



**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATION SERVICES**  
Te Ratonga Mātauranga ki ngā Kura Katorika

**ĀHUATANGA KATORIKA KAUPAPA  
AROTAKE ME TE AHU WHAKAMUA**

**CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW  
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Report on an external review of

**TE KURA Ō WHANAU TAPU  
HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL  
PORIRUA**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

**Review conducted on: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September**

**Review Team:**

**Zita Smith** (Lead Reviewer)

**Linda Birch** (Accompanying Principal Reviewer)

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Holy Family School</b>
<b>Address</b>	<b>Mungavin Avenue, Porirua</b>
<b>School Type</b>	<b>Co-educational Years 1-6</b>
<b>Decile</b>	<b>1c</b>
<b>Ethnic Composition (% to the nearest whole) 241</b>	
	Maori: 48 (20%)
	Samoan: 123 (51%)
	Tokelauan: 12 (5%)
	Cook Islands Maori: 14 (6%)
	Kiribati 15 (6%)
	Tongan: 6 (2.5%)
	Burmese 12 (5%)
	Niuean: 6 (2.5%)
	Fijian: 5 2%
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Chris Theobald</b>
<b>Director of Religious Studies</b>	<b>Peter Setefano</b>
<b>BOT Chairperson</b>	<b>John Lafaele</b>
<b>Parish Priest</b>	<b>Fr. Pene Patelesio</b>

**Date of on-site review:** 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**Date of this report:** 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018

The Catholic special character review of Holy Family School was conducted by the Wellington Catholic Schools Education Service review team of:

**Zita Smith**  
*Reviewer*

**Linda Birch**  
*Accompanying Principal Reviewer*

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## THE AIMS AND FRAMEWORK OF THE CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW

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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).

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

- 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.

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## REPORT SUMMARY

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Holy Family School, located in Porirua East and founded by the Brigidine Sisters in 1960, has as its motto, strength and gentleness. It is part of the very active and vibrant Holy Family Parish, with the church and presbytery sitting alongside the school.

The school and parish, made up of diverse cultures, mainly of Pacific heritages, are supported by two parish priests as well as the Missionary Sisters of Charity who live in nearby Waitangirua.

Since 2015, the roll has grown by nearly 40% to 234 students over 11 classrooms, many in the junior school. The current roll is the highest it has been since 2004.

An outstanding quality of the school is in the ways staff seek to connect with whanau by building authentic, culturally responsive relationships. Getting to know each child, their family and their context has high priority for staff to be able to meet the needs of each child. Several initiatives, designed by the school, reach out to whanau in order to build positive relationships that empower parents to support their children's education. Inclusion is obvious in the way that all students, particularly those with particular learning or behavioural needs, are welcomed and accepted. All parents spoken to had themselves been students at Holy Family School as children. They expressed a deep love and sense of belonging to the school.

Staff demonstrate commitment to the school's Catholic Character values. This is evident in the positive and open interactions, the welcoming and hospitable approach towards whanau, and the way the dignity of students is preserved. The students themselves are respectful, courteous, engaged and show particular reverence at times of prayer.

Pastoral care is a strength and the needs of students and their whanau is always the priority. Community partnerships help provide ongoing, practical support that enables the school to offer pastoral care in the form of food, uniforms, transport and after school care in a sustained way.

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 teacher and an exemplary role model of the Catholic Character.

The principal, DRS and DP, together with the Board, demonstrate effective leadership and stewardship of the school. They are passionate about safeguarding the integrity of the school's Catholic Character, particularly through relationships of care.

The recommendations at the end of this report provide next steps for the school to continue to consolidate and strengthen all aspects of the Catholic Character in a more explicit way.

