

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATION SERVICES

Te Ratonga Mātauranga ki ngā Kura Katorika

**CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW FOR
DEVELOPMENT**

Āhuatanga Katorika Kaupapa Arotake Me Te Ahu Whakamua

Report on an external review of

**ST. ANTHONY'S SCHOOL
SEATOUN**

MAY 2018

Review conducted on: 8-10 May 2018

Review Team:

Zita Smith (Lead Reviewer)

Bernadette Murfitt (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).

- Encounter with Christ - *The Tūtaki ki ā Te Karaiti*
- Growth in Knowledge – *Te Whakatupu mā Te Matauranga*
- Christian Witness – *Te Whakaaktu 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.

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name	St. Anthony's School
Address	10 Ludlam St, Seatoun
School Type	Co-educational Years 1-8
Decile	8
Actual Roll	108
Maximum Roll	130
Non-preference Maximum	7(5%)
Actual non preference	5
Roll based staffing entitlement	7.49
Ethnic Composition (% to the nearest whole)	NZ European: 72 (67%) Maori: 5 (5%) Asian: 3 (2%) Pasifika: 5 (5%) Other: 23 (21%)
Principal	Jennifer Ioannou
Director of Religious Studies	Denise Johnson
BOT Chairperson	Andrew Pink
Parish Priest	Fr. Ephrem Tigga

Date of on-site review: 8-10th May 2018

Date of this report: 21st May 2018

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

Zita Smith
Lead Reviewer

Bernadette Murfitt
Accompanying Principal Reviewer

REPORT SUMMARY

St. Anthony's School is a community Catholic school in the Eastern Wellington suburb of Seatoun, immediately adjacent to St. Anthony's Church, and a short walk from the sea. It was founded by the Mercy sisters in 1923 and has a current roll of 108 across five classrooms.

Since the last review, the school has undergone significant changes in staff. A new principal was appointed at the end of 2015, and more recently, several new staff members have been appointed as a result of former staff departures. The principal is now leading the school effectively through a period of consolidation into a new era of stability.

Staff demonstrate a willingness and openness to support the school's Catholic Character, led by the principal and the DRS. This is evident in the positive and open staff interactions, the welcoming and hospitable approach towards parents and visitors, and the friendly and gentle manner of staff interactions with students. Staff are aware of and responsive to the needs of others. The students themselves are respectful, courteous, engaged and demonstrate a love for their school.

The NZ Religious Education Curriculum is being implemented and teachers use a variety of ways to engage students in their learning. The DRS is an experienced and effective leader in all aspects of the curriculum.

A recent success has been the redevelopment of what was formerly the school/parish hall into a new innovative learning space named *He Atawhai* (Kindness). The building was blessed and opened by Cardinal John Dew in late 2017.

Through effective leadership, the principal and Board demonstrate commitment to safeguarding and strengthening the school's Catholic Character and have worked tirelessly in this area over the past year. New systems and processes, carefully developed through a transparent, consultative process, will ensure that St. Anthony's School continues to give witness to the Gospel of Jesus in the way it educates its students, both now and into the future.

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE PREVIOUS EXTERNAL REVIEW

Key Recommendations from the June 2014 Review:

- 1. Continue to integrate units until the practice is embedded, and ensure regular evaluations take place to monitor coverage of the RE Curriculum.***

Since the last external review, a new principal has been appointed and this year, 3 new teachers have been appointed. The integration of units is continuing to develop with regular staff discussions about how best to integrate aspects of the RE Curriculum.

- 2. Ensure that all teachers who have met the hours for classroom level are observed to achieve their certificates.***

This was achieved at end of 2017. Because of the appointment of new staff, and the departure of former staff members, there is currently one teacher at leadership, and one at classroom level certification. All teachers are building their required hours.

- 3. As part of the school's peer ministry, explore further opportunities for student leadership and peer teaching. Gain student voice by interviewing students from different levels.***

Student voice is evident in internal review documents. It is used to address the needs of students and clearly empowers them to be actively engaged in the life and decisions of the school that affect them as learners.

Year 8 students are chosen to lead the five Houses and this has strengthened student voice and leadership. There are also leadership opportunities for students other than the House leaders.

- 4. To enhance the prayer life of the school, re-introduce and further develop meditation as requested by students who were interviewed.***

Meditation has continued to be a very popular and regular prayer form with the students. The students interviewed commented that they value this quiet, personal way of praying which helps them to be still and be centred on their relationship with Jesus.

5. *Continue to encourage more families to be involved in the parish by involving as many students as possible in the school/parish Sunday masses.*

A school and parish mass is held once a term when students and their families are expected to attend. Students take lead roles in this.

