

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HAMILTON



*He Pūrongo Arotake Mātauranga
Ahurea Katorika ā Waho*

*Catholic Special Character
External Evaluation Report*

Sacred Heart Girls' College Hamilton

Evaluation conducted on 4-6 September

Confirmed Report

School Details 2024

Name of School: Sacred Heart Girls' College

Address: 52 Clyde Street, Hamilton.

Postal address: P O Box 4064, Hamilton, 3247

School type: Secondary Years 9-13

Actual roll: 912

Maximum roll: 925

Non-preference number:36

Actual non-preference number: 20

5.1: 611 68% **5.2:** 21 2.5% **5.3:** 184 21%

5.4: 60 7% **5.5 :** 16 1.5%

Roll based staffing entitlement: 58.7 **Fee Payers:** 23

Required number of Special Character CI 47 positions: 21

Filled number of Special Character CI 47 positions: 18

The Tumuaki and Board are actively working to meet the requirements on the number of special character teachers

Principal: Catherine Gunn

Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism: Agatha Soagia

Director of Religious Studies: Daisy Morris

Board Presiding: Angela Beaton

Elected Board Members (C NC)

1. Jane Searle - NC
2. Toby McIntyre - C
3. Geraldine Jacques - C
4. Andrea Stocks - NC

Proprietor's Appointees

1. Kay Petchell
2. Shelly Fitness
3. vacant

Staff Elected Board Member: Kymberly Bissett

Priest Fr Darren McFarlane (from the Cathedral) is the school Chaplain. Our students come from across the Waikato region.

Cultural percentages :

European 45% Māori . 21%. Pacifika 10% Mella 3% Asian 20%. Other 0.8%

Evaluation Team: **Lead Evaluator:** Terry Consedine

Accompanying Evaluators: Paul Shannon, Karyn Sadler, Nicola Harper.

The Aims of Catholic Special Character External Evaluation for Development

The Catholic special character evaluation process produces a focused picture of the impact of Catholic schooling and the effectiveness of its goals on the lives of all tamariki and ākongā¹. The process seeks to determine whether they have encountered the living God revealed in Jesus Christ, grown in knowledge of Him and His Church, and as a result are forming a deep and lasting relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church². The process also evaluates how the whole school community engages in authentic Catholic Christian witness and evangelisation.

The evaluation also investigates how the school is acting as a kaitiaki of Catholic special character including meeting its statutory compliances.

A collaborative external evaluation process between school and the evaluators helps the school see what it is doing well and identify next steps.

¹ New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference. *The Catholic Education of School Age Children*. Wellington:2014.

² Ibid.

Introduction

Sacred Heart Girls' College is a large Catholic secondary College for girls from years 9-13, situated in Hamilton East. In 1884, Sacred Heart Girls' College was opened as a Catholic Secondary College by the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions to provide an education for Catholic women in the Waikato. Originally the campus was small. New netball and tennis courts were added and there is now a new Arts Block and library. The commemorative window, found in the Notre Dame Centre celebrates the presence and work of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions in the Waikato. The school at present, has 912 ākonga. "Kaimahi are dedicated to ignite the passion and inspire young women to change the world."

The Mahi Tahī Project which is presently underway is one of the largest building projects undertaken in years. It will have a new entrance and vibrant community spaces, designed to enhance Communion, Contemplation and Mission in the College. It will incorporate a contemplative space to encourage personal prayer, a student café to share kai in community, a gallery space to celebrate success and a long awaited space for the staff to gather collectively for collaboration, professional learning and meetings.

A 'Culture of Care' is a key part of life at Sacred Heart. Respecting the value and dignity of the individual is key to the success of building positive relationships. It is at the heart of the Catholic Character and Charism which is expressed through Communion, Contemplation and Mission. This is firmly aligned with the virtues: Faith, Hope, Justice – Whakapono, Tūmanako, Tika – and to Jesus' profound call to wholeness in the Gospel. "I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance" John 10:10

Ākonga are given the best possible assistance to grow as confident, connected, responsible learners for life. The College engages in restorative practices to build, sustain enhance and restore relationships across the learning community.

The relevance of Faith development is a challenging area for the contemporary world. This critical area of formation is developed by journeying with ākonga towards a realisation of the presence of God in their lives. Central to this is the discernment of personal vocation through opportunities for communion, contemplation and mission. There is a strong desire for the College wāhine to discover their passion and purpose and match the Zeal of Euphrasie Barbier.

