



## **CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND**

Pompallier Diocesan Centre, 30 New Street,  
Ponsonby, Auckland 1144

**ĀHUATANGA KATORIKA KAUPAPA  
AROTAKE**

**TE PŪRONGO AROTAKE O WAHO  
CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER**

**EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT**

**for**

**Carmel College**

**29 – 31 July 2020**

## SCHOOL DATA

Principal:	Chris Allen
Director of Learning for Mission:	Rosanna Fouhy
HOD Religious Education:	Denise Camilleri
Sacramental Chaplain:	Father Marchellino Park
School Chaplain:	Rebekah McLeod
BOT Chair:	Julie Scott
Kaumātua:	Andy Peters
Visit Date:	July 29 – 31 <sup>st</sup> 2020
Reviewers:	Monica Johnson, Phillip Mahoney, James Bentley
Date of Confirmed Report:	22 September 2020

## NGĀ WHĀINGA O TE AROTAKE - AIMS OF THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

### Rationale

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference (NZCBC) wishes the review to show how effective the school is in handing on the faith and forming a new generation of Catholics; this includes evaluating the efficacy of Religious Education and how the whole school community engages in authentic Catholic Christian witness and evangelisation. This is the evangelising mission of the Church, in which the school participates.

The External Review process is based on the requirements of the "Catholic Special Character Review for Development" (Draft) that came into effect at the end of 2017.

In the review, schools are asked to consider and demonstrate 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, including stewardship of the relationship between the Church and the State.

Reviewers encourage and commend best practice, and work with the school to analyse opportunities to further strengthen and develop the Catholic culture.

## Introduction

Carmel College is a Decile 9, Catholic girl's college for Years 7 to 13, situated on the shores of Lake Pupuke, in Milford, on Auckland's North Shore. It was founded in 1957 by the Mercy Sisters and the Proprietor of the school is Carmel College Auckland Ltd (CCAL).

The school gathers its inspiration from the Mercy charism. Core Mercy values of *'āwhinatanga - service, tika - justice, aroha - compassion, aumihi – respect and manaakitanga - care'* are taught, lived and authentically woven throughout all school systems and practices. These values are underpinned by the school vision to *'empower young women through a Catholic education in the Mercy tradition to pursue personal excellence and to be prepared to challenge and shape the future'*.

The school roll is 939 students made up of the following ethnicities:

Ethnicity	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total	%
Asian	40	35	28	23	28	41	31	226	24%
European	69	88	87	80	76	81	68	549	58%
Maori	14	7	9	6	10	5	11	62	7%
MELAA	4	3	4	7	2	7	4	31	3%
Other	0	1	2	0	1	1	1	6	1%
Pasifika	10	10	13	7	14	3	8	65	7%
	<b>137</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>100%</b>

There are 42 International Students currently enrolled.

The last Special Character review was in 2016.

## Process

Meetings were held with the Principal, Senior Leadership Team, (SLT), Director of Learning for Mission (DRS), Sacramental Chaplain, School Chaplain, Carmel College Auckland Limited representatives (CCAL), Head of Religious Education (HOD RE), Board of Trustees, (BOT) Pastoral Care Team, International Dean, PTFA, support staff and students, both junior and senior. Many informal discussions were also held with both teaching and support staff. We had the opportunity to attend a full school assembly, House Mass and observe some classes. The open and productive discussions that were held and feedback given was appreciated.

We were warmly welcomed by a mihi whakataukī and later joined the staff for morning tea.

## Response to Recommendations from the 2016 External Review

### Catholic Community

*While it is acknowledged venue capacity remains an issue, consideration should be given to sending reminders to the parent community of major liturgies closer to the event*

- Parents are invited to attend the school masses and liturgies. Photos and reports of the events also go in the newsletter for those who are unable to attend. Approximately 100-200 guests attend each mass. Due to space considerations this is targeted for some celebrations:

Powhiri at the beginning of the year to welcome new staff, students

Dedication Mass – parents are welcomed through newsletter to attend

Carmel Day Mass – parents of students receiving awards are invited to attend

Sacramental Mass of the Assumption – parents of those receiving Sacraments are invited to attend.

