

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

**CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Report on an external review of

**TE KURA Ō HATO CLAUDINE THÉVENET
ST. CLAUDINE THÉVENET SCHOOL
WAINUIOMATA**

OCTOBER 2019

Review conducted on: 15th – 17th October 2019

Review Team:

Zita Smith (Lead Reviewer)

Steve Wheeler (Accompanying Principal Reviewer)

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name St. Claudine Thévenet Catholic School
Address 14 Rata Street Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt , 5014
School Type Full Primary Co-educational Years 1-8
Decile 3

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

Maori: 57 (20%)
Pasifika: 135 (49%)
Pakeha: 32 (11%)
Asian: 47 (17%)
LAAA: 8 (3%)

Principal: Sue Jury

Director of Religious Studies: Lusia Nikolao

BOT Chairperson: Tony Harrington

Parish Priest: Father Marlon Maylon

School Chaplain: Fr John Quang

Date of on-site review: 15-17th October

Date of this report: 31st October 2019

The Catholic special character review of St. Claudine Thévenet School was conducted by the Wellington Catholic Schools Education Service review team of:

Zita Smith
Lead Reviewer

Steve Wheeler
Accompanying Principal Reviewer

THE AIMS AND FRAMEWORK OF THE CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference wishes the review to show how effective the school is in handing on the faith and forming a new generation of Catholics, and how students have grown in faith as a result of the Religious Education programme.

The External Review process is based on the requirements found in the document, "*Catholic Special Character Review for Development*", Aotearoa NZ Catholic Integrated Schools, NZ Catholic Education Office, 2018 (Draft).

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

- Encounter with Christ - *Te Tūtaki ki ā Te Karaiti*
- Growth in Knowledge – *Te Whakatupu mā Te Mātauranga*
- Christian Witness – *Te Whakaatu Karaitiana*
- Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character - *Te Kaitiakitanga me te Whakapakari i te Tuakiri Katorika*

Reviewers encourage and commend best practice, and, working with the school, provide recommendations to further strengthen and develop the Catholic culture of the school.

REPORT SUMMARY

St. Claudine Thévenet School is a full primary school located in Wainuiomata. It was established in 2005 as an amalgamation of St. Matthew's and St Patrick's Schools, on the St Patrick's School site. Its name and charism comes from the foundress of the French Order of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary, who founded the original schools in 1967. St. Claudine Thévenet School is part of the Parish of Te Wairua Tapu which includes four primary schools and two colleges in the Petone and Hutt Valley areas. The local church of St. Patrick's is located approximately 3km from the school.

The school's mission statement and values are articulated and modelled so that the special Catholic character is evident and powerful in the impact it has on students, staff and community. Prayer is integral to the life of the school with staff and students demonstrating a reverence and openness to their relationship with Jesus. Teachers provide a rich variety of prayer experiences and students also take lead roles in classroom prayer.

Warm and respectful relationships are hallmarks of the school. In a calm environment, students are settled and open to learning. Students demonstrate confidence in their capability as learners.

The mandated NZ Religious Education Curriculum is delivered effectively across the school by teachers who are committed to providing the best opportunities for all students to achieve. RE is integrated into the school's connected curriculum with overarching themes underpinned by the Catholic Character, supporting students to make authentic connections between their life and faith. RE is given high status by being placed at the centre of learning. It is soundly managed, well supported and appropriately resourced by a competent and committed DRS, and professionally delivered by passionate teachers. Students are active and engaged in their learning.

A strength of the school is the leadership of the long serving principal who works to ensure congruence between the Catholic Character, the curriculum, every action and all relationships. Children with diverse needs are given every opportunity to experience success and positive outcomes for all students drives the school mission.

The school leadership and Board are committed to providing the best and most equitable learning opportunities for students in a Catholic environment and work tirelessly to achieve it.