The College Houses are named after Waahine o Whakapono nui - Women of Faith:

- **Aubert** –Venerable Suzanne Aubert, founder of Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion
- **Avila** – St Teresa of Avila, Carmelite nun, Mystic and Doctor of the Church
- **Barbier** – Euphrasie Barbier, founder of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions
- **Mackillop** – St Mary of the Cross Mackillop, founder of the Josephites
- **Lisieux** – St Thérèse of Lisieux, Carmelite nun, Mystic and Doctor of the Church
- **Siena** – St Catherine of Siena, theologian, mystic and social reformer

The cultural dimension has changed over the last few years reflecting the changes in New Zealand's population. At present, the distribution is European 45% Māori 21%. Pasifika 10% MELLA 3% Asian 20%. Other 0.8.

Progress with Recommendations from the August 2022

Catholic Special Character Review Report

Key Recommendations:

- 1. To enable the CCM groups to develop further as mini-Faith Communities, it is recommended that professional development is provided to assist teachers to develop a range of prayer styles to build teacher confidence as well as consistency.**

There is now opportunity for an exemplar prayer in English and Te Reo Maaori.

Developing school wide practice of prioritising karakia in CCM time. The audio is provided to support staff and students with the words and pronunciation (and translation).

The Catholic Character Site provides further encouragement of karakia (spontaneous prayer, special intentions, karakia in heritage languages)

- 2. The reviewers recognise the value of a strong SRS programme. We recommend that the integrated SRS programme be reviewed and re-developed to ensure that Religious Education forms the basis of this programme. By beginning with the Religious Education achievement objectives and building the Social Studies ones around them this will ensure that the objectives of the course are met as well as ensuring that the NZBC mandated hours for the teaching of Religious Education are included.**

The SRS programme planning is extensive and comprehensive. The Arotahi lesson is a useful addition which helps ensure that the Religious Education curriculum is comprehensive .

- 3. The BOT have a responsibility to empower building capacity in Special Character and Religious Education qualifications for teachers. It is recommended that the BOT ensure that there is an allocated budget set aside each year to provide for this.**

Professional learning is included in budget allocation in response to needs of teachers specifically for Catholic Character development as well as general professional learning. The Mission Trust also provides additional resources for events such as the Catholic Convention.

- 4. That the Board of Trustees commit to have whole Board professional development in Catholic Special Character at least annually**

This has been a regular addition to the board professional learning schedule and includes Mission Charism as well as requirements of Boards to fulfil their integration agreement.

- 5. Policies begin with a Special Character statement which is not referenced to in the policy. It is recommended that as each policy is reviewed that this be addressed.**

This is a work in progress and the Board understands that they can now refer to the NZCEO website for assistance if required.

Dimension 1: Encounter with Christ

How effectively 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?

1. Spiritual Formation

Sacred Heart Girls' College is a place where there are a number of opportunities for Catholic spiritual formation. The whole focus of the College is to offer opportunities for students to deepen their personal relationship with Christ. This is particularly portrayed in the mission and values of a College which are dedicated to inspiring young women to make a positive (and Catholic) impact on the world. The College Vision is **"Ignite the passion" – Inspiring young women to change the world - me aro ki te hā o Hineahuone.**

All new ākonga to the College receive their own copy of *'Identity: Identified'*, Navigating the Challenges of Life, published by the Bible Society. This publication has been specially designed for young people to face issues like loneliness, self-harm, online bullying, body image, peer image and the like. There is a standout commitment to nurturing and empowering young wahine, guided by values deeply rooted in the Gospels. The College Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Justice serve as the foundation for living out the Charism and legacy of Euphrasie Barbier, emphasising the experience of Communion, Contemplation, and Mission. The presence of the Sisters within the community enriches this mission, providing a living example of these virtues in action. Some students visit the Sisters on a regular basis often with the Tumuaki and the Sisters are present at College Masses and Liturgies.

This vision provides a very strong foundation to provide opportunities for the spiritual development of all members of the College community. This is particularly evident in the CCM (Communion Contemplation Mission) groups. These groups continue to evolve as mini-Faith communities, where the Companion (Kaiako) play a significant role in supporting ākonga faith formation. Tuakana-teina is seen as a strong feature of these groups. Also included is praying with ākonga each morning, engaging in conversations about their faith journey from time to time, and using Karakia o Te Rā for consistency across the College. The prayer changes each term and is read in Te Reo Maaori, with an English translation included. CCM time also involves setting and reflecting on goals related to Faith, Hope, and Justice, which are discussed with parents during Learning Conversations. The newly appointed Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism has created a Google site which includes links to the prayers that are updated regularly.