Thanksgiving Mass – parents of girls leaving are invited to attend.

*Consider ways that "Tagged" teachers can be further developed to support the Special Character of the College*

- Special Character PLD is run each term for all staff, organised by the DRS.



- Tagged teachers are invited to attend a range of PLD opportunities such as courses through Mercy Spirituality Centre.
- Review and development of retreats by DRS has led to a system where most retreats are structured as workshops led by a range of staff including RE teachers, tagged teachers and other staff also. There has been an increase in the range of teachers involved in formation and running retreats since 2017.
- Funding from CCAL has been allocated for a staff Spirituality Day in 2020 (postponed to Term 3 or 4 due to COVID 19). Investigation into Diocesan based formation programme 'Wings' to be run at Carmel.

*Identify students in Catholic contributing schools who choose not to enrol at Carmel College and every 2 or 3 years survey the parents to get feedback on the reasons for their choice.*

- Through the Kāhui Ako, the Principal is in communication with North Shore Catholic feeder schools with closer relationships being built over the past 4 years. She specifically checks on the number of students who are in feeder schools at Year 6 and how many are coming to Carmel. This data is analysed and the following feedback has emerged. There are a very small number of students who do not come to Carmel from the feeder schools and reasons have been identified.

*Until a Chapel is available to the college consider if there is a suitable quiet space where students could go for private reflection.*

- No options for chapel space at this stage; however, the renovations of the convent when completed will once again include a chapel space.

*Consider the research already carried out and make an appointment of a lay chaplain to replace the former one.*

The Lay Chaplain was appointed in 2017 2 days (15 hours) per week funded from CCAL budget. A Job description was written which provides the basis for the focus of this position.

Three dimensions that are important in this role are:

- Proclaiming the Word of God (Kerygma-martyria)
- Celebrating the Sacraments (Leitourgia) and

- Exercising the ministry of charity (Diakonia)

New initiatives such as an in - school sacramental programme have been put in place as a result of this appointment. Girls have responded very well to the new Chaplain who they find very relatable.

#### Pastoral Care

No recommendations from previous reports.

#### Religious Education

*While the College meets the requirements of the Religious Education hours to be taught weekly, as part of the current Curriculum Review it is recommended that an alternative to the RE intensive days (one per term) at Years 11 and 12 be considered*

- This has been reviewed each year at Year 11 and 12 and it is currently not practical to change the timetable to accommodate more periods of RE at this time. The BOT is confident that the girls are engaged in a rigorous academic RE programme that also allows time for a range of other encounters to occur such as retreats, prayer, speakers, and sexuality programme.

*Consider giving parents an overview of their daughter's RE programme so that support can be given at home.*

- Teachers are in contact with parents via email and also parents are able to join the Google classroom for each subject which allows them access to see what is being covered so that they can further support their daughters at home in any subject including RE.

*Have a discussion with the Priest Chaplain about his possible availability to visit and speak to RE classes on selected topics.*

- The current Priest Chaplain is available to come and speak on particular topics. He has been involved in the vocations panel each year for Year 12 students. He has also provided a short video for the international students explaining who he is and what he does (2020). With the appointment of the Lay Chaplain, there has also been opportunities for her to come to RE classes to speak on different topics e.g. Euthanasia bill, Sacramental Programme and sessions of meditation, Lectio Divina. Fr Marchellino Park is very keen to be involved with the College and attended the World Religions day tour to the Hindu temple, mosque

and synagogue and Catholic Cathedral in 2019. He also attended the Year 11 Service Day to Mercy Hospice in 2019 and attends or is involved in a variety of the retreats at different year levels each year. He is also part of the Sacramental Programme in meeting with parents, running sessions and attending the Cathedral trip for reconciliation. The current level of engagement with the Priest is very helpful in developing links with parishes to have Reconciliation each term offered due to a positive relationship with the North Shore deanery.

