



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

Catholic Schools Office

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Proverbs 4:13

CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

*Te Purongo Kaupapa Arotake Mo Nga Ahuatanga
Katorika*

ST PIUS X CATHOLIC SCHOOL, GLEN INNES

22-23 February, 2017

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name:	St. Pius X Catholic School, Glen Innes
Address:	103 Castledine Cres, Glen Innes, Auckland 1072
School Type:	Full Primary Y1-8 for boys and girls
Principal:	Mr Paul Coakley
Director of Religious Studies:	Mrs Ana Tui
Board of Trustees Chairperson:	Mr Sonny Haiosi
Parish Priest:	Fr. Felise Lemi CSSR
Reviewers:	Colleen Gleeson Philip Mahoney
Accompanying Principal:	Mrs Wiki Whittaker
Current Roll:	119
Report Confirmed:	20 March 2017

Introduction

St Pius X Catholic School, Glen Innes welcomed and embraced the opportunity for review and development. The Board of Trustees, Principal, staff, parents, students and parish community warmly welcomed the reviewers and all shared openly their thoughts and opinions.

Situated in the heart of Glen Innes, the school is in the 'Tamaki Regeneration' area and new housing has replaced the state housing that used to surround the school. It is an area in the midst of change. The school has been largely Pasifika and is looking forward to having more diverse ethnicities as people move into the new housing area. The school shares the site with the Parish Church of St Pius X, the Presbytery and Parish Office.

Response to Areas for Development from the 2013 External Review

That the school website include a Board of Trustee's page

- The Board page on the website includes the names of each member and their position on the Board. The information was up-to-date.

That information on the charism, ethos of the school, prayer and devotion expectations and Special Catholic Character components be added to the Staff Handbook.

- This information is now on the school website and the Staff Handbook.

That the Principal uses relevant excerpts from the "Whanau Book" to inform parents with background knowledge of the Strands being taught.

- The Principal ensures, through the newsletter, that parents are informed of the Strands being taught and the background knowledge needed to share special celebrations and feast days with their children.
- There still needs to be information on the website about the Religious Education programme and Strand development.

That teachers regularly take their classes to the grotto for prayer to encourage its continued independent use.

- Teachers are using the grotto as a place to take their class to pray to times.
- Children use the grotto often during playtimes and before and after school. They identify it as a sacred space.

Religious Education teaching development.

- All teachers continue to use online support for all Religious Education teaching.
- The use of the "Learn, Create, Share" pedagogy has continued to develop and teachers present Religious Education lessons which reflect the pedagogy used in other areas of the curriculum.
- Assessment for Religious Education is still a work in progress. Teachers are creatively assessing student knowledge prior to planning their programmes and are teaching

the Achievement Objectives relevant to student need. Summative tests are used at the end of each Strand.

- A Catholic perspective is being written into teacher planning for the 'topic' each term.

Significant areas of Special Catholic Character Development since the last review are:

- The students were able to discuss their learning and articulate how their learning carries over into their everyday life.
- The Principal and new Parish Priest are working closely together to strengthen the relationship between school and parish.

Catholic Community: Te Iwi Whanui Katorika

The extent to which the school is a Christian community where Gospel values are central, where faith is nourished, and where Christian celebration in the Catholic tradition is highly valued.

Areas of Success

St Pius X Catholic School has a very strong sense of spirituality. Faith and Gospel values are very evident in the way the staff, students and parents pray together, relate to each other, welcome visitors and support each other and the wider community. The close proximity to the church and presbytery makes it very much a parish school. The small size of the school allows it to be a very loving and nurturing community. Everyone spoken to by the Reviewers saw the Spirituality of the school as its strength.

The school is evangelising to the students and their families. The school proclaims the mission and Gospel of Jesus Christ and provides a place to encounter the living God. All students, through newsletters, flyers and on the children's blogs, are invited to join the Sacramental programmes delivered by the parish. The Parish Liturgy Committee are considering how to use the older school students to contribute more fully in Parish Masses.