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## SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE PREVIOUS EXTERNAL REVIEW

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### Key Recommendations from the 2014 Review

- 1. *Bring the non-preference numbers into line with the school's Integration Agreement.***  
School leadership has worked hard to bring non preference numbers in line with the 5% entitlement. The school is now within the non-preference entitlement of 15. All potential students and whanau, whether preference or not, meet with Fr Pene prior to enrolment about what it means to be in a Catholic school.
- 2. *Ensure that the annual Attestation and Report are completed collaboratively and tabled at a Board of Trustees meeting.***  
The annual attestation is still an area to work on, although this is now tabled at Board Meetings and Board members have a greater awareness of their responsibility to complete this. Attestation for 2017 has been completed.
- 3. *Reviewers noted that Nag 7(Catholic Character) is not presently included in the school's Review and Reporting Schedule. It is suggested that the school adopts the 3 yearly review cycle as recommended by the CSES and then added to the Review and Reporting Schedule. Also, in light of teachers' learning from TH101 and their wish to incorporate this into their teaching, a thorough review of Religious Education should be the first area to be reviewed in 2015. The Religious Education Adviser can assist with this.***  
The principal now reports on NAG 7 in each Board Pack. The DRS presents a report on Catholic Character activities each term. The Board is yet to plan for or implement a 3 year internal review cycle of Catholic Character in their triennial work plan. See Recommendations.
- 4. *After Religious Education has been reviewed, include the reviewed statement in the Curriculum and Planning Document annually.***  
The RE Curriculum was reviewed and updated in 2017 and is located in the Curriculum Manual. It has yet to include a clear overview that outlines curriculum content for each year level. See Recommendations.
- 5. *When all the Catholic Character documentation is reviewed and written, consider developing a Catholic Character Directory as a point of reference for teachers. Include the revised Religious Education Statement, which should include time allocation, long term plans, professional development, prayer practices, prayer samples, mass/liturgy expectations, pastoral care procedures, behaviour management procedures, expectations of tagged positions etc.***  
The recently rewritten RE curriculum has a directory with points of reference for teachers, including time allocation and other key information. However the following were not evident: long term plans, professional development plan, prayer samples, mass/liturgy expectations, pastoral care procedures, behaviour management procedures or expectations of S464 (tagged) positions. See Recommendations.

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## 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?*

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### AREAS OF SUCCESS

#### **Spiritual Formation**

Prayer is part of school life. Students pray in their classes and whole school prayer currently takes place daily in the Hall, led by the principal or the DP and sometimes student leaders. This takes the form of meditation, scripture and song.

Staff report that they encounter Christ every day in their interactions with one another, with whanau and especially with students. Building positive relationships drives the behavioural and spiritual culture of the school.

The whole staff prays together every week, and each staff member takes turns to lead prayer as part of a roster. Whole staff attendance at the annual Diocesan Commissioning Mass builds community and enhances the common vision that all staff are pivotal to the health of the school's Catholic Character.

Students have the opportunity to encounter Christ through the lens of their own culture. Integrating Pasifika customs e.g. showing manaakitanga/ talimālō by offering and providing food, giving thanks for the kai/ meaa and for those who prepared it, and linking this to what Jesus did, gives the Gospel stories greater meaning.

Students attend Mass on a regular basis in the parish church. Classes are on a roster to attend weekday mass over a term, and at the start and end of terms during the year, as well as on special Feast days, the whole school attends. The two resident parish priests provide support for the school.

The *Phenomenals* Monsters, particular to Holy Family School, exemplify behavioural and learning dispositions of Grit (resilience), ICan (perseverance), Optimum, (being my best self) Mafana (love) and Mana (self-respect). These two latter are aligned to Pasifika and Māori values that children understand clearly and through this initiative, students are encouraged to develop the skills to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to be the best they can be.

#### **Evangelisation**

Students are invited, usually informally by the DRS, to take part in the parish sacramental programme, run by the Missionary Sisters of Charity.



For students who are facing challenges and whose only encounter with Jesus is at school, pastoral care is a powerful tool for evangelisation. The pastoral care they receive through love in action, as well as through prayer, helps them to experience God's love in a tangible way.

### **Faith Based Leadership**

The DRS is respected as a strong leader of faith through service, not only in the school but also in the parish and community. He takes a leadership role particularly in music. He is a model of authentic and caring relationships. Students describe him as a good listener and someone they can talk to about anything.