## Encounter with Christ – Te Tūtaki ki a Te Karaiti

*The school encourages and facilitates 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

There is a clear, shared understanding of Catholic spirituality that is articulated in documentation, discussed by the Senior Leadership Team and evident from staff questionnaire responses. Many referred to their responsibility to support the Special Catholic Character.

Prayer is an integral part of the life of the College. *Inoi Whakarangatiratanga, Prayers of Enrichment for Mercy People*, is a school prayer book frequently used and Atawhai time includes prayers. Students regularly lead prayer, for example at the beginning of Religious Education classes, and are very happy to do so. Junior classes keep an on-going prayer journal that includes a range of traditional and personal prayers. Prayer continued with on-line learning during lock-down.

Staff meet three times a week and begin with thoughtful reflection and prayer linked to the Charism and school values. Meetings begin with a prayer and there are visual reminders of the school vision and values in meeting rooms, offices and around the school.

In 2020 twenty five girls were commissioned as extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion and they serve at whole-school Masses and weekday Masses. Most of them also serve in their Parishes.



Lunch time Masses are held every Thursday celebrated by Chaplain Father Marchellino, with a house or year level being responsible each week on a rostered basis. This is well attended by staff and students. Each year level has scheduled opportunities for the sacrament of Reconciliation.

There are retreat opportunities at all levels and the themes align with the school values and virtues. They aim to provide a genuine encounter with Christ while integrating activities with students' faith journeys.

*"One of the highlights of our time at Carmel has been our annual Retreats. A particular moment was during our Year 12 retreat when we walked through the bush allowing us to simply pause and reconnect with God. We treasure these moments as they give us the opportunity to refresh our minds, find peace and answer God's call to take rest as he says: "Come to me all who are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).*

*"Retreats at Carmel widely focus on mental health and how to deal with stress through our connection with God. In our Year 9 retreat we participated in activities that helped to create a safe environment enabling us to talk about any issues in our lives."* Year 13 student

## **Evangelisation**

The College runs a sacramental programme for those that are unable to attend Parish run programmes but this has been identified as an area for further development. In 2020 two students were baptised in their Parishes after completing the school programme and six students, who are part of a sacramental programme, were presented to the community at a Right of Acceptance during the Carmel Day Mass.

In its enrolment processes and documentation the college clearly defines Catholic Special Character. The SLT interview every applicant and emphasise that Catholic Special Character underpins everything at the College. Expectations are clearly articulated. During lockdown these were conducted via Zoom.

The Chaplin, Fr Marchellino, has very quickly established a positive relationship with the school and is involved in school activities such as joining the girls after Carmel Day Mass staff. Students appreciate his genuine joy, aroha and enthusiastic approach to all he undertakes.



The school newsletter contains significant Special Character information, beginning with the theme for the year and the links to Gospel values, and Church teachings.

### Faith Based- Leadership

The Principal has extensive experience in Catholic schools and was previously a student, parent and a staff member at Carmel College. She is in her seventh year as Principal. She clearly promotes a faith-based vision for the school, as well as being a warm, reflective role model in action. She is an active member of the Auckland and National Catholic Principal's Associations and participates readily in the PLD offered during the year. She is consistent in putting Special Character first and Special Character activities are given priority. She is a Eucharistic Minister in the Orewa Parish.

The Director of Learning for Mission is also a role model for other staff. She is highly qualified and has over 14 years of service in several Catholic schools. She is a guardian of Special Character at Carmel College, inspiring students and supporting them in their endeavours. She works well with the HOD RE who is very experienced, passionate about her role and is well-respected by staff and students.

