

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

**CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER REVIEW  
FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Report on an external review of

**TE KURA Ō HATO PATARIKI  
ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL  
MASTERTON**

**MARCH 2019**

**Review conducted on:** 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**Review Team:**

**Zita Smith** (Lead Reviewer)

**Andrew Herrick** (Accompanying Principal Reviewer)

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## SCHOOL DETAILS

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**Name: St Patrick's School**

**Address: 132 Chapel Street, Masterton**

**School Type: Co-educational Integrated Years 1-6**

**Decile: 5**

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

**Maori: 63 students (27%)**

**Pasifika: 12 students (5%)**

**Filipino: 11 students (5%)**

**Pakeha: 123 students (53%)**

**Asian: 18 (8%)**

**Principal: Steve Wheeler**

**Director of Religious Studies: Chris Connor**

**BOT Chairperson: James O'Connor**

**Parish Priest: Father Bruce England**

**Review conducted on:**

**Date of this Report:**

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

***Zita Smith***

*Reviewer*

***Andrew Herrick***

*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 - *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.

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## REPORT SUMMARY

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St. Patrick's is a school of 233 students located in the heart of Masterton. The school was established in 1883 on a site adjacent to St Patrick's Church. With the amalgamation of St. Bride's Girls' College and St Joseph's Boys' College into Chanel College in 1978, St Patrick's School shifted to its current site on Chapel St (formerly the location of St. Bride's).

The school's motto *Strength and Kindness* is drawn from the Brigidine motto and charism; the school values of strength, kindness and excellence are well known and highly visible around the school. The school has adopted 11 virtues in both English and Te Reo Māori which, throughout the year, are woven into school and class prayer, as well as in the weekly newsletter.

The school's Catholic Character is obvious to all who come into the school. It is visible in the daily prayer life of the school, liturgical celebrations, in the actions and attitudes of staff and students, as well as in the icons, symbols and signage in and around the school. Many colourful murals depict aspects of the school's history, mission and values as well as the school *pepeha*.

St Patrick's is seen as a special place where people are treated with respect, compassion, inclusion and kindness and where the Gospel values are lived out in everyday interactions as well as in the pastoral care of students, staff and whanau.

The school's Catholic spirituality and special character have been powerful in evangelising students, resulting in many Baptisms each year. A huge commitment of the school, particularly the DRS, is in taking responsibility for the local Sacramental programme. Baptism, Reconciliation and First Eucharist are all provided through school-run programmes, resulting in high numbers of children (as well as younger and older siblings) taking up these invitations to become full participants in the Catholic faith.

The NZ mandated Religious Education programme is taught in all classrooms where interactions between teachers and students, and among students are relaxed, respectful and positive.

Student leadership is promoted and encouraged and senior students have many areas of leadership where they reach out to and serve others.

The principal, DRS and Board are committed to the Catholic Character of the school and are working together effectively to ensure that all students have the opportunity to grow in their Catholic faith.

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## **SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE PREVIOUS EXTERNAL REVIEW**

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### **Key Recommendations from the St. Patrick's 2015 Review**

***Ensure that as policies and procedures are reviewed, that a rationale statement to reflect the Catholic Character of the school is included.***

All policies have now been reviewed and reference Catholic Character. As policies are reviewed, discussion takes place on how the wording upholds Catholic Character.

***Regularly revisit the school's charism so that the whole school community is aware of the rich history of the Brigidine Sisters and their inspiration and impact on the school.***

Each school year now begins with a unit of work focusing on the theme of 'Belonging'. This enables each area of the school to set the scene for the year ahead and remind the children of the school's history and what it stands for.

Memorial signage around the school about the Brigidine sisters as well as other significant people from the school's history has been completed.

This year St Brigid's Day (1st Feb) was celebrated with a special Mass.

***Include expectations for teachers in regard to pastoral care procedures, behaviour management, certification and professional standards.***

A Code of Conduct for all staff is now in place and is referenced at the start of every year. The staff collaborative mindset was created 3 years ago, and syndicate agreements on how staff will work together, is reviewed annually.

Job descriptions, referencing the particular role of tagged teachers, were introduced at the start of 2017. Ministry of Education PB4L programme was implemented at the start of 2017 with a focus on the school's Gospel values.