The Principal speaks to each family as they enrol about the expectation of their participation in parish as well as school life. The Director of Religious Studies inducts all new students into the Special Character of the school and takes them to visit the Church and sends home a booklet she has developed about Prayer life. The Director of Religious Studies is working with the Parish to maximise the training for the Sacramental programme. The Soul Friends relationships support non-preference students, in particular, to understand the Catholic way of life.

"We have only been at this school for 3 weeks and my children are already asking me when our family are going to Church".

(Parent interview comment)

The Principal has led the school for eight years as a first time Principal. He is supported by a Associate Principal and Director of Religious Studies who share the Principal's vision for the school. The Board of Trustees, Parish Priest, parents and teachers spoke highly of the Principal's leadership and his commitment to the faith which is a model for them all. He is a strong advocate for the children and families.

The school is part of the Manaiakalani Cluster which has now formed a Community of Learning (CoL). This strong partnership with one other Catholic and all local State schools provides St Pius X Catholic School with many beneficial relationships and opportunities. They work together to raise academic achievement, for sporting, music and cultural activities and annually combine to produce a Cultural Festival and a Film Festival. The school also works with other surrounding Catholic Schools who support each other and visit each other's schools. Sacred Heart College has a close partnership where a group of boys come to the school weekly to be mentors for the Year 7 and 8 boys in the school. This is also supported by several of the Marist Brothers.

Parents support the school with fundraising and organising social events. The school has a Social Worker in Schools (SWIS) worker to support families. Through the Manaiakalani Trust and the Parish, St Pius X School has developed a strong partnership with parents. Parents are comfortable to come into the school and are proud of the school and their children.

St Pius X Catholic School has a welcoming, caring and family oriented atmosphere. The Board of Trustees, Principal and staff are looking forward to the re-building of their school where they hope they will have a stronger presence in the community and will be able to display more evidence of the Special Catholic Character of the school. All stakeholders, however, commented that it was the "people" who made the school such a special place.

The parents and Board of Trustees both commented that having the students to Year 8 built character and leadership qualities. They were proud that their students left the school with "confidence and maturity, equipped with life skills to build resilience".

St Pius X Catholic School is an authentic Catholic community where the Gospel values are central, faith is nourished and Catholic celebration is highly valued. This is evident in:

- The deliberate display of the school virtues in every classroom. Virtues are unpacked each week and regularly referred to. Special Character Honours Awards are presented fortnightly to children who always live by the school virtues.
- Student knowledge of the school's Holy Faith charism and St Pius X, the patron.
- The strong relationship with the Holy Faith Sisters, two of whom are regularly at the school and another provides professional and spiritual development for staff.
- Weekly staff prayer on Mondays and prayers before all meetings.
- Prayers throughout the school are varied and are always reverent, spiritual times. The Reviewers were privileged to be part of prayers in all classrooms. The prayer focuses were well presented and relevant to the Liturgical year and the prayers were student led.
- Mary's grotto at the entrance to the school is well utilised by classes and individuals as a prayer space.
- Each class is rostered to attend Mass on Friday with their Soul Friends or a buddy class.

- Full school Masses are held on special feast days and once per year, on a Sunday, with the Parish.
- The staff attend an annual full-day retreat, recently facilitated by a Holy Faith Sister.
- The Holy Faith Scholarship Award is presented each year to a child who lives by the Gospel Values. It provides payment for two terms of attendance dues.
- The Pilgrimage taken to St Patrick's Cathedral on Catholic Schools Day 2016.

The school and parish are building strong relationships. The Parish Priest is new and is working closely with the Principal to re-establish links. A strong Parish youth group ensures that the older youth continue to have a relationship with the school. The staff support all parish events. The Parish Priest spends time in the school visiting classes weekly and is often seen at the school gate after school talking to children and their parents.