Prayer is woven into the fabric of several aspects of daily College life, encompassing a variety of forms, both traditional and contemporary. Ākonga actively participate in leading liturgies and prayers during assemblies. Every College event, whether it be prizegiving, assemblies, or sports days, begins with prayer or Mass, typically led by student leaders such as the Head Student, Deputy Head Student Catholic Character, Sports Leader, or Mission Leader. Other examples include the Call to Mission ILiturgy (the first liturgical gathering for the year) led by the Senior College Council. Also, the Visitation Liturgy was prepared by ākonga, with assistance from the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism, for the feast of The Visitation. There is a possible opportunity to make it a more general practice for ākonga to be leading prayer in CCM time, and in RE classes once teachers have modelled it.

“Prayer is encouraged and modelled by leadership and teachers at every opportunity. We have prayers at the start of every meeting and assembly.” (Kaiako)

All Religious Education classes start or finish with a prayer. Kaiako have autonomy over what this looks like. For some, teachers lead and model prayer, and others may access prayer books or use the NZ Pray Today App. There is a prayer roster, and ākongā choose and lead the prayer. Some classes have a class prayer which they read together at the end of the lesson. In the contemporary learning spaces aspects of Scripture and Euphrasie Barbier's 'Gems' are displayed and serve as a resource for prayer as much as an aesthetic for the environment.

“Through Sacred Heart, I have been able to be a part of the RCIC program and help students around my age receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion. I also enjoy the prayer we do and the start and end of SRE and the start of our music lesson too.” (Ākongā)

There is a New Zealand focused vision of Catholic spirituality in the College. Ākongā and Kaiako are on the journey towards having the opportunity to understand wairuatanga Māori. The College incorporates tikanga and Te Reo Māori and Māori expression of Katorikatanga into a significant number of aspects of Catholic special character, including Masses, liturgies, retreats and prayer. These are real strengths in the College. Tumuaki leads by example in this space. She is confident in being able to lead prayer in English and Te Reo Māori.

The College is an active participant in the Annual Commemoration of the Colonial forces invasion of Rangiaowhia in 1864, resulting in both the Catholic and Anglican Missions being destroyed. Ākongā have participated by taking roles such as karakia and waiata in the Liturgy. The impact of these initiatives assists ākongā and whānau Māori to feel valued as well as ākongā from other cultures.

There are rich retreat opportunities for ākongā provided at each level of the College. The College engages with a New Zealand based team from Auckland, Logos, to lead these retreats that are strongly valued by the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism. She said the retreat experience gave a further opportunity for Pasifika ākongā to consider having their own retreat personalised to their cultural context. This also gave the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism an opportunity to connect spiritually with these ākongā focusing on who they are and where they belong. She used the Whare Tapa Wha model as a basis.

Ākongā can encounter Christ through the Charism of the College's Founding Order, the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions. This is a real strength in the College and all members of the community working to fully understand how Communion Contemplation and Mission can be lived as part of their living of the Gospel message. The College Charism aligns with the Gospel values and there is a plan to strengthen the scriptural understanding surrounding these values.

Ākongā can articulate the importance of prayer in their own lives.

"God is in all the classes. It's not pushed on you, but it is deeply encouraged." (Year 10 student, who is not Catholic.)

2. Evangelisation

The Tumuaki message in the College newsletter and the website are impressive in taking the opportunity to proclaim the mission and Gospel of Jesus Christ to all members of the College community. These frequently offer opportunities to develop and deepen whānau knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures and develop familiarity with the teachings of the Catholic Church. These Catholic special character reflections help normalise tikanga and wairuatanga Maaori providing opportunity for ākonga and whānau Maaori to feel valued as tangata whenua. Other social media platforms such as Facebook are used as a means of becoming informed of upcoming special character events, enabling members of the College community to join in the celebration of the achievement of their ārangatahi in an effort to integrate their faith, culture, and life. The College acknowledges Ngati Wairere as Mana Whenua and the original owners of the land that Sacred Heart Girls' College has stood on since 1884.

Displays and symbols, including those significant for Maaori provide witness to the Catholic special character of the College, these are in more confined areas due to the present huge work Mahi Taha Project. This helps ākonga and whānau feel valued and welcome through the inclusion of displays and symbols. There is an impressive display of Maaori symbolism blended with Catholic special character in Iti Kahurangi and Whakanui. No doubt the new development will have similar reflections.

