



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

Catholic Schools Office

Kia mau ki te ako ko tou oranga hoki ia

Proverbs 4:13

CATHOLIC SPECIAL CHARACTER EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL
BALMORAL

4-5 MAY, 2016

SCHOOL DETAILS

Name: Good Shepherd School

Address: 30 Telford Ave, Balmoral, Auckland 1041

School Type: Contributing school Yrs 1-6 boys and girls.

Principal: Mrs Jane Hahn

Director of Religious Studies: Miss Melissa Down

Board of Trustees Chairperson: Mrs Katherine McGillivray

Parish Priest: Fr Philip Sullivan

Reviewers: Mr Philip Mahoney
Mrs Colleen Gleeson

Accompanying Principal Mrs Rosemary Kemp

Current Roll: 220

Report Confirmed: 13 June, 2016

The National Administration Guidelines (NAG 2) requires all schools to develop a Strategic Plan, maintain a programme of self review and report to the community. In Catholic Schools this process must include provision for the maintenance and development of Catholic Special Character. The review and development cycle includes annual internal self review of a key dimension of Catholic Special Character as well as an external review every four years.

The purpose of the external review is to provide assurance to the Proprietor that the school has appropriate systems in place to deliver education with a Catholic Special Character in terms of the following three Key Dimensions:

Catholic Community: Te Iwi Whanui Katorika

The extent to which the school is a Christian community where Gospel values are central, where faith is nourished, and where Christian celebration in the Catholic tradition is highly valued.

Pastoral Care: Manaakitanga

The extent to which the school community nurtures, supports and cares for individuals.

Religious Education: Te Whakaakoranga Whakapono

The extent to which the school helps to fulfil the teaching Mission of the Church.

As well as the key dimensions, the Reviewers look at the school's process for self-review and how areas for development are incorporated into the school's Development Plan. In carrying out this review, the Reviewers had access to relevant documentation, interviewed staff, Board of Trustee members, parents and students and visited all classrooms.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY: **Te Iwi Whanau Katorika**

The extent to which the school is a Christian community where Gospel values are central, where faith is nourished, and where Christian celebration in the Catholic tradition is highly valued.

Good Shepherd School, Balmoral warmly welcomed and embraced the opportunity for review and development. The Board of Trustees, Principal, staff, students, parent and parish community welcomed the reviewers and all shared openly their thoughts and opinions.

Situated in Central Auckland, this school is set in a peaceful setting at the end of Telford Ave, Balmoral. The Church, Presbytery and Parish Centre are all located at the centre of the school property. The school is well established in the Balmoral area and has a strong history. The school celebrated its Centenary in 2012.

SPIRITUALITY

The individual and communal spirituality of the whole school community is promoted and nurtured.

The spirituality of Good Shepherd School is seen in the way staff and students relate to each other, welcome visitors and support each other and the wider community. Through its charism and values it provides encouragement and resources for individuals within the school community to develop their own faith journey.

EVANGELISATION

The school is a faith community which endeavours to spread the Good News by word and witness

The school proclaims the mission and Gospel of Jesus Christ. Parents spoke of how welcome they felt at the school and the strong sense of family, community and caring which provides a nurturing environment for the personal spiritual growth of children.

The school is well within its permitted number of non preference students and is now looking at the criteria for preference students to ensure that support is provided for those students and families in the 5.2-5.5 criteria to have the opportunity to build a strong relationship with Jesus Christ through the Sacraments. The Parish Priest fully supports the school by thoroughly discussing the opportunity for Baptism with those not in the 5.1 category.

The DRS has become the contact person for any community members wanting the Sacrament of Initiation and she keeps in contact and provides support throughout their journey. The Principal and DRS both work closely with the Parish throughout all Sacramental programmes.

PARTNERSHIP

Education is a collaborative responsibility.

The Principal, staff and Board of Trustees work to build strong relationships with families, the Parish and the wider community. All members of the school community spoken to by the Reviewers said that they felt very welcome in the school and appreciated the 'open-door' policy.

The partnership with parents is continually being developed through effective communication and learning conversations. The Good Shepherd School PTA consist of a core group who meet twice per term and initiate events and fundraising. The Principal and some staff attend all meetings. They receive huge support from the teachers, parents and parish community at all events and organise a balance of events for fundraising and socialising. They run the Friday lunch scheme, sausage sizzles, bake sales, movie nights, discos and Quiz nights. Every second year they run a Fair to raise funds for the school. They were advertising the 'Fall Ball' social event during the review.

Supporting the PTA, the 'Holey Fathers' group help with working bees and run the annual Hot House Challenge fun day and the 'Mother Superiors' run the garden club.

The school has an Out of School Care (OSCA) before and after school programme which operates out of the library and ICT room each day.

Good Shepherd School belongs to the Central Catholic School Community of Learning which includes 9 other Catholic schools. They also have established relationships with the secondary colleges they contribute to; St Peters, Baradene, St Mary's, Marcellin and Marist.