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE PREVIOUS EXTERNAL REVIEW

Key Recommendations from the 2015 Review

- 1. *Utilise the 'Catholic Special Character Review and Development' resource on a three year cycle to ensure all aspects of Catholic Character are reviewed.***
A schedule of review was developed and reviews have been carried out since 2016. As a result there is greater Board awareness of statutory requirements and areas for development.
- 2. *Continue to explore user friendly ways of involving staff in 'Understanding Sexuality' by entering into discussion with the current providers.***
Teachers have not participated in this course to date.
- 3. *Further extend links to social justice and humanitarianism groups e.g. Caritas, St Vincent de Paul so that students gain an understanding and appreciation of issues that may prompt them to take some action.***
Since the last review, the school has been involved in Caritas Lenten initiatives, collecting for the local foodbank of St Vincent de Paul, Mufti mania and fundraising for disaster relief. As a result, student understanding of the need to look beyond the school setting and offer support has been heightened.
- 4. *Since the school has identified 'Service' as one of their Gospel values, work towards creating opportunities for students to serve both at school and in the wider community.***
Student leaders undertake service in a range of ways within the school as members of the Student Council. As a result, there has been more effective and authentic leadership within and across the school, interacting with other schools (Catholic Schools Day) and in the community (cleaning up local streets), as well as a stronger relationship between school and parish.
- 5. *Continue to develop needs-based religious education through integrated authentic themes and work towards consistency of practice school-wide. Ensure also that the coverage of achievement objectives is tracked.***
Whanau group co-operative planning for all RE units is based on an annual schoolwide theme. Tracking sheets are used to monitor coverage of learning outcomes and achievement objectives. Observations in RE are carried out both for in-school review and for certification. Planning is shared and more streamlined. Assessment is co-constructed and an authentic representation of learning. All AOs are tracked over a two year cycle and teachers understand the expectations for the teaching of RE as per the Religious Education implementation plan.

TE TŪTAKI KI A TE KARAITI – ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST

How does the school encourage and facilitate the development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ who reveals the transforming love and truth of the living God?

AREAS OF SUCCESS**Spiritual Formation**

The school has a clear spiritual focus. The vision, “*Creating a Christ-centred learning community*”, states its intent and direction with transparency. Its four values, compassion, integrity, service and respect, provide the basis for the way people treat each other at St Claudine’s. The charism of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary is encapsulated in the phrase, “*How good God is*” and the school is blessed to have been gifted a song by Chris Skinner using the words of the charism in the lyrics.

Varied and rich prayer is an integral part of school culture. Daily prayer takes place in every classroom, led at times by the teachers and at others by students on a weekly roster. Prayer supports students' personal relationship with Jesus by offering them time to be still and to reflect. Through prayer, children experience different ways of encountering Christ, e.g. in song, meditation, using contemporary music, YouTube videos and traditional prayer like the Rosary. The school’s spiritual practices are culturally inclusive, with the use of a variety of languages for prayer and song. The school labyrinth near the playground provides space and time for quiet personal reflection and prayer. Some classes have Gratitude Journals which they write in at the end of each week as they reflect on the gifts Jesus has given them.

Staff prayer is regular and leadership each week is shared on a roster by staff. This time is greatly valued and staff have expressed an appreciation of the opportunity to centre and to develop their relationship with Jesus.

Significant events and Feast Days in the Church’s seasonal calendar are part of the fabric of the school and are always celebrated together. A beginning and end of year Mass is held in St Patrick’s, the local community church. Other Mass and liturgical celebrations are held at school because of its distance from the church. New students and their families and whanau are welcomed into the school with a blessing ceremony held once a term. Fr John, the school’s Chaplain, blesses the candle that each child receives.

In the senior school, a Catholic Character Captain is part of the Student Council. With a team, he supports the DRS to take lead roles in whole school liturgies, Mass and

assemblies. All leaders are expected to be role models of faith and service across the school and each year the Student Council attends a leadership formation day.

Evangelisation

The sacramental programme that serves the Catholic community of Wainuiomata is organised and run by the school. It is well supported by staff and whanau. Baptism, Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation programmes are all run in school time by the DRS who is released for this. Whanau are invited to attend the meetings for their own spiritual development. Students are invited to participate through the school newsletter, classroom newsletters and through the encouragement of classroom teachers. Students who have received a sacrament are acknowledged and congratulated in school assembly.