Families are invited to be actively involved in regular Sunday Mass by being part of the altar server roster, morning tea roster, and roster for church cleaning and washing church linens.

6. *Ensure the staff are given the opportunity to attend the Understanding Sexuality professional development programme.*

This has been achieved. As all except one staff member who completed this PD have now left the school, there is a planned approach to ensuring all current teachers will attend this course over the next three years.

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**

Varied and rich prayer is an integral part of the daily routine of school life. This includes individual and community prayer using traditional and contemporary forms. Church seasons and special times have their own celebrations. Of particular note is the annual Rosary night during the month of November when students lead the rosary in the Church in a visual way, and increasingly in the language of their ethnicity. This is very well supported by families and parish.

The staff prays together regularly and the principal and DRS are seen as positive role models who support, uphold and witness to the Catholic Character of the school. Recently appointed staff are already seen as being energised and positive role models in the way they support the school's Catholic Character. There are opportunities for staff to attend professional development in order to grow in their personal encounter with Christ as well as in their catechetical knowledge.

There is space and time for quiet personal reflection and prayer, particularly in the form of meditation. Students interviewed spoke of meditation as being a valuable and very popular way of encountering Jesus and which gave them inner peace.

The concept of being R.E.A.L is strong. The values of Respect, Excelling, Awareness and Learning, stemming from the PB4L programme are evident schoolwide on walls, in the foyer and in daily interactions. The school Charter relates these values to Gospel values.

The Mercy charism is referred to in the Charter, and the school Houses are named after five foundation Sisters of Mercy. At the recent opening of *He Atawhai*, Mercy sisters were invited to attend as guests of honour and a plaque was unveiled in their name.

Evangelisation

The school actively encourages attendance at Sunday Mass, and the reception of the Sacraments.

Throughout the year there is a regular programme of liturgies, celebratory occasions and Masses and students have the opportunity to develop these liturgies or to have some leadership roles in them. Parents and whanau are always invited to attend.

School communications, including the newsletter, website and other social media, are used as a means of evangelisation, helping members of the school community to integrate their faith, culture and life.

Faith Based Leadership

The principal and DRS provide effective leadership in the Catholic character and are positive role models. They work well as a team and collaborate to ensure teachers are being developed in Religious Education and Catholic Special Character. The DRS is appropriately qualified and provides effective leadership for the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum.

Mutual respect is shown amongst all members of staff. Staff reported that they can talk freely about their faith and the teachings of the Catholic Church. The DRS is open and approachable to discuss any aspect of the Catholic character. The staff has regular times of prayer and all meetings start with prayer. They discuss topical readings, new ways of praying and sharing their faith with students.

In the last year, the principal and Board have developed a faith-based staff code of conduct and this initiative and its process have been instrumental in the transformation in school culture. The outgoing Board Chair and principal are to be commended for their leadership in this area.

NEXT STEPS

With the recent employment of new staff members, the development of a shared understanding and long term vision in the school of the nature of Catholic spirituality, is currently in progress. Continue to build on the spiritual formation of all staff through regular internal and external PD. The two day retreat planned for the start of next year will be an excellent opportunity to provide a depth in spirituality and to set cultural expectations about modelling and teaching Catholic Character.

Develop the Mercy charism and the charism of St. Anthony as a lens through which the school's Catholic identity and commitment to Jesus Christ are made visible, and link to the R.E.A.L school 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 and DRS are effective leaders. They are people of integrity and are honest and open with all staff. The principal and DRS demonstrate their own personal faith commitment in the way they lead the Catholic Character of the school. The DRS is seen by staff and community as an exemplary role model who makes herself available as a mentor and guide when it comes to any aspect of the RE programme. She is highly experienced and knowledgeable in this role. Teachers reported that they feel supported by the DRS to deliver a strong programme of RE within the school.

Religious Education

The RE curriculum is integrated into other curriculum areas under a single Inquiry theme, which helps to make learning relevant, authentic and contextual. This year the overarching theme, *Connections*, has given students many rich opportunities to make connections between their world and their faith. This Catholic perspective through which students are invited to see their world has given them a greater awareness of how everything is connected to God.

Religious Education is taught throughout the school according to the NZ RE Curriculum on a two year cycle, using the school RE Curriculum document as its base. Long Term Planning, with the overarching annual theme and a term by term focus, is shared by all teachers in extended planning sessions. Discussion about the affective domain of student learning from the last term focus feeds into the next focus. Although teachers aim to integrate the RE curriculum fully under the big theme, sometimes a “stand alone” lesson is taught to ensure curriculum coverage.