***When pastoral care is reviewed ensure that it is robust by involving all key people – students, staff, parents and also parish members.***

A pastoral care review has recently been completed and shared with the BOT. Pastoral care within our community continues to develop and grow. This is especially due to the work of the school support group and the introduction of a breakfast club as part of the *KidsCan* programme.

***Trial the practice of inquiry learning in Religious Education so that student voice will increase in the learning process and students will be involved in making decisions about their learning.***

The teaching of the RE curriculum continues to be done through integrated RE & Literacy as well as stand-alone RE lessons to ensure that the RE focus is not lost. Integrating RE is part of the current work to establish the school's Philosophy of Learning and to review the Curriculum design and will be in the recommendations of this report.

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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**

A strength of St. Patrick's School is its commitment to the spiritual formation of staff and students. The school mission and values of strength, kindness and excellence are highlighted in many different ways, with Jesus as the model of those values.

Opportunities are available for the spiritual development of all members of the school community and invitations are regularly extended to develop spiritually in a variety of ways.

A range of rich prayer experiences is an integral part of the daily routine of school life. This includes individual and community prayer. Every Monday the school gathers to pray together, using one of the school's 11 virtues as a focus. They are displayed on the walls of the Hall and on banners in te reo Māori as well as English, making clear the school's priority as followers of Jesus. The school also comes together spontaneously for particular prayer purposes. An example of this is the recent tragedy in the Muslim community.

Classroom prayer is valued by students, who often take leadership roles as part of a roster. Students talked about their varied experiences of prayer, including praying in colour, using a mandala, meditation, nature prayers after an autumn walk, as well as silent personal prayer which they enjoyed very much. Leadership teams attended the Student Leaders in Catholic Schools (SLICS) workshop this term along with students from other Catholic schools in the Wairarapa.

Staff pray together twice weekly and are on a roster to organise and lead. Rich retreat opportunities are offered to all staff which focus on encountering Christ on their personal journey of discipleship. These take the form of 3 day guided retreats at the Cistercian Monastery at Kopua and many staff have taken part in such retreats.

A liturgy on Teacher Only Day starts the year, and a blessing Mass for all staff of Catholic schools in the Wairarapa was held early in Term 1. Attendance at AP/DP, DRS and Principal days run by the Catholic Schools Education Services support staff to grow spiritually.

There is a regular programme of liturgies and Masses that are appropriate for the age of participants, and students have the opportunity to take leadership roles in them. All syndicates attend the local church Mass three times a term and the school holds a Mass in St. Patrick's Church once a term as well. The school year starts with a Mass to

celebrate the Feast of St. Brigid and this year a whole school and parish Sunday Mass for St. Patrick's Day was held with the attendance of more families than have attended such Masses in the past. The school also uses significant occasions into which liturgies are incorporated. Waitangi Day, Matariki, Leavers' Liturgy, as well as Holy Week and Christmas are opportunities for celebration in whole school and community prayer and song. Student Liturgy Leaders work with the DRS to organise such liturgies.

### **Evangelisation**

A strength of the school is the way it actively encourages the reception of the Sacraments. The DRS runs the Masterton programme for the Sacrament of Baptism, reconciliation and First Eucharist, which includes some students from other local schools. This programme, run at the school in school time has meant that over the last 3 years there have been 58 baptisms including one parent and 97 children making their First Communion. Personal invitations, as well as promotion through the school and class newsletter ensure that the sacraments are highlighted to the community. A parent programme is run for Reconciliation and First Eucharist, supported by the local parish priest. Baptisms are celebrated in the Church during the school week, with families, classmates, the principal, the classroom teacher and DRS all in attendance.

Staff are positive role models who support, uphold and witness to the Catholic Character of the school, supporting the students to grow in faith. Some talk to their students about their own faith journey when appropriate.

School communications, including the school prospectus, weekly newsletter and website are used as a means of evangelisation, helping members of the school community to integrate their faith, culture and life. Syndicate newsletters provide information about what students are learning in RE and the current Season of the Church.