The importance that the College puts on this area is the strategic appointment of a Te Ao Maaori - Leader of Learning - as well as additional teacher resourcing for Te Ao Haka and Kapa Haka. The school is also supporting these waahine to become fully qualified teachers.. Parents and ākonga who enter the College, who are not yet Baptised members of the Church, are encouraged to pursue Baptism through the Cathedral's Sacramental Programme. There is a group of senior students who have faithfully assisted the parish cathedral pastoral assistant as leaders of groups as part of the parish programme of RCIC. The parish works with the College in support of the comprehensive programme of liturgies and Masses.

“We also have a Pasifika Choir who sing at Mass on a Saturday. The parish welcomes students to attend Mass where possible as well.” (kaiako)

Considerable thought is invested in planning a regular program of liturgies and Masses that are appropriate for the age and culture of the participants. These liturgies and Masses align with feast days significant to the College's Mission Charism, particularly the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Assumption. Ākonga are given opportunities to take on leadership roles during these celebrations. Several people in the community have commented on the profound impact these liturgies and Masses have on the community:

“It was a lovely experience to witness the Cathedral full of these young women and their participation in the Liturgy.I was impressed with the articulation of the readers and the music led by the choir. It is nice to know that our young adult (in this case) women are still able to experience ceremony and tradition as part of their education and formation.“ (Dr Greg Dunn in a letter to the Tumuaki)

Transition and whanaungatanga programs play a crucial role in supporting new members of the community, including ākonga, kaiako, and whānau. An whanau 'transition' hui has a special focus on those new to Catholic Education. The whanaungatanga continues when all new students are welcomed to the school on their first day with an orientation day, during which the Tumuaki, following the example set in Isaiah, leads a ritual of welcome where each ākonga is greeted and introduced to their CCM Companion. Over the following weeks, these Companions (Kaiako) and their Religious Education kaiako guide ākonga through church traditions and protocols in preparation for the first College Mass, which takes place once the College year is underway. These processes are particularly beneficial for ākonga unfamiliar with Catholic beliefs and practices.

The practice of "companioning" extends to staff induction as well. At the Welcoming Liturgy for Staff, a now well established ritual uses a heart shaped pounamu (gifted to the Tumuaki), to strengthen the whanaungatanga. As is a long held tradition of the Church to 'touch' symbols of faith and connection to the past, all staff are invited to touch the pounamu as a symbol of the community - past, present and future. There is a similar ritual with Year 13 Leavers Ceremony - who are also invited to touch the Heart. This is the same pounamu worn by the Principal at formal occasions that call for the Korowai to be worn too.

Staff work towards being positive role models who support, uphold and witness to the Catholic special character of the College. This is particularly embedded in the understanding of the charism with its strong links to Gospel values. This helps ākonga to articulate what belonging to a Catholic community means.

3. Faith-based Leadership

As part of promoting a faith-based vision for the College. The Tumuaki, supported by the Director of Religious Studies are the key drivers of the vision through faith-based leadership, alongside the senior leadership team. The team see the appointment of Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism as an exciting new beginning since the role has been largely conducted by the Tumuaki (assisted by the Director of Religious Studies over the last two years). The Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism is a welcome new appointment this year. She has a Catholic presence and has made a real impact already. She is weaving her way into the position and she clearly brings some special gifts to this role. Now as a team they work collaboratively to lead different aspects of the development of Special Catholic Character within the culture of the College.

The Tumuaki and Leader of Learning - Director of Religious Studies both have high levels of qualification in Catholic special character. Together they have provided effective leadership for the development and implementation of activities and programmes that help people to encounter Jesus Christ. They both confidently and competently articulate their own faith and have taken responsibilities to create the strategic and annual development of Catholic special character planning.

The Tumuaki is a faith-filled leader with a real depth of knowledge of Theology and Scripture.

The displays in her office clearly are one example of the reflection of the Catholic Character of the College. She has a wealth of knowledge around the Mission Sisters' Charism also. As part of her work, she actively seeks connections with other Sacred Heart Colleges and is soon going to Perth to explore potential to strengthen connections with the Mission College network and to begin to engage with authentic Mission opportunities which are well established at both Mission Colleges in Australia (Perth and Melbourne). The Tumuaki takes the opportunity to encourage, empower, and nurture faith and leadership in others and encourages faith-based leadership. She is committed to developing staff formation through opportunities to serve through the Mission Sisters in Vietnam, where there is a need for the Vietnamese sisters to improve their English literacy and language. Such experiences can be transformational and have lasting impact on staff and students

The Tumuaki and the Director of Religious Studies have been involved in the Board's annual internal evaluation of the College's Catholic special character. As part of this, the opportunity has been provided to assess the Catholic identity, faith formation, and the impact of Catholic special character initiatives on the faith development of ākonga. This was initiated three years ago and the rich data gathered from this evaluation has informed several new College Catholic special character initiatives. Moving forward, the plan is to expand this process, focusing on a different dimension each year to better understand the impact of various aspects of Catholic identity and faith formation.