Staff feel supported and described the kind, caring relationships towards one another. There is a sense of belonging and common purpose, where people are listened to and acknowledged. One staff member explained this by saying *"As we see Christ in all people we meet, I think we do so by developing good relationships with colleagues, students, the whānau and the school community"*.

The experienced Senior Leadership team are steadfast in their commitment to a student focused environment and personal success. They spoke about the fundamental part Catholic Special Character played in their portfolios. This included attention to the Hauora of staff and students, the importance of prayer, a restorative approach to pastoral care, and the importance of human dignity and respect. Constant review and evaluation is embedded in their practice.

The Principal commented that she follows Catherine McAuley's wisdom *"The simplest and most practical lesson I know ...is to be good today but better tomorrow"*.

### *Next Steps*

1. The school values are spoken about often, in assemblies, classrooms, home rooms, staff reflection and in newsletters. Continuing to translate these into behaviours and linking them with scripture and the teachings of Jesus will strengthen understanding.
2. Running a complete sacramental programme aimed at 5.2 and 5.3 students in particular then ensuring they are linked back to their Parishes.
4. Linking environmental issues more explicitly with Special Character

## **Growth in Knowledge – Te Whakatupu mā te Mātauranga**

*The school assists its community to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ, his teachings and the Catholic Church.*

### *Areas of Success*

#### *Religious Education*

Students were engaged and focussed, and teacher-learner relationships were warm and respectful. The high level of subject knowledge, willingness to continually upskill and the witness of the RE teachers underpins confidence and competence in the RE staff.

Effective, integrated teaching and learning programmes for Religious Education are based on the nationally mandated curriculum. Faith Central resources are used, particularly for Years 9 and 10 and other resources are on a shared drive with extensive use made of the Google suite. The DRS has engaged in PLD on the bridging document and new RE curriculum and will continue to work on this in the future.

Students are provided with a vast range of opportunities to learn, grow in faith and develop a mature relationship with the person of Christ. This encompasses understanding of what the church teaches, forming a personal world-view, reflecting on what it means to be a Catholic in today's world and helping to find meaning in their lives. Programmes are reviewed annually and a 2019 analysis of achievement data shows that the students achieve well. In 2019 72% of students gained merit and excellence in their RE standards at Level One, 78.72% at Level Two and 80.72% at Level 3. One of the Departmental goals is to further increase Merit and Excellence endorsements in RE, and work has begun on introducing Scholarship RE.

During our visit a group of Senior students commented that they had enjoyed junior RE better, as from Year 11 the subject became more assessment focused which reduced class discussion and debate, something they found stimulating. *"RE has become very clinical."* Year 13 student

The Department has 14 RE teachers, 3 of them full-time, and there is a regular meeting schedule for the department. All of the members of the Department undergo PLD when available such as the Zoom meetings run by the Mercy Spirituality Centre. The DRS is currently up-dating the Diocesan data-base with levels of Certification being reviewed.

Students see RE as an important subject having an effect in their daily lives, setting themselves up for the future when they encounter people whose views are very different from their own. They show an appreciation for their faith, the school and its traditions. They supported the statement from the RE Department Documentation that states: *"At Carmel College, Religious Education is about the development of an open-ended, critical thinking approach to the Catholic tradition, rooted in the person of Jesus and the message of the Gospel which is expressed in the five core Mercy values."*

The Special Character Awards at prize giving are valued.

### Catholic Curriculum

Guidance for all staff on what constitutes a Catholic world-view has been provided to HODS to stimulate discussion of a Catholic perspective in all curriculum areas. It focussed largely on the social teaching of the Church and formed the basis for further development led by SLT. Departmental documentation and minutes of meetings clearly showed the importance placed on this throughout the school. Staff questionnaires mentioned specific ways in which the Catholic world view was incorporated beyond tokenism. Reviewers saw evidence of this in classrooms such as Art, English, Technology and Social science. Texts used in English and topics in Social Studies had strong links to Catholic Social Teachings. *"We look at the negatives of globalisation with regards to Nike sweatshops, we use CARITAS as an example when studying human trafficking, incorporate our values when we look at climate change and sustainability".* In technology *"We make head coverings for women with cancer and run bags for children in woman's refuge centres"*. Staff Questionnaire

Most Health and PE teachers have completed *Having Life to the Full or Understanding Sexuality* courses with the Diocese and policies and practices reflect Catholic Special Character. Outside Health



providers are vetted for appropriate content and the policy states that *“the Board, through the Principal, will monitor the provision of counselling services by the way of an annual report”*.