The principal and DP are strong advocates for and models of the values of Holy Family School in their words and actions. They have a real strength in creating and leading initiatives designed specifically to meet the needs of the students and whanau of the school. Programmes that build self-belief and confidence in students and that connect with, educate and empower whanau are having a positive impact.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Plan for a more structured approach to spiritual formation for both staff and students. Examples could be retreat days, Year 6 student attendance at CSES leadership day, PD to build variety into classroom prayer experiences.

Illustrate the *Phenomenals* dispositions with examples of how Jesus lived these qualities in his life, using Scripture excerpts as a base. These then become an opportunity for spiritual formation.

Initiate a weekend School and Parish Mass with students taking key roles.

Use the Student Diaries as an inspirational and educational tool for Catholic Character by incorporating e.g. simple prayers (in different languages), family prayer, night time prayer, an outline of the upcoming RE themes being taught and simple activities connected with these.

Ensure classroom prayer provides a variety of prayer experiences for children to encounter Christ and give opportunities for students to lead this, no matter their age.

The Tama Ikiiki Programme, a preschool programme run weekly for children from 4 years old who are coming to Holy Family School, is a wonderful opportunity to introduce to children and their whanau, a friendship with the person of Jesus. Incorporate into the programme, a prayer time and a simple, explicit Religious Education focus appropriate to the age of the children.

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## 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?*

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### AREAS OF SUCCESS

#### Leadership

The DRS is a role model of faith. He is knowledgeable, supportive and is always open to working alongside teachers. He is currently studying a TCI paper, Catholic Social Teaching, online.

#### Religious Education

The school implements the nationally mandated RE Curriculum and teachers make effective use of NCRS online curriculum material including Faith Alive in their planning and as a resource for the teaching programme. Teachers plan and teach mainly in their individual classrooms, except for *The Village*, comprising three parallel classes of Year 4-6 students, where teachers share planning and some teaching. During the review, the launch of the Church Strand in *The Village* was led by the DRS for all students.

Teaching in Religious Education is for the most part effective and engaging for learners; teachers implement strategies to meet the learning needs of students. Scaffolding, using speaking frames, e.g. "I can give praise to God by...", was particularly helpful to support the learning of junior or ESOL students.

Explicit teaching, linking to prior knowledge is in evidence, as well as links to children's culture and life experience, as a way for learners to integrate their faith and their life. An example of this is the use of oral language and writing about the eels in the local creek to highlight God's creation. Also, the use of drama, writing and creating songs to perform helped students relate to the Church topic. Religious education is integrated into the Amata Nei play-based programme in the New Entrant classes to help children understand aspects of faith through play.

In most classes observed, there was a balance between teacher as facilitator and student input, with good student engagement. Learning buddies, small group tasks and group brainstorming were evident in all classes.

Classroom interactions are respectful, with positive relationships evident between students and teacher and among students. Students are confident to share their ideas and teacher feedback is affirming and encouraging.

Teachers attend Cluster Meetings and Curriculum days as their professional development.

#### Catholic Curriculum

The school has a heightened awareness of and commitment to social justice within the school and in the wider community, implicitly relating this to the Gospels' portrayal of Jesus' care for the poor and marginalised, which is central to the Gospel message. Social justice is central to all





actions and interactions at Holy Family School and informs decisions that impact on students and their whanau.

The So'otaga Programme (so'otaga means *connection* in Samoan) is a powerful initiative to grow a connection and relationship between school and home, and through it to hear the voice of whanau. It was designed by Holy Family School leadership to educate and empower whanau. This is an excellent example of the school's cultural responsiveness to its community.

The Missionary Sisters of Charity, who provide a deeply Catholic perspective on prayer, the Mass, the Church and the Sacraments support the school with weekly teaching visits.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Visual displays of the students' work and learning in RE on classroom and corridor walls or as video clips shown at Assembly, will continue to educate and give students greater ownership of their learning, as well as give a clear signal of the priority of Catholic Character in the school.

There is no evidence that the planning and teaching of RE is monitored or assessed across the school, or that teachers new to Catholic schools are scaffolded and supported in a strategic way. See Recommendations.

A Catholic Character component was evident in some student reports. Ensure that a Catholic Character component is part of *all* annual student reports to whanau.