VALUES

The school identifies and actively promotes Gospel values.

Good Shepherd School identify their core values as:

Respect – Whakaute

Care – Manaaki

Honesty - Pono

These values, linked to the Gospels, can be found in the school Charter and displayed throughout the interior of the school and in every classroom. The children, staff and parents were very familiar with the values and were able to articulate to the reviewers what they looked like in action.

The values and Charism have now been linked, in response to the 2012 External Special Catholic Character review report. A strong graphic representation of a cross, with the Good Shepherd at its centre, Gospel verses and quotes from St Mary MacKillop is visible throughout the school. This underpins everything at the school and helps the children to shape their learning and behaviour. Values are promoted in classrooms and at assemblies. Values tickets are given out to children who had been seen to be living by the values which are worth one house point. The Good Shepherd Award is presented to two children each week at Monday Prayers, chosen by the teachers for living the Values in class or on the playground.

SCHOOL CULTURE

Catholic Special Character is visible in the relationships and the artistic expression seen throughout the school.

Since the previous External Special Catholic Character review in 2012 it is evident that the school has developed its charism to ensure that the Good Shepherd is at the core of the charism with St Mary MacKillop acknowledged as a living example of following the Good Shepherd and the foundress of the Josephite Order who founded the school. The graphic representation of the Charism is simple and clear.

The school community are very proud of the fact that they are the only Good Shepherd School in New Zealand. As you enter the school a beautiful stained glass window of the Good Shepherd has been installed. Staff, students and parents helped to design the window and it took a community effort to make it a reality. The foyer has been upgraded to visually depict the ethos of the school.

Images of the Good Shepherd and St Mary MacKillop are placed around the school and in classrooms. Large murals designed by children to depict the school are on the exterior walls of the school. The grounds and buildings are well maintained. The school is on a large property which includes a swimming pool, tennis courts and two fields either side of the church.

The school motto is *"Together we Learn and Care. He kotahitanga ako me manaakitanga maatou."* and senior students were able to articulate the charism and motto and what they meant to them.

The school has four Houses; Blake, Cowley, Hillary and Sheppard. The children were able to articulate that these people were successful, innovative and strong leaders in New Zealand history.

The Reviewers spoke to many people during the two day visit and all saw the strong, tight school community as its main strength. The Principal and staff work to maintain strong relationships with the parent and parish communities. The long history of the school and parish is treasured by the community. Parents commented that they liked the school because it fostered Catholic values, was a smaller school and the teachers were all caring, passionate and good role models. There was a strong sense of belonging to the school community from staff, students and parents.

It was evident that Good Shepherd School is about its people. The open door policy and welcoming atmosphere is inviting for families and visitors. The staff are valued by parents and the Board of Trustees and the parish community for their hard work and enthusiasm.

"The school is a friendly, welcoming, co-operative learning environment where the dignity of each person is respected."

Staff survey comment

LEADERSHIP

Leadership effectively shapes the faith-based vision, values and outcomes of the school programme.

The Principal of Good Shepherd, Balmoral has very successfully led the school for 3 years. Her commitment and passion for providing a quality Catholic education that is relevant to the students of Good Shepherd is evident in her words and actions and was acknowledged by the Board of Trustees, staff, parents and Parish Priest. She has an excellent rapport with parents, is approachable and always available. The Board of Trustees and Parish Priest have trust in the Principal and see her as an excellent role model and leader. She is a Parishioner at Good Shepherd Church.

"The Principal is seen 'walking the talk'. She knows everyone in the school and parish community. She gives strong messages to the students at assemblies and is not afraid to express what the expectations are at the school."

Board of Trustees interview comment

The Principal reports to the Board of Trustees through a monthly report which includes Special Catholic Character items. She has a strong working relationship with the Senior Leadership Team and together they provide support and guidance for teachers and children and have led the development of a strong charism and learning environment. All members of the Leadership team are skilled practitioners and share the Principal's vision for the school and her high standards. The Principal and

Senior Management Team are seen at the gate of the school each afternoon chatting with parents and children and doing duty.

The Chairperson ably leads a stable Board of Trustees who all have the Catholic Special Character at heart. They were able to express how the school's Catholic Special Character impacted on their role of governance.

The Board members take their responsibility seriously. They work with staff and parents to develop a Strategic Plan and believe that the school is heading in the right direction. The Special Character Committee includes the Chairperson and other Proprietor Representatives, the Principal and Director of Religious Studies when required.

The Board of Trustees is representative of the school community and have all participated in training through the School Trustees Association, Catholic Education Services workshops, Vulnerable Childrens Act and changes to Health and Safety Act Ministry of Education workshops. They have a page on the school website to introduce themselves to the community. They communicate through a regular Board of Trustees newsletter. It is suggested that these newsletters be posted on the school website. They consult with parents, informally and through discussions at consultation meetings and school events. Some Board members are also on the PTA.