### **Faith Based Leadership**

The Principal has grown in his leadership of the Catholic Character. He has ensured that all school documents reflect the school's Catholic Character and the school Charter is a particularly good example of this. His leading piece in the weekly newsletter consistently reflects the school's Catholic Character. He is a visible presence in the local Church and sits on several church committees both locally and in the wider Wairarapa Parish. The DRS is active in the local church community as a musician and proclaimer of the word at Mass.

The principal and DRS ensure that opportunities are provided for all teachers to deepen their faith and understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church. There is an expectation that all are working towards the next level of certification and the DRS keeps a record of this, supporting teachers to reach the next level. They have

certification levels appropriate to their length of service in Catholic education. All staff completed Spirituality for Teachers (RE 502) in 2017, the *Understanding Sexuality* course in 2016 and TH502 in 2015.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Ensure students write personal invitations to their parents and whanau for liturgies and Masses.
- Involve as many students as possible in all liturgies and Masses and inform whanau of their involvement.
- Run a prayer session for how parents can implement prayers at home.

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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 provides effective leadership in ensuring the RE Curriculum is taught and that associated documents are in place and available for all staff. She is a faith-filled, positive role model, who leads and supports staff in many practical ways. She is very experienced and well qualified, providing effective support for the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum. She leads RE staff meetings, provides resources, encourages and highlights to staff PD opportunities and plans and prepares all liturgical celebrations and masses. This year she has begun delegating some planning responsibilities to other tagged teachers. The DRS does not have a class of her own and as 0.8 FTTE, uses .15 of her time in her role as DRS.

### **Religious Education**

The school implements the nationally mandated NZ Religious Education curriculum. Until last year teachers were using an integrated Inquiry process to teach RE but discovered that the specific RE outcomes were being lost amidst other themes, so they returned to teaching the Strands on a two year cycle, using literacy as a vehicle for integration, with an enduring understanding that underpins all planning. Planning is thorough and consistent across the three syndicates. This year teachers have begun to

develop their understanding and use of the Religious Education Bridging Document (REBD) in planning and teaching.

The Religious Education programme is taught using a variety of strategies in a way that encourages students to think about the impact of faith on their life. This was particularly evident in the use of the current Caritas unit. Students are interested in their learning and readily complete the work they are given as well as being enthusiastic in discussions that connect their faith to the life. They enjoyed working in small groups or pairs, doing problem solving tasks, and responding thoughtfully to complex questioning.

Teachers gather assessment data on knowledge and actions that will stem from learning at the end of each strand. This information is collected and handed on to the DRS.

Written reports to whānau have a section that addresses the students' attitude to and behaviour around the Catholic Character.

Interactions between staff and students and among students are positive and genuine, and as a result, classrooms are secure and happy environments. The tone is respectful and students have a clear understanding of classroom processes and routines. Teachers are positive role models in the way they articulate and enact the values of the school while working with children. Students are confident to express their views and are actively engaged in their learning.

### **Catholic Curriculum**

The school develops students' awareness of their responsibilities as global citizens as well as citizens of New Zealand. One example is the way particular occasions like Waitangi Day and Mātariki are highlighted and wrapped in liturgy and prayer.

Another example is in the school becoming a green/gold EnviroSchool, with *Laudato Si* as its basis for action. Staff have participated in PD on this encyclical.

The school also contributes to awareness raising and action for justice within the school and in the wider community. Their leadership groups organise fundraisers and mufti days for Caritas projects and learn about the people they are helping as part of their RE.

All teachers have participated in the *Understanding Sexuality* Programme and the school is using an approved Australian resource to teach their sexuality programme.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Refer Recommendations.

- Enlist the support of Catholic Schools Education Services to facilitate PD on the REBD so that all teachers have the same learning opportunity.
- Ensure there is clarity around what success looks like as a result of an integrated RE and Literacy lesson.
- DRS to delegate greater responsibility for aspects of RE and the Catholic Character in order to grow and empower teacher leadership.

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### **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?*

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#### **AREAS OF SUCCESS**

##### **Catholic School Community**

The principal, DRS and other teachers in S464 positions are active witnesses of faith in the school and in their local church communities. Amongst the staff there are six Ministers of the Eucharist.