The Parish Priest and Parish Office Manager are both on the Board of Trustees. The school and parish share news on their websites and on newsletters.

Opportunities for Development

The school could identify ways they are able to follow up the enrolment and induction meetings at appropriate times after enrolment, to ensure that all students are encouraged and invited to continue their faith journey by receiving the Sacraments.

The values ("Pillars") of Faith, Hope and Love are explained in all documentation and linked to the charism. The virtues are linked to the strands and the next step for the school is to possibly refine the virtues to 'Catholic' virtues and link each one to a gospel story.

A variety of prayer styles is taught throughout the school. It is suggested that all teachers become acquainted with meditative prayer for children. This provides quiet time for a deeper personal relationship with God to develop.

It is suggested that the DRS and Parish Priest consider offering Rite Two Reconciliation during Lent and Advent each year.

Pastoral Care – Manaakitanga

The extent to which the school community nurtures, supports and cares for individuals.

Areas of Success

St Pius X Catholic School nurtures, supports and cares for all individuals within its community. As visitors to the school, the reviewers experienced warm and generous hospitality from all members of the school community. Being a small school in a small community, all families know each other and there is a family atmosphere across the school. The Tuakana/Teina (older children caring for younger ones) relationships come naturally to the children.

The Support staff were openly appreciated by the parents and Board of Trustees. Being a small school means they are relied on to do many and varied jobs and they do so willingly. Training is provided when required.

St Pius X Catholic School is very responsive with pastoral care. In this small community people know when help is needed. The Catholic Caring Foundation supplies a grant to employ a Pastoral Care/Student Support Worker for the school, liaising with families and also applying to charities for support. A Social Worker in Schools (SWIS) also spends time in the school and with families. Social Services are used when required. A breakfast club is run daily by parents and volunteers and lunches are provided to students when needed. Parents feel well supported by the school. The Principal and staff support parents where possible, translating documents and helping to fill in forms, particularly with Immigration and Work and Income agencies and they visit the families in times of grief. Retreats for families are organised in times of stress.

The school is supported by many local groups and agencies, for instance the Glendowie Parish and St John's Rotary Club.

The school has an inclusive environment where all children are acknowledged for their special God-given talents. The school provides Reading Recovery, STEPS, LEXIA, Pause Prompt Praise, ELPS and ESOL programmes and Reading Together. There is a generous allocation of Teacher Aides and many volunteers come to hear the children read on a regular basis. A teacher takes boys for extra writing classes.

The St Pius X Catholic School community recognises the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the status of Maori as Tangata Whenua. The school has no Maori students identified on the roll however Te Reo Maori is used in prayer, hymns, and integrated into classroom programmes. Work is done annually on the Treaty of Waitangi and from this each class writes their own Treaty.

The school has mainly Pasifika families and the Pacific cultures are visible and acknowledged throughout the school. The School Charter is presented in English, Samoan and Tongan. The staff and parents have worked on the Pacific Island Education Plan and have developed an action plan for 2017. Children are free to speak in their own languages and these are used regularly in prayer. The parents are consulted about what they want for their children and support the school in partnership. The Principal was given the opportunity recently to visit and work in schools in Samoa, giving him a clearer understanding of the Samoan way of life.

St Pius X Catholic School provides many opportunities for the students to develop an awareness of others, of issues in and beyond their immediate community and an empathy for those who are hurt and suffering. They raise money for Caritas charities, donate food and goods for the Parish foodbank and have mufti days or fundraising disaster relief.

St Pius X Catholic School provides leadership opportunities throughout the school. All children are given the opportunity to lead prayer and act as monitors in their own classrooms. The senior students volunteer for positions as liturgy leaders who run assembly, Peace Officers, librarians, wet day, fruit, milk, road patrol and cone monitors. They serve as Altar servers and also serve at parish morning teas. They see their role as being role models

for the younger students and representatives of the school. The school enters the Cultural Festival, they sing for the Grandparents Day Mass and World Vision Kids for Kids.