DRS – ensure there is a system for keeping hours of PD for each teacher and carry out all requirements for the next level of certification as soon as these hours have been achieved.

There is no evidence that a programme for teaching Human Sexuality is planned for and being taught. See Recommendations.

Integrate Catholic Character explicitly into the So'otaga programme.

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**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?*

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**AREAS OF SUCCESS****Catholic School Community**

The Catholic concept of community is evidenced in the school through the co-operation and sense of teamwork of all members. The school is a welcoming environment where hospitality, aroha and courtesy are evident. It is characterised by warm relationships, where all are treated with respect.

Employment choices made by the school are underpinned by Catholic social justice, with all support staff being paid the "living wage" and where employment is offered, wherever appropriate, to adults within the school and parish community. Currently, all non-teaching staff have been employed from within the community.

The principal and DRS are active witnesses of faith in the school and in their parish/es, and present the face of Christ to others in their interactions. Staff demonstrate a culture of care, and will often make home visits if there is a need or at times of family bereavement or loss.

**Partnership and Collaboration**

The school demonstrates real strength in operating and educating in culturally responsive ways. The school recognises the cultural diversity of its students and whanau, and works hard to ensure that all cultures are honoured and respected.

Communication channels are effective and accessible to all. Whanau are consulted and communicated with and wherever possible, parents' ideas are incorporated into the life of the school. This can be seen clearly in the So'otaga Programme where parent voice is specifically invited and valued, and the Tama Ikiiki Programme which supports pre-schoolers and their whanau to become confident and "at home" in the education system they are entering.

The principal is proactive in building and maintaining relationships with outside organisations that support school families in practical and financial ways. These organisations include Kids Can, Eat My Lunch, Kickstart Breakfast, Forward Gear and USO Bikes.

The school is part of the local Catholic Schools Scripture Reading Competition and this year students achieved several successes.

**Te Tiriti o Waitangi**

The school recognises Māori as tangata whenua and liaises with local iwi when required. There is an annual tradition of whole school visits to marae in the Wellington area with the Year 5 and 6 students staying overnight. Last year, the school held a noho marae at Takapuwahia Marae in Porirua.



The school holds a mihi whakatau or powhiri to welcome new students and their families, and visitors into the school, with children taking active leadership roles in karanga, korero, waiata and haka. Songs, prayers and greetings are often in te reo Maori. Matariki was a major celebration for the school and whanau this year with a noho marae, and hangi. This was very well supported by the community.

### **Pastoral Care**

Holy Family School community won the 2016 Wellington Community Airport Trust Award for pastoral care. "We care" is the guiding principle of the school and exemplifies its priorities.

The school is supported by external support agencies as well as generous benefactors of the school to provide, at no additional cost to whanau, transport in the school van for students who require it, breakfast in schools five days a week, after school care 3 days a week, the supply of school shoes and jackets, and funding to ensure *all* students are able to experience an holistic curriculum. In addition, the school provides extra assistance to families as and when the need arises, especially at times of personal tragedy, loss or bereavement.

Holy Family School is committed to an inclusive ethos, in keeping with the Gospel values, and welcomes ākonga with diverse abilities and learning needs, providing appropriate assistance and programmes to enable them to fulfil their potential. A recent video made for a new student with special needs, showing classmates extending him a warm welcome, demonstrates the commitment of the school to the Gospel value of inclusion.

Staff are affirmed and appreciated, and their wellbeing is supported. Surprise release for outings, bringing in a coffee cart, morning teas and social events during the year are some of the ways staff are shown appreciation by the leadership team.

### **Service and Outreach**

Student leadership ambassadors help with hospitality after Masses, funerals and special events in the parish. Sometimes students sing or perform at these functions.

The school supports the St Vincent De Paul Society activities. A Little Vinnies group is active in the school, and senior students volunteer to be part of this. They meet with their adult coordinator each week where they work to provide service in the community.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Explore ways to continue to involve students in service and outreach beyond the Holy Family community.

Although behaviour is managed and pastoral care is evident, there are no written processes or procedures in evidence. See Recommendations.