The Religious Education Department, working with PE/ health department conducted a review of how Sexuality Education was taught at Carmel College. Consultation with the community was undertaken and feedback used to determine what would be covered at each year level and how that would be delivered in terms of departments.

### *Next Steps*

1. Pathways to Certification for all RE teachers are continued and encouraged.
2. Participation in PLD about the bridging document and new RE curriculum is continued and plans for implementation included in departmental reviews.

## **Christian Witness – Te Whakaatu Karaitiana**

*The school provides a hope-filled Catholic Christian witness which empowers its community members to integrate their faith and their life.*

*“Being aware of the challenges today when so many girls are 'unchurched' the BOT in consultation with the principal and DRS support the focus for 2020 to be on how to provide authentic encounters with Christ for all girls and staff at Carmel. “ Principal*

## **Areas of Success**

### **Catholic School Community**

Students, staff and parents speak fondly of the sense of community and pride in the school. The students appreciate the quality teaching they receive and know that staff really care for them. A group of students said that Carmel is *“like a family”*.

Staff in turn appreciate the students they teach. *“I like our students. I like my job. I encourage students to be helpful to me and one another. I talk about God’s work”*. Staff Questionnaire

The new school uniform, that students were very much part of designing, has been well received by the whole community. This includes a new crest that better reflects Aotearoa New Zealand and now

includes the words “*Mana Maria*” - to Mary as our guide, and reflects the bi-cultural nature of our country. The Mercy Sisters were consulted and suggested this change in wording.

Carmel College is actively involved in the wider Catholic Community attending events such as the ordination of Bishop Michael Gielen and hosting seminars for the Diocese including *Teachers New to Catholic Schools*. Five staff attended the National Convention held in Wellington in 2018 that was co-hosted by the Principal Chris Allen.

There has been a strategic reorganising of the student leadership team with an emphasis on focusing on the different aspects of leadership areas and student led teams. There are two Heads of Special Character but each of the six Houses and their leaders are responsible for House Masses and Special Character events.

There are many feeder schools, including five Catholic ones, and although coming from a wide range of schools, students identified a sense of *sisterhood* which bound them together upon entry to the school. The senior girls model this for the junior girls. The Tuākana-Tēina programme is part of the house-based Atawhai system and senior students take the initiative to welcome and look after new students. Atawhai groups are vertical and this group meets every day.

Links with the local Parishes are valued and there is a positive relationship with the Deanery. The re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross at St Joseph’s Takapuna during Lent, with boys from Rosmini College, is a well-established tradition.

The Teacher’s Council’s *Our Code, Our Standards* whakamana, manaakitangi, pono and whanaungatanga that are underpinned by Gospel values, are evident in all aspects of school life. Students feel safe, supported and are polite and well-behaved. This is how a group of students described it: “*I can be myself at Carmel and it makes me strive to be a better person*”. They also said that “*Catholic is not an add-on but part of the package*”.

The school is part of a North Shore Catholic Kāhui Ako including six Catholic Primary schools in the area as well as Rosmini College. There is an annual cultural day and shared liturgy. The Principal is the Lead of this group.

There are many opportunities for parent involvement in the school including the PTFA. Many channels of communication with parents are used including regular newsletters, emails, the latest news in a quick link on the school web-site and, more recently, Facebook. Parents we spoke to

talked about the *“strong sense of community connections, firmly rooted in the Catholic North Shore Community, the quality education and the safe, caring environment.”*

### Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The school demonstrates commitment to tangata whenuatanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership in many ways. Te Reo and tikanga Māori is evident throughout the school and staff participate in on-going PLD in Te Reo and Tikanga. The review team was welcomed by a Mihi Whakatau led by the Tū Wāhine and Kaumātua.