Staff model Jesus' love in classrooms, leading by example. They openly share their faith and encourage students to do the same, especially through cultural practices. Talking about the Sunday Gospel on Friday reminds students that the Word of God speaks to the heart of the Christian. This is good practice for children who will not be at Mass on the weekend. The fortnightly newsletter carries photographs of children's participation in seasonal ceremonies and celebrations e.g. washing of the feet, Stations of the Cross, receiving the sacraments.

Faith Based Leadership

The school has strong Catholic leadership. The principal's leadership is based in her own personal faith and commitment and she is an active member of Te Wairua Tapu parish. She clearly articulates the school's vision, is explicit in her expectations about "what we do as a Catholic school," and works hard to ensure congruence between the vision and the lived experience in the school community. She has built and continues to model and grow an inclusive culture embedded in Catholic Character. She further demonstrates her Catholic leadership capability with roles beyond the school, as lead principal of the local Kahui Ako (Community of Learning), and at national level as the current President of the NZ Catholic Primary Principals' Association.

The DRS is a role model of the Catholic Character and active parishioner of St Patrick's Church, taking a variety of leadership roles. As such, she is a respected member of the Catholic community and provides a strong link between school and church.

NEXT STEPS

- Ensure the website reflects the school's special Catholic Character. This could be done by including the school vision, values as well as a link to the life and charism of St Claudine.

- Consider a Staff Only Day (Retreat or Reflection) that highlights the school's diversity and unique Catholic Character e.g. visiting a local Marae.

TE WHAKATUPU MĀ TE MĀTAURANGA – GROWTH IN KNOWLEDGE

How does the school assist its community to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ, his teachings and the Catholic Church?

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Leadership

Strong leadership from the principal provides clear direction for teaching Religious Education, about which she is very well qualified and knowledgeable. She facilitates or engages a provider for PD in some aspect of the Catholic Character at the start of the year on a Teacher Only Day.

The DRS supports staff with the themes, resources, special events and any guidance required in the teaching of RE. She prepares masses, liturgies and leads and runs the sacramental programme. Staff value greatly the outstanding commitment and support they receive from the DRS. With the principal, the DRS oversees all aspects of the RE curriculum and its delivery, from planning masses, feast day celebrations, as well as providing resources plus necessary information and carrying out observations to ensure and support the successful teaching and learning of RE in the school.

Religious Education

The nationally mandated Religious Education Curriculum is being implemented effectively. Planning is carried out collaboratively across whanau teams using the Religious Education Bridging Document, around which all teachers have participated in PD. Tracking sheets are used over a two year cycle to ensure balance and coverage. Teachers are well organised and their planning is clear and easy to follow. Students are partners in planning for the connected curriculum by providing teachers with ideas about what they want to learn in brainstorming sessions.

Learning and teaching programmes for Religious Education reflect best practice in current pedagogy. The school's connected curriculum is underpinned with an annual overarching theme reflecting the Catholic Character as the focus for all teaching and learning. This allows learning to be integrated across the curriculum, empowering students to explore their knowledge of God and develop their faith in authentic contexts. Across the school, teaching is targeted to individuals or small groups rather than the whole class. Teachers provide students with learning opportunities that are

well-timed, creative and engaging; open ended questions, choice about what and how they learn puts students at the centre and empowers student agency. Students have the opportunity to question and explore their faith. They are engaged, focussed and confident in being able to manage their own learning. They can talk about what they are learning and how it helps their relationship with Jesus. They contribute to the ideas around them in small groups, with a buddy or as individuals.

The DRS provides support and resources in a timely manner. Whanau Teams share ideas and resources across the school that might be useful. Teachers make effective use of a range of resources, including NCRS online curriculum material, *Faith Alive* and appropriate video clips.