The Tumuaki and Director of Religious Studies and all kaiako engage in professional learning and formation in the areas of Te Reo Maaori, tikanga, te ao Maaori, mātauranga, and wairuatanga Maaori. The Tumuaki and the Te Ao Maaori Leader of Learning has been working with MAC (Māori Achievement Collective) and at present, the Director of Religious Studies is leading 'Learning to the North East' with kaiako as part of her Kahui Ako role. Both MAC and 'Teaching to the North East' uphold an ongoing commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The Tumuaki and Director of Religious Studies are keen to provide opportunities for kaiako in special character positions (Schedule 6, Clause 47 Education and Training Act 2020) to deepen knowledge and understanding of their Catholic faith-based leadership roles and capabilities. When evaluators spoke with some of these teachers, they expressed that they were "role models but may feel at times they are not experts." There is an opportunity to formalise this more so that these teachers understand their role more clearly in supporting the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism in a variety of special character initiatives.

There are a number of kaiako of Religious Education who are working towards a formal qualification in Religious Education or Special Character. It is commendable that some are completing one paper each year. There is an opportunity for the Board to consider ways to encourage kaiako prepared to teach RE from other Learning Areas to take up these studies.

Next Steps for Development

- There is already a regular practice of prayer to begin and end meetings. There is opportunity for the staff to find time to gather for a focussed prayer time.
- There is opportunity for the special character teachers to provide greater support to the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism, including offers of formation.
- Prayer is now well established in both CCM and RE classes; there is an opportunity for ākonga to take a greater role in leading these prayer

Dimension 2: Growth through Education: Growth in Knowledge

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

1. Leadership

The Tumuaki and Director of Religious Studies provide outstanding leadership in religious instruction and observances. They are both excellent role models not just with their faith-filled leadership but also with their high levels of qualification in Religious Education and Catholic special character. The Director of Religious Studies provides outstanding leadership for the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum. The support offered to teachers of Religious Education is second to none.

The Tumuaki, Director of Religious Studies and Board implement the principles of Ka Hikitia: Ka Hāpaitia, the cross-agency strategy for the education sector that sets out how the education sector will support ākonga Maaori and their whānau, hapū and iwi to achieve equitable outcomes. The Tumuaki and the Leader of Learning (LoL) Religious Education are taking the necessary leadership steps to ensure that all curriculum is delivered with a culturally responsive pedagogy. The impact here is that kaiako are beginning to incorporate waiuatanga Maaori into their teaching of Religious Education and spirituality. There are now a number of Katorika Maaori practices evident in the College.

In the senior school ākonga are given the opportunity to develop faith leadership knowledge, skills and experience. There is a strong culture of leadership in Year 13. They play key roles in the planned full College Masses and Liturgies.

The role of the Director of Religious Studies is given appropriate status in terms of such things having appropriate release time, appropriate management units, and having opportunities for their leadership capability to be developed especially through the Kahui Ako and hence leading kaiako professional learning.

The Director of Religious Studies and the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism, are faith-filled, positive role models. They take leading roles in Professional Development and formation in Catholic special character. Kaiako engaged in this learning, which is recorded, and shared with the diocesan office annually for Certification purposes. This recording of

Certification for teachers and leaders is a means to strengthen Catholic special character. The Director of Religious Studies collects Certification data which is then analysed to support ongoing professional learning and formation. There is a strong desire from the Leadership team to offer RCIA as a means of formation for a number of keen staff who would be willing to participate in the development of their faith journey towards Catholicism.

2. Religious Education

The Religious Education program is given high status by the Tumuaki. There is strong evidence that it is soundly managed. The planning and resources provided to teachers are both comprehensive and of high quality. Kaiako make effective use of National Centre for Religious Studies (NCRS) online curriculum material including Faith Central. More recently some resources have come from the new curriculum online.

