hand uniforms are repaired and passed on to students who need it. A local community initiative, *Feel the Need*, uses the parish hall to make lunches which are distributed free to local schools where need has been identified. St Joseph's makes use of this for some of its students. Parents spoken to, were very positive about the way students and families are cared for and about the communication that underpins it.

The school uses Positive Learning for Behaviour (PB4L) which encompasses the school values. Whanau report that as behavioural issues arise, they are addressed very quickly so that all students feel safe and parents are kept informed through timely communication.

The Principal and DP run a mentoring programme for Māori boys at risk, meeting with them fortnightly and involving them in service opportunities around the school. The graduates go on an overnight hunting trip at the end of the year as an acknowledgement of their achievement.

Senior leadership are pro-active in ensuring staff welfare is a priority. Staff are appreciated and valued and this is seen in a variety of ways, like the acknowledgment and celebration of staff achievement at fortnightly morning teas, the provision of fruit, meals during interviews, funded flu injections, and end of term/year functions. Staff show pastoral care towards one another and there is a strong sense of collegiality and goodwill amongst staff.

Service and Outreach

The school recognises the need to develop their students in service of the church and the community. They lead in a variety of ways in the school, at assembly prayers, in Masses, and general school activities. There are also kapa haka leaders, and students who provide Pasifika leadership.

Across the school, student homework sheets have an activity that requires students to serve in some way either at home or in the community. Through integrated learning, senior students in particular are taking the initiative to find ways that will make a positive difference to their community.



NEXT STEPS

- Explore how the school can embed service more explicitly. Examples of this are to grow relationships with the people at St Joseph's Retirement complex, establishing a Young Vinnies, service at the local Soup Kitchen, service of the parish (altar servers etc.)
- For school Masses and school/parish Masses, continue to build authentic alignment with Te Tiriti o Waitangi through the integration of kaupapa Māori.



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?

Actual Roll: 460

Maximum Roll: 580

Non-preference Maximum as per Integration Agreement: 29 (5% of max roll)

Actual non preference: 29

TOTAL staffing entitlement: 22.37

No. S464 positions required 14

No. actual S464 positions: 12

Preference Criteria	Number of Students	% actual roll
5.1	260	57
5.2	6	1
5.3	67	15
5.4	98	21
5.5		
Preference with no criteria		
Total of signed preference roll	431	94
Non-Preference Roll	29	6
International Fee Paying Students	2	

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Stewardship

The Board has a clear understanding of the importance of safeguarding and strengthening the school's Catholic Character and of seeing everything through a



Catholic lens. All meetings start and end with prayer with Board members taking turns to lead.

Procedures for advertising and making teaching appointments to positions are in line with the requirements outlined in the *Handbook for Boards of Trustees of Catholic Schools*. When an offer of appointment is made the letter template provided by NZCEO is used.

At the end of each term, the principal presents a *Catholic Review Report* to the Board, where everything connected to the Catholic Character is described in detail, along with next steps or areas for improvement.

Job descriptions indicate the specific responsibilities of staff members to actively support the Catholic Character of the school.

The school's annual budget provides separate funding lines for Catholic Character and for Religious Education.

Legal Obligations

The school is meeting its obligations under its Integration Agreement in terms of preference/non-preference students.

Concerning tagged positions, the principal has worked extremely hard in the last year to ensure the appointment of teachers who carry the S464 tag. As a result the number of tagged teachers has increased from four to twelve. There are still two tagged teachers required, and in consultation with the Vicar for Education, Jenny Gordon, this is being addressed.

NEXT STEPS

- Analyse preference data and consider how you might address the impact of the large numbers of preference students who are not baptized, nor have a strong connection to their Catholic faith e.g. 5.4 students who have a very tenuous Catholic connection.
- Make sure that any reference to Catholic Character in all formal school documents, is at the *start* e.g. Job Application forms, Job Descriptions, Appraisals, Board Reports, Strategic Plan, Board Agenda, Board Policies etc.

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. Ensure that all elements of the school Charter are explicit about Catholic spirituality and fostering a relationship with Jesus:**
 - Review the current vision to encapsulate the school's commitment as a *Catholic* school. Articulate this vision as the essence that underpins the Catholic Character.
 - Link the school values to Gospel stories that students can talk about and relate to.
 - Explore the Mercy charism, being explicit about how it links to the vision and values.
- 2. Provide and embed an induction process into the school's Catholic Character for new students, particularly those coming into the senior school.**

Growth in Knowledge

- 3. Continue to develop an authentic, integrated RE curriculum**
 - Ensure that across all syndicates, RE consistently remains the key focus for integrated learning
 - Introduce student self-reflection and evaluation as a response to their learning and personal faith journey
 - Provide an online Hub where staff can access all expectations for being in a Catholic school and teaching Religious Education, as well as resources and links to learning. This will include but not be limited to: ***the RE Curriculum, the teaching of Religious Education, Catholic Character Calendar, professional development timetable, Sexuality Education within the Health Curriculum, and prayer in classrooms.***

Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character

- 4. Provide opportunities for tagged teachers to grow as Catholic leaders, with a focus on cultural responsiveness practice through a Catholic lens.**



5. To ensure that, with a new Board, the Catholic Character continues to be safeguarded and strengthened:

- Ensure all Board members participate in professional development, through both CSES and NZSTA
- As policies are reviewed, ensure they reflect both the Catholic Character of the school and its commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi.
- Ensure there are policies and procedures for behavioural management and pastoral care.
- Include the cycle of Catholic Character internal evaluation in the Board three-year Workplan. Use the Draft *Catholic Special Character Review for Development* document as the basis for annual self- review.

The review team is confident that the St. Joseph's School leadership (Board, Principal, DP) have the willingness and ability to address the recommendations of this report. The DRS has resigned her position and the new DRS, when appointed, will be part of this work.

In concluding this report, the review team wish to thank the St. Joseph's 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Zita Smith".

Zita Smith
Lead Reviewer