Teachers gather appropriate assessment data at the end of each term in ways that makes it easy for students to demonstrate what they have learnt. Teachers write a self-reflection on what the data tells them, which they then discuss collaboratively to understand the impact of their teaching on student achievement in RE and to develop next steps. Senior students are also beginning to self-reflect on the impact of their learning through keeping a *Journey of Learning* book.

Classroom environments are calm, positive, inclusive, safe, vibrant and reassuring. Students are focused, on task and comfortable with routines and expectations. Classroom relationships are inclusive and respectful and the dignity of all is upheld.

All staff members engage in a regular, planned programme of Catholic Character professional learning and development usually as a whole staff both within school (led by the principal or DRS) and from external providers, to extend knowledge and understanding of the RE curriculum. Staff have completed TCI papers TH501, TH502, SC501, and participated in PLD on the Religious Education Bridging Document, Te Kahui Waiako, and Catholic Social Teaching since the last review. They attend Cluster meetings and Curriculum Day meetings as appropriate. Teachers have certification levels appropriate to their length of service in Catholic education which is monitored by the DRS and principal.

Catholic Curriculum

With staff having completed PLD in this area, the core principles and application of Catholic social teaching are taught as an integral component of a lived faith.

Raising awareness of and acting for justice within the school and in the wider community, explicitly relating this to the Gospels' portrayal of Jesus' care for the poor and marginalised, is a particular hallmark of the principal's leadership. She ensures that there is a collective responsibility for all tamariki in the school - "*These are our children.*"

She works tirelessly to ensure equity for all is lived out in word and action, not only at St Claudine's but in the way she supports other local Catholic schools. As the only Catholic School in Wainuiomata, St Claudine's presence is a powerful witness of a Christian community.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to evolve the connected curriculum.
- Continue to develop student self-assessment and self-reflection on their faith journey and relationship with Jesus in the light of their learning.
- Ensure Catholic spirituality is embedded in Health & Sexuality programmes and that teachers receive appropriate PLD to enable them to do this. (See Recommendation).

TE WHAKAATU KARAITIANA- CHRISTIAN WITNESS

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

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Catholic School Community

Through the connected curriculum and through PLD on Catholic Social Teaching, staff are assisted to understand what the integration of faith and life means from a Catholic perspective. As a result, the Catholic concept of community is seen through the co-operation of all members of the school as brothers and sisters in Christ. School initiatives such as Social Justice day (across Catholic schools in the Kahui Ako for senior students from Y5-10), The Whanau Fiesta, Friendship Buddies, Ako Pai activities, *From Garden to Table* - Sharing the Harvest and the School Picnic at the start of the year, as well as school Masses, liturgies and the sacramental programme, demonstrate how the school reaches out to build the Catholic community.

The culture of the school is characterised by warm relationships at all levels, friendly communications, and active listening, where upholding personal dignity is paramount. The school is a welcoming environment where hospitality is offered and courtesy is demonstrated on a daily basis. New students and their families are welcomed with a blessing ceremony led by the school chaplain each term. Whanau spoken to, expressed gratitude and appreciation for the ways in which the staff show care and compassion not only for their children but for themselves as the caregivers. They feel a strong sense of love for and belonging to the school and acknowledge the positive impact of the school on their children and extended family.

St Claudine's is clearly a Catholic school. Displays and symbols provide witness to its Catholic identity. The sign on the front gate bears the vision and a signpost at the entrance has the school values written in different languages. The office foyer, principal's office and staffroom all have statements, icons and photographs depicting different aspects of the Catholic Character. All classrooms display the school's values as well as student work in RE and traditional prayers on the walls, with prayer spaces evident. Recently, the Student Council gifted each class with an altar pack to refresh all prayer tables. Classrooms now have more visible signs of the Liturgical Year.

Partnership & Collaboration

St Claudine's is part of a Kahui Ako of Catholic schools from Te Wairua Tapu Parish, comprising four primary schools and two colleges. The principal is the leader of the Kahui Ako and meets regularly with the other principals. Wellbeing and transitioning of students from primary to secondary schools are two key areas of focus. Special occasions like Catholic School's Day and a day to celebrate Social Justice strengthen relationships across the parish schools.