The College implements the nationally mandated Religious Education curriculum using aspects of the new Curriculum as appropriate. Adequate time is provided for the curriculum to be taught with integrity. The College has an integrated curriculum in Years 9-10, Religious Education learning forms a significant focus alongside Social Studies. This provides a foundation for authentic connections to wider issues in the world learnt through Social Studies. It helps them see the connection between their faith and life, and faith and culture. The planning provided for teachers is superb and comprehensive. Arotahi is a programme of targeted Religious Education which is designed to complement the SRE programme for these Years 9 and 10 ākonga. This provides the opportunity to go into depth on aspects especially in the new curriculum especially those objectives that sit outside the SRE model. An impact here is that ākonga are able to make real life connections to address issues related to our Catholic Social Teaching and to encourage depth of critical thinking to action.

Increasingly, the curriculum is delivered using a culturally responsive pedagogy as kaiako confidence builds. Kaiako are working towards implementing the concept of ako, a teaching and learning relationship of reciprocity where the roles of ākonga and kaiako are shared in the classroom.

Whānau who met with the evaluation team said they are informed regularly of the content and emphasis of the Religious Education programme. They expressed appreciation for the fact that the communication was excellent.

International students attend Religious Education classes, which are adapted appropriately for their needs. Kaiako implement strategies to meet the individual learning needs of all ākonga, including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students.

The impact here is that kaiako are beginning to incorporate wairuatanga Maaori into their teaching of Religious Education and spirituality. There are now a number of Katorika Maaori practices evident in the College.

3. Catholic Curriculum

Religious Education kaiako participate in regular Catholic special character professional learning and formation including the principles of Catholic social teaching, and their application to their responsibilities. The Tumuaki and Director of Religious Studies are both highly qualified and there is strong encouragement given to other Religious Education kaiako to do papers to gain a greater depth of knowledge. The Director of Religious Studies records their completed papers for certification purposes.

The College teaches the core principles of Catholic social teaching and their application, as an integral component of a lived faith throughout the College. As part of this focus kaiako teach about Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the importance of tangata whenua and the partnership with tangata tiriti. This includes aspects of teaching local Katorika Maaori and Pākehā history. This strongly supports a deeper understanding of the bicultural history of Aotearoa New Zealand.

College policy ensures that those aspects of the Health Curriculum which involve human sexuality education are set in the context of the teaching of the Catholic Church and delivered using culturally responsive pedagogy. Parents are invited to an evening each year to engage in the teaching and learning content of the Human Sexuality and Personal Development components of the Health Curriculum to support and ask questions, seeking clarifications where needed. A number of kaiako including teachers of science, Health and PE are involved in teaching and have participated in professional learning 'Having Life to the Full' course.

Kaiako new to Catholic schools receive ongoing support especially through their kaiako Companions to enable them to understand the Catholic special character of the College and to effectively integrate a Catholic perspective across the curriculum.

The College contributes to awareness raising and action for justice within the College and the wider community, explicitly relating this to the Gospels' portrayal of Jesus' care for the poor and marginalised. There is conscious effort made to connect to the outside world - "Beyond the school gates". The particular focus comes with careers and making subject matter and faith relevant to real life. The use of Caritas educational material provides ākonga with the opportunity to critique society in the light of the Gospels.

Next Steps for Development

- Make Scripture Scholarship a priority for kaiako and ākonga formation strategy in the College.
- The RE curriculum at Level 1 is a focus area for review: the survey data indicates a gap that impacts the overall goal of 'agents of social justice' which is upholding the charism.

Dimension 3: Te Whakaatu Karaitiana-Christian Witness

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

1. Catholic School Community

Sacred Heart Girls' College is a Catholic Faith Community where Catholic witness and practices are regularly promoted in the College. Kaiako and ākonga are encouraged to see Christian witness as an active response to their experience with Christ. The College develops and plans meaningful liturgies and Masses, giving ākonga chances to participate in important feast days that reflect the College's Charism and the spirit of its founder Euphrasie Barbier. The Charism is actively promoted as a lens through which the College's Catholic identity and commitment to Jesus Christ are made visible. This is enhanced by the support of the Mission Sisters.

“The Sisters are frequently visible reminders of that relationship and spend time with our student leadership especially to help and guide. (kaiako) We also have a Pasifika Choir who sing at Mass on a Saturday. The parish welcomes students to attend Mass where possible as well.” (kaiako)

An impact of this focus is that the College is a welcoming environment where all are treated with hospitality, aroha and courtesy. The culture of the College is characterised by friendly communications, active listening, and a sense that all are treated with respect.