Students observed in RE were engaged, interested and focused. The school has a particular strength in helping students to connect their faith to their world. Teachers provided a variety of effective opportunities for students to learn. Students reported that they enjoyed RE and saw links between their faith and their lives. Simple te reo was evident in most classroom teaching and in prayer and song. Integration through literacy was particularly effective. The school continues to purchase graded faith-based readers to support this.

Catholic Curriculum

Staff engage in a regular, planned programme of Catholic Character professional learning and development, and new staff are being included in this plan. The DRS leads regular staff PD and the staff are involved in Cluster meetings and PD offered by CSES. Teachers new to Catholic

schools receive ongoing support to enable them to understand the Catholic culture of the school and to effectively integrate a Catholic perspective across the curriculum. Professional development is an expectation for all teachers whether tagged or untagged. It is planned for, and a range of opportunities are provided, from internal PD, to courses run by CSES and papers offered by TCI. Five staff members, including the principal and DRS, are studying a paper in theology through The Catholic Institute this year.

Catholic Character Review, led by the DRS, is consistently carried out and the 2017 review on Christian Witness was based on the new draft document.

Student voice is evident across the school. Students feel that their opinion is valued and they have a sense of ownership, pride in and love for their school.

School policy ensures that those aspects of the Health curriculum which involve human sexuality education are set in the context of the teaching of the Catholic Church. Since the last review all teachers had completed professional learning and development in *Understanding Sexuality*. Now, with the appointment of new staff, there is a plan in place that will ensure all have completed the new “*Life to the Full – Human Sexuality*” programme before the next review.

NEXT STEPS

The school’s RE Curriculum Document is ready to be reviewed and redeveloped in light of the new RE Bridging Document which will come into use this year under the leadership of the DRS.

Keep building on the integration of RE through Inquiry and continue to develop the affective domain of student learning.

Continue to use the template provided by CSES for internal Catholic Character Review and ensure that the cycle for Catholic Character Review is included in the Board cyclic calendar of work.

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

The principal, DRS and other teachers in S464 positions are active witnesses of faith in the school and in their parish, and present the face of Christ to others. The DRS, who lives in the parish, is seen as a leader of faith and an important link between school and parish. With the appointment of new staff, being active witnesses of faith to the children is becoming more explicit.

The culture of the school is characterised by warm relationships at all levels, friendly communications, active listening, and a sense that all are treated with respect. Parents describe a

strength of the school as a faith community where the actions of people, modelled particularly by the leaders, reflect Gospel values.

All staff are assisted to understand what the integration of faith and life means from a Catholic perspective. Leaders report that the current staff, including those newly appointed, are enthusiastic and open to living and witnessing to the Gospel values in all their interactions. Displays and symbols provide witness to the Catholic identity of the school. Visual signs of Catholicity are evident. A cross has been added to new block *He Atawhai* using recycled timber from old classrooms.

Partnership & Collaboration

There are positive links between the school and parish. School families are invited and regularly volunteer to support St. Anthony's Church through cleaning, providing morning tea, altar girl/boy duties, and children's liturgy. Special Occasion Liturgies/Mass such as Ash Wednesday, Easter liturgy, and Grandparents Mass, as well as Sacramental celebrations involve a strong school and parish link.

Regular use of the Church building for multiple purposes teaches students respect and reverence and provides an opportunity to regularly practise how to behave in the sacred space.

The School has been proactive in inviting students to become sacramental, and last year the school ran a programme for 15 students who were baptised in a special community Mass. The school ran education meetings in the evening for parents, and during the school day for the students.

The annual Grandparents Mass is a very popular event which attracts grandparents from as far away as overseas. Children's artwork is hung in the parish church for the occasion and morning tea is provided and followed by fun activities in the classrooms.

The new combined Holy Trinity Parish, of which St Anthony's is a part, celebrates a combined Mass each term, which each of the three schools takes their turn leading. Year 8 students from the three schools come together annually for a retreat day at the Home of Compassion. The 3 Holy Trinity Parish principals are meeting regularly and are actively involved in the development of the new Community of Learning of Wellington based Catholic Schools.

Te Tiriti O Waitangi

The school is working to grow in its understanding of Māori spirituality and it incorporates *tikanga Māori*, *te reo Māori*, and *karakia* into the daily life of the school. Students take leadership roles in *karanga*, *haka*, and *waiata* and senior students have learnt their *mihi*.

A powhiri followed by Mass is held each term to welcome new students and their families and new staff to St Anthony's. This practice was established in 2017 when the principal worked with a parent and ex staff member to establish powhiri protocols.

Pastoral Care

St Anthony's School has a well-developed Pastoral Care policy that reflects Catholic character. Having a parent class representative is a long standing tradition. These parents get alongside new parents, as a conduit for communication and information, and can direct a parent towards the support they need if required.