The Carmel College Kowhaiwhai is proudly displayed and the reason for the design clearly articulated in documentation and on wall displays. *“For each individual member of our Carmel Community, the waka represents their personal learning journey, with Christ in the waka with them and our collective journey as a Carmel learning community”*. Staff Handbook

The use of waiata and karakia during Masses and liturgies is actively encouraged and signage around the school is in both English and Te Reo.

There is a significant commitment to tikanga Māori within the Religious Education programmes and throughout the school. All RE units have a glossary of Māori words. Māori spirituality and culture is not only part of the RE curriculum but is incorporated into other curriculum areas. The Principal promotes and *“normalises”* Te Ao Māori throughout the school and ensures appropriate protocols are used in the school for things like welcoming visitors and dignitaries, and that obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi are considered. New students are welcomed by a full school pōwhiri at the beginning of each year.

There is separate consultation with Māori parents and this whanau Hui given a new focus. A strategic plan has been developed and a clearer structure for meetings put in place. As a result of this new awards for prize giving were purchased and a korowai commissioned for the new student leadership role of Tū Wāhine. This student takes a *“lead role in Tikanga Maori and leadership amongst our tauira”*. Student Leader Job Description.

Te Reo is taught by a specialist teacher across all year levels, with compulsory courses for all at Year 7 and 8.



## Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is seen as a moral imperative of Catholic education at Carmel school so that all students are supported as individuals and treated with justice and respect. Manaakitanga is a hallmark of the school. Spiritual Hauora and wellbeing are the foci for the large pastoral care network. The group, led by a Director of Learning Engagement, meets regularly and includes two Guidance Counsellors, a part-time Chaplain, SENCO, Director of International students and House Deans. There is on-going tracking of all students and regular Pastoral Care meetings discuss students of concern. One Dean described her approach as *“focussing on compassion and forgiveness, working within the Restorative Relationship framework”*. One of the counsellors talked about *“valuing the person and walking with them, making a connection which is spiritual as well”*.

Programmes such as *Travellers* are run each year, with two groups of 15 in 2020. Also the *Circles* programme is incorporated into year 7 and 8 programmes and a *Respect* matrix, that was co-constructed with staff and students, used.

The Pastoral Care team continued contact with families during the recent pandemic lockdown. *Carmel Connected* the iSite set up by the student leadership team during the recent pandemic lockdown to increase student engagement included aspects of well-being such as fitness, yoga, prayer, inspirational videos and prayer. *Ask your Team* survey is being used to evaluate on-line learning and to see how students are coping with return to on-site learning. The *E Pulse App* is also being trialled to check on student well-being and to provide student voice.

Transition for students is well-catered for, with two orientation days, special needs transition days and a separate transition day for any new students from other levels. All of these days have a Special Character component. Partnerships between home and school are valued.

The Deans work with student leaders and actively promote positive relationships and resilience. A Catholic perspective is always included with Gospel links to things such as kindness, loving and the dignity of people. The school participates in a Netsafe programme. Responsible digital citizenship is part of the Mental Health strand of the Health curriculum and is taken very seriously. There are very clear guidelines for students.

All members of the SLT and Deans have completed Restorative practice training. This represents a significant investment by the Board in the restorative approach. They talked about the restorative chats that form part of dealing with any incident and questions like *'What would Jesus do?'* Peer mediators are trained by the Guidance Counsellors.

A High Pastoral Needs register is maintained, with confidential access. House Deans follow their students from Year 7 to 13 through the school so they get to know their students really well.