2. Partnership and Collaboration

The College works to build and maintain respectful and affirming relationships with whānau Maaori so that they feel welcome and 'at home' There is recognition of the cultural diversity of Aotearoa, New Zealand, and work is done to ensure that all ākonga develop an understanding of this diversity. Opportunities are taken to consult and communicate with whānau in culturally appropriate ways. The recent appointment of Te Ao Maaori Leader of Learning has strengthen this aspect of partnership with whaanau and the tangata whenua. The College provides clear information and opportunities for whānau to understand College systems and practices in general and in relation to Catholic special character especially through the newsletter and website.

The College builds strong partnerships and works collaboratively with their founding order the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions. Sister Anne Skleners contributes to support the learning in order to build kaiako understanding of the Charism in action. A number of retired sisters live across the road. They are present at the significant College celebrations and senior students take the opportunity to visit the Sisters.

The College supports and cooperates with other Catholic schools for the benefit of all ākonga, and kaiako. This happens particularly with the schools who are part of the Kahui Ako. Visits are made to the contributing Catholic schools in preparation for enrolment.

Ākonga, kaiako, the Board and College community understand the importance of tangata whenua and mana whenua. This is very well role modelled by the Tumuaki and a significant number of kaiako do their best to include Te Reo Maaori in their curricula. Some have completed supporting courses. There is real acknowledgement of the cultural diversity of the College and attempts are made to honour and respect all cultures.

The impact here is that the College proudly upholds a strong Catholic ethos, deeply integrated into its values and daily practices. This ethos reflects a firm commitment to the communities with which the College is connected, including the Mission Sisters, through the Mission College Trust Board, the Proprietors, the mana whenua, and the feeder schools that contribute to its vibrant educational environment.

3. Pastoral Care

The 'SHGC Culture of Care', provides the foundation for pastoral care practice around the College. There is a very strong Pastoral Care Team. It has a stated goal to wrap around both the ākonga and their family/caregivers. The focus is effective, positive, solution-based interactions between the College and the whānau. It is based on 'Positive Behaviour for Learning'. The CCM Companion plays a central role here and the CCM mini-Faith Community has a role of welcoming ākonga into the College for who they are as well as providing initial support in any situation. Tuakana-teina provides a great model in these spaces.

'If you are a Companion, (kaiako), each one of your students is your '5 Year Project' as they progress and develop through our community' (Pastoral Care Handbook)

The formal and informal pastoral care structures and processes affirm the dignity and mana of every ākonga and provide a sense of belonging, security and well-being. The Tumuaki tuarua is very skilled in restorative practice and this has led to staff being trained in this area. The restorative nature of Senior Leadership Team protocols when ākonga make unhealthy decisions is key. There is strong encouragement for ākonga to develop a sense of HOPE – Tūmanako – about their future, allowing them to grow from mistakes, through forgiveness, in order to act purposefully and positively.

"We wrap our ākonga up with love" (DP Pastoral Care)

A special equity fund established by the PTFA is always available for any ākonga needs such as uniform, food and doctor's appointments. This is seen as an opportunity to support those who are most vulnerable. A similar fund is available for the Tumuaki, also from our PTFA. This group of parents and staff are very aware of the needs of our most vulnerable whaanau and find ways to uplift and support them with dignity.

4. Service and Outreach

Ākonga and kaiako demonstrate a commitment to serve their College, parish, and wider community by volunteering their time and leading where appropriate. This dedication is deeply rooted in the Gospel message and the example set by Jesus Christ. Such actions are integral to the College's Mission Charism, emphasising service and faith as central components of the College's values. Recently, a Faith Ministry group was established with the aim of training Eucharistic ministers and altar servers, further aligning with the College's mission of fostering spiritual leadership. Although this group currently functions primarily as a choir, there are promising signs that it is transitioning towards its broader purpose of liturgical service.

The College actively seeks out strategies to build leadership confidence and strengthen community spirit. This focus is particularly evident in the senior school, where a variety of leadership opportunities are available. These initiatives include activities that promote social justice, such as involvement in Caritas and other charitable organisations, as well as participation in prayer liturgies, cultural activities, retreats, and camps. In addition, ākonga can engage in formal leadership roles, allowing them to develop key skills while contributing positively to both the College and the wider community.