There is a positive school and parish relationship despite the challenge of the distance between the school and St Patrick's Church. The DRS is seen as a very strong connection between the school and parish. Church altar servers, most of whom are students of the school, are co-ordinated and organised by one of the teachers. Fr John who is the chaplain for the four schools in the parish, visits regularly and is greatly loved by staff and students with whom he has a positive relationship. Over the past year when the local church was being renovated and moved, parishioners attended Mass at school for feast days and were welcomed into the staffroom for morning tea which developed warm relationships.

The school operates and educates in culturally appropriate ways, recognising the cultural diversity of New Zealand, and works to ensure that all cultures are honoured and respected. The cultural diversity of the student population is reflected in the cultural diversity of staff. Students spoken to feel accepted and valued for who they are and feel comfortable speaking their first language for prayer. The celebration of Samoan and Maori Language Weeks and the school's annual cultural day enhance the school's commitment to diversity.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The school has a commitment to the bicultural nature of Aotearoa NZ, and works to develop an understanding of Māori wairua/spirituality by incorporating tikanga Māori,

te reo Māori, and karakia into the daily life of the school. There is a school kapa haka as well as Pasifika group which perform in the community. Visitors to the school are welcomed with a mihi whakatau and students take leadership roles in karanga and korero. Cultural leadership is a role for two student councillors. Signage identifying classrooms is in te reo Māori as are the school values.

The school is committed to applying *The Theory For Improvement-Constraints Analysis* (Robinson 1993; Robinson & Lai, 2005), which sees Māori students achieving *as Māori*. Achievement data show that there is no disparity between Māori achievement and total student achievement. Māori Land Wars and Parihaka have also been taught in the school so that all students are aware of the bicultural history of Aotearoa NZ.

The school has particular processes that acknowledge and support Tikanga Maori. Totika Time is the way in which behaviour is managed – through conversations and restorative justice practices rather than punishment. It involves self-reflection, a korero with a teacher, and taking action to restore relationships. The Tuakana Teina programme builds supportive relationships between older and younger students.

The Board invited Danny Karatea-Goddard from the Archdiocese of Wellington to facilitate a korero with Board members, for the purpose of providing background knowledge about Te Tiriti O Waitangi in the context of a Catholic School. This has been powerful in deepening the Board's knowledge and understanding in this area.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care systems and procedures are responsive to the needs of students and their families, and reflect Gospel values. The school's Pastoral Care Statement is very clear about how the school meets the needs of those who are vulnerable, with priority given to ensuring equitable opportunities for all students. Children are personally known, cared for, and provided with support as required.

The wellbeing of staff is seen as very important and the principal is very aware of and provides support to staff in practical ways. Staff feel acknowledged and cared for by the principal, leadership team and by one another. Staff celebrations and social occasions, as well as noticing needs and acknowledging vulnerability are all features of this staff.

Teachers and whanau spoken to are unanimous that pastoral care is a priority of the school, particularly for those who are vulnerable or finding life a struggle. Examples of this are supporting families, including staff, with care packages, providing practical help, ensuring Attendance Dues rebates are well advertised, and helping with the provision of school uniform.

Behavioural management is based on restoring and nurturing positive relationships and classroom teachers manage this on a day to day basis by being sensitive to the pastoral care needs of their students. For broader issues beyond the classroom, one teacher has responsibility for running Totika Time. The Gospel values provide a guide to how Jesus would behave and Totika Time supports this in its restorative justice focus.

Service and Outreach

The school develops an explicitly Christ-centred culture of justice, service and outreach by supporting local and national Catholic groups in their campaigns and activities. Tapping into Caritas initiatives, especially the Lenten programme, fundraising for disaster relief, Mufti Mania, providing St Vincent de Paul foodbank support with “Bring A Can Week,” cleaning up the streets outside of the school, and sending cards to occupants of the local retirement village, demonstrate the school’s actions.