The happy, positive relationships and calm learning-focussed environment of the school community removes most causes of disruptive behaviour and creates in children a willingness to co-operate and self-manage. The school encourages a high level of respect and dignity for all. Behaviour management is aligned to the school virtues and is based on a restorative justice approach. They have a long established 'Peace Room' where they are able to consider their actions and talk over their problems which is very successful.

Opportunities for Development

With the school moving into the paperless, digital arena it may be required to provide training for Teacher Aides on the use of computers. Particularly to support the children in their work and for communication purposes, so all last-minute changes in timetable and organisation is transparent to all.

The Pastoral Care Plan is based mainly on behavioural needs and should also include support for student welfare, families, parish and the wider community.

Religious Education – Te Whakaakoranga Whakapono

The extent to which the school helps to fulfil the teaching Mission of the Church.

Areas of Success

The Director of Religious Studies has taught at the school, in the Director of Religious Studies position for 11 years. She is also the senior school team leader. She is supported in her role by the other S65 position teacher and with 1.5 days per week release time. In Term 1 each year she joins each classroom for a Prayer session and provides feedback, in Term 2 she observes a Religious Education lesson in each room and gives written and oral feedback to teachers. In Term 3 she provides further support as needed. The Director of Religious Studies provides support and guidance for teachers in planning and resources. A consistency across the school Religious Education programme, with clear guidelines on planning, pedagogy and expectations for classroom environments was evident. She attends two Board of Trustee meetings per year to discuss the self review and the Special Catholic Character strategic goals.

Teachers use the "Learn, Create, Share" pedagogy, used for all other curriculum areas, for Religious Education. They plan onto a Google Site which students can see and work from. Students in Years 5 to 8 have one-to-one devices, they all have a Religious Education book and a Religious Education digital file. They are using creative ways to respond to learning through blogs, PowerPoints, art work and drama for example. All children have their own blogs and parents use this medium to comment on the children's work. The Principal regularly takes Year 8 Religious Education lessons to ensure the differentiation of teaching in a composite class.

All topic work is planned with a Catholic perspective and integrated with other curriculum areas. "Let us hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" is the overarching statement for the whole year. Term 1 is covering the Environment which lends itself nicely to the Creation and how they are Kaitiaki of the world God made. The school employs a specialist Music teacher one day per week and weekend guitar lessons are available.

Each classroom has a small patch of garden to tend, they recycle paper and plastics. This is planned to develop throughout the year through the topic work.

Professional development is provided for teachers through:

- Staff and Cluster meetings attendance,
- All new teachers are required to complete a paper in RE101 for new teachers.
- Staff retreat
- The Director of Religious Studies attends all DRS days and conferences.

The senior Leadership team all have attained Endorsed Leadership Level, one teacher has Classroom Level and one is working towards Classroom Level.

St Pius X Catholic School communicates well with the school community. They use newsletters, fliers, texts and the children's blogs to reach parents. They consult with parents for the Health curriculum, the Manaiakalani Project and student achievement.

Opportunities for Development

Teachers are finding out the prior knowledge of students before planning a strand and now need to look at differentiating the Religious Education teaching to meet the needs of the diverse achievement levels in each class.

The school provides a comprehensive Health Report annually. The next step in the development of this report is to add a Special Character aspect to the report.

The Director of Religious Studies should send all retreats, staff meetings and other Special Character professional development information to the Catholic Schools Office to add the credits for teachers onto the database and inform the Office when staff are eligible for accreditation.

The Principal provides information about the Religious Education programme in the newsletters and the Director of Religious Studies sends fliers home about coming celebrations. The school could also have information on the school website about the Religious Education programme and the website calendar could have all events included.

Stewardship and Compliance – Tuaritanga me te Hanganga Ture

The extent to which the Board of Trustees provides systems and processes to govern and comply with the school's Integration Agreement.