“I have been part of clubs and committees such as the Mission committee throughout my time at school and participate in other leadership opportunities outside of school. I also try to follow in Jesus' footsteps in my day to day life including at work, at home, etc, by living in accordance with His values, especially empathy.” (Ākonga)

The senior school offers a wide range of opportunities for service, particularly in leadership roles. Several kaiako have noted that there is potential to further increase involvement by encouraging more students to participate in service-oriented groups. As part of this effort, the College is currently developing an Ambassador Programme for junior ākonga. This initiative aims to foster community service and leadership from an early stage, helping ākonga engage with meaningful service projects. Additionally, this programme could potentially revive and support established initiatives such as Young Vinnies, and Amnesty International, creating even more avenues for students to lead and serve within their community.

Next Steps for Development

- There is opportunity to elevate and amplify the Mission Charism embodied in key scripture: the Annunciation, Visitation and Pentecost, through liturgical expression AND specific learning through the curriculum. This provides a framework for community service and leadership for ākonga .
- The Companionship model, checking all teachers are aware of what it means and what they can do for this. Potentially include the support staff. Extend this across the College.

Dimension 4: Te Kaitiakitanga me te Whakapakari I te Tuakiri Katorika-Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Special Character

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

The Board is an effective steward of the Catholic character of Sacred Heart Girls' College in Hamilton. Their vision to continue to be a beacon of Social Justice with a Heart for Mission in a global community drives their Strategic and Annual plans. The Board is fully supportive of the Tumuaki. The Presiding Member and the Tumuaki meet regularly to discuss matters relating to the College and acknowledge that they have an open, honest and transparent relationship.

As has been stated earlier, the Tumuaki, Director of Religious Studies and the Director of Catholic Character and Mission Charism work collaboratively to enhance the Catholic special character. In particular, this year, the College's Charism focus is dedicated as the 'Year of Faith', where the Gospel focus of 'The Woman at the Well,' models Faith and Mission, incorporating the principle of manaakitanga and the 'Communion' dimension of the College's Charism.

The Board is clear in its actions. All Board meetings begin with prayer. Board members are encouraged to take their turn on the prayer roster and resources are supplied to them to encourage participation.

The Board is however, one down on the number of Proprietor Appointees. The Tumuaki confirmed that a suitable appointee was being approached to fill this position.

The Board and proprietors appointees have submitted their Attestation and annual report respectively to their proprietor for 2023.

In terms of staffing and CI47 positions, the College is three short (18 instead of 21) of meeting its obligations under its Integration Agreement. The Tumuaki acknowledges this matter and in fact has a number of teachers who have indicated a desire to enrol in an RCIA programme if such a programme could be run through the College. The Tumuaki and Board are actively working to satisfy the required number of special character positions.

The College's enrolment system is fully digitalised and all documents evidencing preference are available online alongside the ākongā enrolment data. The College is currently well within its non-preference roll limit with a total of 20 non-preference on the roll.

Next Steps for Development

- The Tumuaki and Board are actively working to meet the statutory requirement for special character positions within the College.

Recommendations

- To develop an Adult Formation Plan that is inclusive of all staff. This plan to include a pathway for:
 - Those wanting to explore the Catholic Faith with a possible view of joining.
 - Growing the qualifications of staff willing to engage with the learning.
 - Build capacity in leadership for staff aspiring to be Director of Religious Studies and senior leadership.
- It is recommended that the board explore opportunities for staff to experience an authentic Mission experience through the RNDM networks that is already becoming well established through the Tumuaki whanaungatanga.
- The student survey shows some important data regarding trends in Catholic special character and ākongā response to Catholic Identity and Faith formation. As an extension of this self-review each year the College records the actions taken (across the dimensions) in response to the trends shown in line with the requirements.
- To explore ways to re-establish community ties and broaden the opportunities for ākongā as part of Mission to take a more active part in outreach to vulnerable people e.g establishing Vinnies/Caritas and other service opportunities throughout the College.
- The Board must continue to revise and update policies to ensure the Catholic ethos of the College is maintained and enhanced ([Guide from NZCEO](#))

The evaluation team is confident that the Tumuaki has the willingness and ability to address these recommendations fully before the next external evaluation. The Catholic Education Office staff are available to assist the Tumuaki, Board and kaiako in compiling an action plan to address these recommendations.

The evaluation team thanks the community of Sacred Heart Girls' College for the welcome and cooperation extended to them and for the opportunity to experience the way that they safeguard and strengthen their Catholic special character. The organisation and preparation for the external evaluation by the College is greatly appreciated. The manaakitanga shown to the evaluation team during our time there was exceptional.

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N.B. This report will be shared with the Mission College Trust Board, NZCEO and the Hamilton Diocesan Schools Council.