The Guidance Counsellors see a Catholic perspective as not negotiable, and find the hope present in a faith-based school environment an advantage in dealing with anxiety and depression. They are part of the Catholic Counsellors' Network and have a Catholic supervisor. They meet with the Deputy Principal in charge of Learning Engagement regularly and will refer students to other team members if appropriate. There is support from outside agencies such as WINZ, YWCA, Study Link, Doctors, Oranga Tamariki and St Vincent de Paul.

There is a legacy of focussing on staff well-being and recently the Board allocated an extra days leave to all staff to be taken at their discretion to acknowledge the extra work carried out during lock-down. Staff value gestures such as this.

### Service and Outreach

The Carmel ethos that includes outreach to those less fortunate is seen as fundamental and a key part of Special Character. Organisations such as Young Vinnies, CARITAS, Mercy Hospice and De Paul House are well supported and raise awareness of important issues that are clearly linked to Mercy and Gospel values. Students also choose a variety of causes to fundraise for such as Breast Cancer Pink Ribbon Day and Mental Health Foundation and those from all levels are involved in the many groups. These include Z Club, SAVE Environmental group, United Nations Youth, Human Rights, Body Image and the Faith Café.

The Faith Café is a wonderful example of faith in action. While staff attend PLD sessions students run a café that is very popular. The significant amounts of money raised is donated to charities such as de Paul House.

*"Going beyond just an academic education, Carmel instils within us a culture of compassion, helping us to become Mercy women who see the need and make the difference, both when in uniform and without. As the Prophet Micah calls us to, "Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God", we as Mercy women are driven not only to recognise the dignity of our peers but to take it a step further, responding to this truth by putting the needs of others above our own and expressing the radical love of Jesus to everyone we meet."* Talitha and Prishlisaa, Special Character Leaders.

*"For some girls, service has always been a part of them, for others, it's something new. Carmel has inspired us to work to build the kingdom of God by walking alongside our struggling brothers and sisters in the community, following in the footsteps of other Mercy women such as Catherine McAuley. In doing so, we live out Jesus' teaching to be light of the world guiding others along the way. When doing our service hours, we are reminded of scripture as Jesus says in Matthew 25:40 that we should serve others just as we are serving God himself. With this in mind, we reach out to the community, seeing Jesus within the sick, the oppressed, and those struggling with poverty."* Talitha and Prishlisaa, Special Character Leaders.

Following Internal review in 2018, it was decided, from consultation with students, staff and the parent community, that although there was lots of great service happening building on the work of the previous DRS, it was time to formalise the process and put in place a school wide service programme. In 2019 the service programme was formalised and over 70% of students completed the programme. Even with the disruptions of the pandemic this is on-target to increase this year. CCAL agreed to fund a service coordinator for 2 days per week in 2019 to work with the DRS to develop this programme. This has had a significant impact.

*"The students, staff and parent community are supportive of the programme as a way in which girls are able to live out the Gospel message as Mercy women who see the need and make a difference. It was decided that in order to embed the programme into the culture of Carmel that it would stay as a key goal in 2020. Being aware of the challenges today when so many girls are 'unchurched', the BOT, in consultation with the principal and DRS support the focus for 2020 to be on how to provide authentic encounters with Christ for all girls and staff at Carmel."* SLT.



Senior students organised their own response to raise awareness of racism and the *Black Lives Matter Movement* in America. This was then spoken about in the context of the Mercy value of Whakarangatira that embraces all aspects of human relationships. A very powerful and confronting video, with a range of students speaking about their personal experiences with racism, was recorded and shown to Atawhai groups.

### *Next Steps*

1. Continue to articulate and link the rationale for service to the example of Jesus
2. Continue to embed the service programme linked to core value Āwhinatanga

## **Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character – Te Kaitiakitanga me te Whakapakari i te Tuakiri Katorika**

*The school in its stewardship and compliance with statutory obligations safeguards and strengthens its Catholic identity.*

### *Areas of Success*

#### *Stewardship*

The Board is ably led by the Board Chair and includes a Mercy Sister. The Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022 gives priority to Catholic Special Character. Goal One states nine core strategies to ensure that the special Catholic Character of the school is deepened and embraced.