**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?*

Maximum Roll: 305	Actual: 241
Non-Preference Maximum: 14 (4.6% of max roll)	(5.8% of actual roll)
<b>Actual Roll</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>Maximum Roll</b>	<b>305</b>
<b>Non-preference Maximum</b> as per Integration Agreement	<b>15 (5%)</b>
<b>Actual non preference</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Roll based staffing entitlement</b>	<b>12.5</b>
<b>S464 Positions</b>	<b>7</b>

**Student Numbers for Each Preference Criterion and Non-preference**

Preference Criterion	Number of Students	% of Current Total Number of Students
5.1	115	48%
5.2	3	1%
5.3	100	41%
5.4	9	3%
5.5	0	
Non-Preference	14	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>100%</b>

**AREAS OF SUCCESS**

**Stewardship**

The Board of Trustees ensures that the vision and strategic direction for the school clearly and explicitly reflect the Catholic Character of the school, through a strategic aim and annual goal that focuses on Catholic Character.

The Board shows a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by co-opting a Māori parent on to the Board as a way of ensuring Māori voice at governance level.

**Legal Obligations**

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

## **NEXT STEPS**

An analysis of preference student criteria needs to be part of Catholic Character reporting to the Board. In the last year there have been 53 new enrolments of preference students. Of these, 32 (60%) students met the criteria under 5.3 or 5.4, which means they are not yet baptised. Overall, the school has more than 100 students who are preference but who are not baptised. This has huge implications for the needs of the students' faith development and for the teaching of Religious Education, and needs to be addressed strategically. As well, 10 preference certificates for students enrolled in the last calendar year under the 5.1 criteria were incomplete. They contained no information about the parish, location or date of the child's baptism. See Recommendations.

Gather information about pre-school siblings of current students to help manage the growing roll.

The review cycle for internal evaluation of Catholic Character needs to be inserted into the Board's triennial work plan. Responsibility for reviews should involve not only the DRS but also the principal and proprietor's appointees in some capacity. See Recommendations.

As policies are reviewed and updated, ensure that each reflects the school's Catholic Character.

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## 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.*

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### *Growth in Knowledge*

**1. Write and embed a school Religious Education Curriculum with clear guidelines that reflect the school's community, using the NZ RE Curriculum together with the Religious Education Bridging Document (REBD). Ensure that:**

- The document contains a long term plan overview, professional development plan, prayer samples, mass/liturgy expectations, pastoral care procedures, behaviour management procedures and expectations of S464 (tagged) positions.
- All teachers participate in external PD on the REBD
- Planning and teaching, based on the school's RE Curriculum document, is consistent
- Teachers have an appraisal goal based on their teaching of RE
- Regular classroom RE observations and feedback are carried out by DRS
- The effectiveness of teaching and learning for students is evaluated

**2. Develop and teach a Health curriculum programme for human sexuality education across the school, set in the context of Catholic teaching.**

- Ensure all teachers have participated in the *"Having Life to the Full"* Sexuality PD.
- Ensure whānau and the Proprietor are consulted about the programme.

### *Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character*

**3. Carry out an internal review of one Catholic Character dimension per year as part of a 3 year cycle. Ensure that**

- Reviews are based on the dimensions in the *Catholic Special Character Review for Development* Draft Document
- Catholic Character review is included in the Board triennial work plan

4. **Ensure preference forms are completed fully and accurately before a child is accepted into the school.**
  - Analyse preference data by both preference criteria and year group, to give clear information about the faith needs of students.
  
5. **From the time of enrolment, ensure that there is an invitational process for receiving the appropriate Sacraments as part of the school welcome and culture.**
  - Invitation to Baptism followed up with a Baptismal programme
  - Sacraments of Initiation programme run within the school (but not necessarily by school staff)

The review team is confident that the Holy Family School leadership (Board, Principal, DP and DRS) have the willingness and ability to address the recommendations of this report. They have already begun to work on several of the recommendations with the support of the CSES team.

In concluding this report, the review team wish to thank the Holy Family 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.



Zita Smith  
Lead Reviewer