The culture of the school is characterised by warm relationships at all levels, friendly communications, active listening, and a sense that all are treated with respect. The school is a welcoming environment where courtesy, kindness and aroha are seen and experienced.

Displays and symbols provide a very clear witness to the Catholic identity of the school. Memorial signage, murals on outside walls, a statue of St. Patrick, the Brigidine cross on the end of the school building, the school Gospel values based on the Brigidine motto on display in the foyer, on walls, in corridors and as a mural make it clear what this school is about. The three syndicates are named Brigidine, McKenna and Kildare after significant people or places connected to the school's history. The school's charism and legacy is reinforced every year when its Catholic history is taught in all classrooms.

##### **Partnership & Collaboration**

The school works to have a reciprocal relationship with the church community. Syndicates attend Mass weekly in the local church in summer and in winter the Mass is held at the school with parishioners invited. A school Mass is held once a term. Both the principal and DRS are active parishioners with leadership roles in the local church community.

The school treasures its relationship with the Brigidine Sisters and Sr. Monica is a regular and welcome visitor.

The school supports and cooperates regularly with other Catholic schools in the Wairarapa Parish. Staffs of the schools participate in PD together and this year a blessing Mass was held to which the staff of all schools were invited.

The school supports the building of links with Chanel College. St Patrick's students and staff attended this year's Ash Wednesday Mass at Chanel, they participate in Catholic Schools Day and sports events together and support any initiatives of Chanel to grow the relationship between the two schools. The principal and Board are very aware of the need to encourage their families and students to attend Chanel College. The Masterton Kahui Ako to which both St. Patrick's and Chanel College belong, could be another opportunity to deepen links between the two schools.

The principal collaborates with other principals both in State and Catholic schools and is currently on the organising committee for this year's national Catholic Principals' Conference to be held in the Wairarapa.

### **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**

The school works to develop an understanding of Māori wairua/spirituality and it incorporates tikanga Māori, te reo Māori, and karakia into the daily life of the school. The school's welcoming waiata and karakia are both in Te Reo Māori. The school has its own pepeha which is also printed on a mural on an outside wall. A pōwhiri is held each term to welcome new students and their families. Students take lead roles in this.

Mātariki is celebrated with an early morning ceremony, in which the Year 6 students pass on the leadership to the Year 5 students as part of the theme of new beginnings. This celebration includes shared kai as well as a collection for the local foodbank and is very well supported by families and whanau.

The school has good relationships with iwi and a kaumātua who is very supportive and gives advice on tikanga when needed.

A kapa haka tutor who works with all students in the school all year is funded by the Board. For special occasions, students are auditioned to form the school kapa haka group. The school performs at the local Kapa Haka Festival.

Ka Rewa, a local initiative that uses outside facilitators to teach students about different aspects of tikanga Māori, is provided without cost to the school. As well, two years ago the whole staff participated in PD which was focused on Māori language pronunciation, local history and tikanga.

### **Pastoral Care**

The sacred dignity (mana and tapu) of each individual is acknowledged and upheld in variety of ways at St. Patrick's through different forms of pastoral care.

Behaviour management processes are fair, clear to all, guided by restorative practice and linked to Catholic social teaching. Students are enabled to develop the skills to take responsibility for their own behaviour, principally through Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) which was initiated in the school at the start of 2018. The school's Gospel values are at the heart of all behavioural expectations. Although in its early stages, PB4L has created a coherent and clear school system for dealing with behaviours which integrates naturally into the Catholic Character.

The school welcomes students with a diversity of ability and learning needs. Appropriate assistance is provided in a caring environment to enable them to fulfill their potential. Teacher Aides who support these students spoke highly of the inclusive nature and kindness of the whole school community towards those with particular needs.

Two staff members are trained as *Seasons for Growth* facilitators and this programme which supports students experiencing loss or grief is offered as the need arises.

The school has parent volunteers to manage the Breakfast Club, funded by the *KidsCan* organisation and which also supports students with uniform, stationery, shoes and jackets.

Staff are affirmed and appreciated, and their wellbeing is supported. A culture of trust exists among staff, who encounter Christ through experiencing the shared values and relationships of care within the school. The Employer Assistance Programme has been made available to all staff by the Board and staff receive a Care Box as an expression of support, when they have a particular need.