The representatives that met with the review team are proud that Special Character permeates everything in the school, from the curriculum in general to co-curricular activities and relationships within the school. They also clearly articulated the importance of remembering the difference between governance and management, affirming but not being involved with the running of the school.

The Board receives regular monthly reports on Special Character and religious education, under the dimensions of the *Review for Development* document. Feedback on the progress of the Special Character goals is included in the monthly reports from the DRS and also in the annual report to CCAL and BOT. These goals are also a focus of Special Character committee meetings each term,

chaired by Sr Rosemary Revell, a Mercy Sister, this committee determines the strategic direction for Special Character.

Members participate in liturgical events as well as being regular visitors to the staffroom. The Mercy Sisters join the school on special occasions such as Carmel Day Mass and this year students enjoyed singing happy birthday to Sister Monica, a former Principal, who was turning 91.

The Boards provide a generous budget to cover both RE, Special Character and PLD and classrooms are well resourced.

### Employment

All job descriptions, and employment information for prospective employees, give priority to Special Character and it is thoroughly embedded in employment procedures. The Special Character statement signed by all staff includes elements of the *Code of Ethics for Catholic Schools* and a statement that “*outlines what Catholic character is, your rights, and your commitment as a staff member in a NZ Catholic school*”.

The Board fully supports the faith leadership of the Principal, and recognise that she works tirelessly in and out of school hours, attends PLD and maintains important networks within the community. She is to be commended for her leadership in the recent Pandemic shutdown, ensuring on-line learning was established across all levels. She in turn feels valued and well-supported by the Board.

The staff appraisal system is robust and *Catholic Elaborations on Professional Standards* are part of this. These augment the existing requirement for all staff to support the Special Character of the school.

### Professional Development

The shared practice of leading reflections at Board meetings has led to finding resources that support spiritual development. The Board values the PLD offered by the Diocese and Mercy Sisters and recommends this as a priority to all Board members. With three newly elected Board members consideration should be given to helping them understand their role.

### Enrolment

The school gives clear priority to baptised Catholics and carefully monitors the status of enrolled students. The Integration Agreement permits 5% non-preference, however the current 2020 school roll is over this. The school is actively encouraging families to complete sacramental programmes and thus be eligible for preference status.

All school promotional materials reflect the Special Character of the school.

A fund exists to help students attend activities such as retreats and assistance with attendance dues are arranged where there is financial hardship.

### Chapel

The need for a Chapel or quiet space has been discussed for some time and several students and staff talked about this. There will perhaps be an opportunity to look at this in the scheduled redevelopment of the Convent.

### Statutory Requirements

The attestation document signed by the Board Chair and Principal indicates compliance with the maximum roll only. They are non-compliant with the number of non-preference students and number of tagged teachers as stated in the Integration Agreement. The Board and Principal are actively working towards compliance with non- preference students and tagged teachers.

### Next Steps

1. Consider ways of continuous formation of the Board that could include an opportunity for the longer-serving Board members to share wisdom and best practice in relation to Special Catholic Character.
2. Continue efforts towards reducing the number of non-preference students.
3. Monitor and plan to increase the number of tagged teachers when the opportunity arises.
4. Continue to actively seek suitable space for Chapel or quiet space.



## Conclusion

It was a pleasure for the review team to spend time getting to know the Carmel College school community. Our sincere gratitude for the warm welcome, courtesy and hospitality we received, and for the superb organisation and preparation by the College for this review.

The Board of Trustees, Principal and staff are to be commended on the vibrant school culture with outstanding Christian witness based on Catholic Social teachings. Carmel College is a high achieving school that is a true reflection of the holistic nature of Catholic education in the context of the Mercy tradition.

We wish the Carmel College school community all the best for the future and look forward to following future developments.



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