Areas of Success

Most of the Board of Trustee members are new since the 2016 elections. They see the Special Catholic Character as paramount and fundamental to all decision making. They are passionate about the school and very proud of its achievements. The Proprietor Representatives, including the Parish Priest, work closely with the Principal and Director of Religious Studies to review the Special Catholic Character of the school annually. The Board of Trustees attend all Diocesan training, A Holy Faith Sister provided them information on the Charism and representatives always attend the Catholic Convention every 3 years.

A Board of Trustees induction handbook has been developed to ensure all members understand their role as governors and that it is a Christ centred school. Some members of the Board of Trustees are also on the Parish Council and all members of the Board belong to the St Pius X Parish.

Performance Management systems are in place and all teachers have the Special Catholic Character clearly stated as part of their job descriptions. The school has a Special Catholic Character self review process on a three year cycle. The reviews identify strengths and areas for development in the dimension chosen each year. An action plan is prepared for the following year. This action plan should also become part of the Strategic / Annual planning.

The Board of Trustees have considered and used the Bishop's Conference document "The Catholic Education of School aged Children" as a guide for policy and strategic planning.

Opportunities for Development

With the school's change to "SchoolDocs" policies it is necessary for all policies to be reviewed and the Special Catholic Character of the school to be reflected in each policy. There is no Pastoral Care Policy and because many of the school families have pastoral needs the Board of Trustees need to write a policy which includes how the school intends to organise care and support for families, students, parish and the wider community.

St Pius X Catholic School is one S65 position short of meeting compliance. We recognise the staff is very stable and there has not been an opportunity to appoint another S65 position however the next advertised permanent position does need to be a S65 position.

During the review the Board of Trustees talked about their vision for all children who live in the Parish to attend the school and to grow the roll to its maximum. This vision is not reflected in the Strategic Plan. It is suggested that when the Charter is reviewed this vision be included.

Recommendations

A preference audit was carried out as part of this review.

	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	Non Preference	Total
Y8	11	1	1	1	2	16
Y7	11		1	1	3	16
Y6	5		1		3	9
Y5	11		1	1	3	16
Y4	4		3		1	8
Y3	12		1	1	4	18
Y2	10	2	2	2	5	21
Y1	10			1	4	15
Total	74	3	10	7	25	119

The non preference roll is 25 (12.8%) of the maximum roll. The Parish Priest and the Principal are encouraging families to consider entering a Sacramental programme. At the time of review 10 children were in the Parish programme. This would decrease the percentage to 7.6% if they all receive the Sacraments, still over the 5% allowed. It is essential that the school does not accept more non preference students until this number is below 5%.

62% of preference students are 5.1, the other 38% (5.2, 5.3 and 5.4) should be invited to join the Sacramental programmes in future.

The enrolment systems need to be more stringent:

- No student should be allowed to start school until all forms (enrolment, preference etc) are filled in completely and handed to the school office.
- Ensure that all forms are filled in with all information needed.
- Ensure the Priest completes the Preference forms correctly, stating the preference criteria clearly.
- If a student is baptised after enrolment they should produce a new preference form.

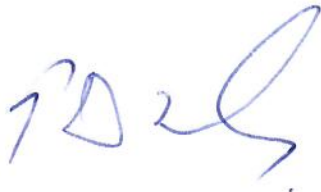
Conclusion

St Pius X Catholic School provides a happy, cohesive Catholic learning environment. The school has committed and passionate staff, a strengthening connection with the Parish, very supportive families and friendly children who love coming to school.

The senior children interviewed by the reviewers are living testament that the school is achieving what the community aspires to in their Mission Statement:

"Excellence in education: working together as a Catholic community."

The school provides an environment and many opportunities for each child to have a genuine and ongoing encounter with Christ, to grow in knowledge and understanding of Christ's teaching and to live a life of Christian witness within the Catholic Church.



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