The principal and teachers drive the pastoral care in the school by being aware of the needs of students and their families, outsourcing help to volunteer parents who form a support group to make meals or provide the help needed.

### **Service and Outreach**

The school has a strong Leadership programme for senior students. The Strength and Kindness team lead the school in community and school service projects. The Pae Arahi Team are two students who take leadership roles (much like a head boy and girl), and the Liturgy Team supports the DRS in the organisation of liturgies and Masses, often coming up with ideas for worship.

When students show strength and kindness in the community e.g. children using their time and resources to fundraise to help others after a disaster, as well as during school interactions, this is celebrated and acknowledged at assemblies through the presentation of the Consideration Cup.

Kindness Week provides opportunities for students to focus on projects that show kindness towards others within the school as well as the wider community. The school supports Caritas and other social justice issue fundraisers e.g. inviting students and families to provide donations to the local food bank.

The school choir sings locally to different groups and at local funerals if there is a strong Catholic connection.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Despite invitations very few families are Mass attendees. As well as the St. Patrick's Day Mass, organise another annual Sunday school/parish Mass on a special occasion with a clear expectation for attendance.
- Set up a regular time for the parish priest to visit the school.
- Maintain the care for the Brigidine Sisters' graves – this could be linked to Holy Souls Day.
- As the key “feeder” school, continue to support links with Chanel College.
- Continue to look for opportunities for students from other cultures to contribute the richness of their customs and language to school culture.

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**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?*

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**Actual Roll: 233**

**Maximum Roll: 320**

**Non-preference Maximum Entitlement *as per Integration Agreement*: 32 (10% of max roll)**

**Actual non preference: 24 (28 for the year)**

**TOTAL staffing entitlement: 13.48 (11.90 Roll-based)**

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

**No. actual S464 positions: 7**

<b>Preference Criteria</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>% actual roll</b>
5.1	117	50%
5.2	7	3%
5.3	52	22%
5.4	36	15%
5.5	0	0
Preference with no criteria	0	0
<b>Total of signed preference roll</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>91%</b>
<b>Non-Preference Roll</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>International Fee Paying Students</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</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. The parish priest is a Board member and strategic planning includes the aim of continued strengthening of Catholic Character in the school. The Board has received professional development offered by the Catholic Schools Education Services.

The Board receives regular reports on Catholic Character from the principal and an annual report from the DRS. They have recently put in place a three year plan for internal evaluation, which ensures the review of one of the main dimensions of Catholic Character each year. A review of *Growth in Knowledge* has just been completed and *Christian Witness* is being reviewed this year.

### **Employment**

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, including the principal's.

### **Legal Obligations**

The school is meeting its obligations under its Integration Agreement in terms of preference/non-preference students. This year the school received permission to increase its non-preference roll from 5% to 10% of the maximum roll. This now allows for up to 32 students to be enrolled as non-preference. Currently there are 24 non-preference students with four more enrolled to start this year.

The school is meeting its obligations under the Integration Agreement in terms of tagged teachers. The Vicar for Education has given approval for the school to use its roll-based staffing entitlement to calculate the number of tagged teachers holding the S464 tag. There are currently 7 tagged teachers including the DRS and principal.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Ensure new Board members are up-skilled with a focus on Bishops 'Catholic Education of School Age children' on appointment.
- Continue to work towards acquiring a sacred space.
- Although Board governance policies refer to Catholic Character, personalise this to your own school culture as each policy is updated.

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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. Ensure that the school's new philosophy of learning and curriculum design, which includes the RE curriculum, are relevant and dynamic for these students, with Catholic Character at the heart.**
  - Planning and teaching of RE is aligned to the REBD and its vision
  - Authentic evaluation and student self-reflection shows the impact of learning on these students
  - Student voice consistently informs the design of learning
  - Ensure consistent teacher practice across the school in approach and engagement

### *Christian Witness*

- 2. Continue to find ways to involve families and whanau in the Catholic life of the school.**

The review team is confident that the St. Patrick's 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 the recommendations.

In concluding this report, the review team wish to thank the St. Patrick's 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**