The Board has a pastoral approach to staff wellbeing and has begun subsidising weekly mindfulness/ yoga sessions for them which staff acknowledge and appreciate.

Service and Outreach

Taking faith out into the community is encouraged and supported by the school. This is evident in a variety of actions that support the community and beyond. Examples of this are regular fundraising for Caritas, support for families in need and the addressing of needs as they arise in the wider community or world e.g. earthquakes, floods. During the *Education Outside the Classroom* programme, senior students walked to the Atatürk Memorial to pray and to lay rosemary for remembrance. Six students represent the school alongside students from other local schools in the *Predator Free Miramar* organisation. Senior students spring clean the parish church every year.

Students are rostered to attend a weekly Mass for the elderly and stay afterwards to serve them lunch. This has developed very positive intergenerational relationships between the students and the older parishioners and both groups value the interaction.

The school's Catholic Character is regularly promoted in the wider community through fortnightly reflections in the newsletter, advertising the special character content from the annual plan, identifying the Gospel value(s) that students are learning about, and advertising the regular opportunities for community attendance at school Mass / prayer times etc.

A Young Vinnies group is in the process of being established.

NEXT STEPS

Continue to develop further connections with the Parish (see recommendations). Conversations have begun as to how to achieve this. A regular, timetabled slot for the parish priest to visit classrooms, be in the playground, or greet parents after school could build the parish relationship with students and families.

Continue to build on the powhiri and embed this as a school tradition. The school's planned cultural responsiveness professional development, planned for 2018 will bring about actions that will build on the school's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

As planned, establish a Young Vinnies group with the support of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

**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?*

Student Numbers for Each Preference Criterion and Non-preference

Preference Criteria	Number of Students	% actual roll
5.1	79	73%
5.2	0	
5.3	17	16%
5.4	7	6%
5.5	0	
Preference with no criteria	0	
Total of signed preference roll	103	95%
Non-Preference Roll	5	5%
International Fee Paying Students	0	

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Stewardship

The development of a Staff Code of Conduct, developed last year by the Board, has been a powerful tool in establishing a concrete way of safeguarding and strengthening the school's Catholic Character. The process included extensive staff consultation and promotion with the community. The Code is based on the expectation that all staff exhibit Gospel values in their day to day professional interactions. The outgoing Board Chair demonstrated strong leadership in driving this initiative from its inception, and was instrumental in developing other recently established Board processes and systems, to safeguard the school's Catholic character.

The Board of Trustees ensures that the vision and strategic direction for the school clearly and explicitly reflect the Catholic Character of the school. Strategic planning includes the aim of continued strengthening of the school. The Catholic Character is clearly reflected in the recently developed Staff Code of Conduct as well as in the Religious Education, Pastoral Care, and Health and Safety policies.

The Board receives regular reports from management on Catholic Character and on Religious Education.

Legal Obligations

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

Regarding Tagged positions, the roles of the DRS (tag S464) and Deputy Principal (tag S466) are currently being carried out by one person. The Catholic Schools Education Services is aware of this anomaly and has given approval for the principal to work through a process to separate the roles.

NEXT STEPS

Continue to ensure that as policies are reviewed and updated, they reflect the unique Catholic Character of the school. Continue to work through the process of separating the roles of DP and DRS.

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. Clarify and articulate the unique Catholic culture of St. Anthony's School.

- Ensure that the R.E.A.L values from the PB4L programme are illustrated and exemplified in terms of Gospel Values sourced directly from a Gospel story or parable.
- Develop a regular cyclic plan for students to learn about the charism of the Mercy sisters and the charism of St. Anthony and find ways to integrate this into the school's values.

Growth in Knowledge

2. Continue to induct, support and provide appropriate professional development for new and existing staff to build depth of knowledge in Catholic theology and culture.

Christian Witness

3. Explore and action with the wider parish, creative ways to help school families to identify as *parishioners* of St Anthony's community through their commitment to and stewardship in the school.

Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character

4. Ensure that the Board processes and systems, recently developed to ensure that the Catholic Character is safeguarded and strengthened, are embedded as core practice.

5. Continue to ensure support for the wellbeing of the principal, which will empower her to further develop her capability in effective leadership.

The review team is confident that the St. Anthony's School leadership (Board, Principal and DRS) have the willingness and ability to address the recommendations of this report.

In concluding this report, the review team wishes to thank the St. Anthony's School community for their warmth and hospitality during our visit and for the opportunity to observe and the privilege to experience the Catholic Character of the school.



Zita Smith
Lead Reviewer