The school recognises the importance of service. Students learn this through a variety of service opportunities; as wet day monitors, peer mediators, kaitiaki - stewards of God’s creation, and Tuakana Teina. The ‘buddy bench’ gives students an opportunity to reach out to those in their midst who may be feeling sad or lonely. Students spoken to, understand that their actions of service and outreach are based on the Gospel message.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to explore ways to invite and include parents and whanau in the spirituality of the school.

**TE KAITIAKITANGA ME TO WHAKAPAKARI I TE TUAKIRI KATORIKA-
SAFEGUARDING AND STRENGTHENING CATHOLIC CHARACTER**

*How does the school, in its stewardship, and its compliance with legal obligations,
safeguard and strengthen its Catholic identity?*

Actual Roll: 279

Maximum Roll: 350

Non-preference Maximum as per Integration Agreement: 18 (5% of max roll)

Actual non preference: 18

TOTAL staffing entitlement: 14.75

No. S464 positions required based on TOTAL staffing entitlement: 8

No. actual S464 positions: 8

Preference Criteria	Number of Students	% actual roll
5.1	138	50%
5.2	13	5%
5.3	47	17%
5.4	59	21%
5.5	0	
Preference with no criteria	1	.3%
Total of signed preference roll	258	
Non-Preference Roll	18	6.5%
International Fee Paying Students		

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Stewardship

The Board of Trustees ensures that the vision and strategic direction for the school clearly and explicitly reflects its Catholic Character and is committed to the responsibility of the school to help form Christ in the lives of others. Strategic planning includes the aim of continuing to strengthen the Catholic Character in the school. There is a Catholic Character Policy and the Pastoral Care Statement clearly reflects Gospel values. There is a Code of Ethics based on the Catholic Character which Board members adhere to. The Board Chair leads a thorough induction process for new members to clarify the Board's role and mission. All meetings begin and end with prayer which Board members take turns to lead. Internal evaluation is part of the 3 year Board Workplan and has begun to be carried out using the dimensions in the Draft *Catholic Special Character Review for Development* document.

The principal and the Chair have a very positive, professional working relationship, meet regularly and are united in their vision for St. Claudine's as a Catholic school.

A current initiative of the Board is to repair and restore the school hall which has been out of action for several years due to earthquake risk. Because the hall is seen as a focal point for gathering the whole community in both a spiritual and social sense, the Board sees it as a priority to actively work towards having a fully functioning place for assemblies, liturgies, masses and social occasions. The Archdiocese of Wellington has agreed to fund this restoration work.

Legal Obligations

The school is meeting its obligations under its Integration Agreement in terms of staffing and tagged positions. With regard to non-preference students, the Vicar for Education has given approval for the school to exceed its non-preference entitlement on the grounds of pastoral consideration and compassion until the end of 2019. The non-preference roll and the associated waiting list are monitored carefully.

Job descriptions and appraisal systems indicate the specific responsibilities of staff members to actively support the Catholic Character of the school and a Catholic Character goal is part of every staff member's appraisal.

NEXT STEPS

- As all policies are updated, ensure they reflect the school's Catholic Character.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is expected that the Board of Trustees and staff will include these recommendations in its strategic and annual plans and address them fully before the next external review. Catholic Schools Education Services staff are available to offer professional support as required.

Encounter with Christ

- 1. Identify Gospel stories and visuals that will illustrate and enable the school values to be described as *Gospel* values.**

Growth in Knowledge

- 2. Create a staff induction and development programme that develops understanding of and commitment to congruence between the Catholic Character and all aspects of school life.**
- 3. Liaise with the providers about tailoring the design of the '*Having Life to the Full*' programme so that it is culturally appropriate to staff needs, and encourage participation. This was a recommendation in the 2015 Report.**
 - Ensure the school's *Myself and Others* Health & Sexuality programme reflects the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Character

- 4. Ensure that internal evaluation outcomes which indicate areas for development are included in the school's strategic plan.**

The review team is confident that the St. Claudine Thévenet School leadership (Board, Principal 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 St. Claudine Thévenet 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