The school communicates to parents through the fortnightly newsletter which includes news, events, reminders and information on the Sacramental programme run by the Parish. There is also an "Update" sheet sent home between newsletters. PTA notices and student written articles are also found on newsletters regularly.

STEWARDSHIP

The school accepts responsibility for delivering education with a Special Catholic Character.

The Board of Trustees recognise their responsibility to ensure that Catholic Special Character permeates the whole curriculum and the school environment. They understand that partnership with the Parish is an important aspect in developing an effective school environment.

The Charter and Strategic plan has a very strong Catholic Special Character content in the Strategic goals. The Board, in consultation with the community, has identified four strategic areas; Catholic Special Character, Independent Learning, Sustainability and Environmental Awareness and Wellbeing. The goals are clearly defined and reported on monthly.

A Proprietor Representative sits in on all full time teacher appointment interviews. At the time of appointment the expectations for a staff member and teacher are made clear. Prior to starting at Good Shepherd, teachers spend one day at the school meeting with the Principal, Director of Religious Studies and Team Leader and visiting classrooms to understand the ethos of the school.

In response to the 2012 External Special Catholic Character Review Report the annual Internal Catholic Special Character Self Review process is led by the Proprietor Representatives, Principal and Director of Religious Studies. The process is clearly defined and is part of the school's annual self review programme. Goals are set and the focus of the review determines the type of consultation implemented, and with whom. A final report, including strengths and areas for development is presented to the Board and becomes Part C of the Annual Proprietor Representatives' Report to the Bishop.

Each school policy begins with a statement which ensures that the Special Catholic Character of the school underpins the policy. It is suggested that when reviewing policies the Board of Trustees ensures that specific guidelines are related to the Special Catholic Character. An example is the Curriculum Delivery Policy could state that the Principal “Ensures that the Special Catholic Character of the school is integrated throughout the planning and implementation of all curriculum areas.”

New teachers are inducted into the ethos of the school by the Principal and Director of Religious Studies. They have a buddy teacher and senior team leader for support and guidance. Each teacher has a Special Catholic Character Inquiry goal in their performance agreement and clear guidelines are set for Religious Education teaching. These are monitored throughout the year by the Director of Religious Studies, the Principal and senior team leaders.

The school has six tagged teachers and requires one more to meet compliance with the Integration Act. 76% of the preference children at Good Shepherd are Baptised and within the 5.1 criteria. The school is taking a variety of steps to address the needs of students in the 5.2 to 5.5 criteria. The number of students in the non-preference category is well below the required 10% threshold.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP

A Catholic culture of prayer. Liturgy and faith-based celebration is promoted in the school.

The reviewers joined three classes for prayers during their visit. These prayers were student led at all levels of the school and the students were reverent and respectful of this sacred time. The children were focused using candles, crucifix, statues, items of relevance to the Religious Education focus, and Bibles. A variety of methods to pray were used, including scripture reading, spontaneous prayer and reflections, singing and traditional prayer.

The school has a Good Shepherd Prayer written by the school and said each day in each class and at school occasions. A school song (himene) was written last year by senior students and translated into Maori. The school now has a school song and a himene.

The whole school meets for prayer every Monday morning with classes taking turns to lead the prayer. The staff begin each year by attending a Parish Mass to start their Teacher Only Day. They meet to pray every Friday morning before school. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend Masses and liturgies. If adults are in classes at the beginning of the day they are welcome to take part in the class prayer. Some classes buddy up for Prayers at special times.

Each class has a Prayer Kete which includes a liturgical cloth, statue, books, prayer cards in Maori, English and other home languages, the Sign of the Cross in many languages and a notebook for parent comments. Each child takes the kete home for one night and the next morning shares their experience with the class. If there is a family in need the roster could change so the kete can go to that family.

A memorial garden has been developed in a quiet area of the playground by the library. A grotto with brass plaques for some of the community who had passed away, is surrounded by garden and seating. The children can go there to pray or have a quiet time.

School Masses are held on the feasts of the Good Shepherd and St Mary MacKillop and at the beginning and end of each year. Liturgies are held on St Joseph’s Day, St Patrick’s Day and during Holy Week. The school celebrates at Sunday Mass once per term with the Parish. The children participate in these Masses by reading and singing. The Director of Religious Studies plans and

organises all School Masses and liturgies. Each class is rostered to attend a weekday Parish Mass once per term. The Year 5 students attend a retreat at the Friary each year.

All Sacramental programmes are organised and implemented by the Parish. The school advertises and supports these programmes and celebrates the children involved. The Principal or Director of Religious Studies attend the Sacramental programme lessons each week.

In response to the 2012 External Special Catholic Character Review Report, Rite 2 Reconciliation has been organised to begin in Advent this year and to be held in Lent and Advent each following year, depending on the availability of Priests.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

The school promotes social justice.

"Never see a need without doing something about it".

(St Mary MacKillop)

Good Shepherd School provides many opportunities for the students to develop an awareness of others, of issues in and beyond their immediate community and an empathy for those who are hurt and suffering. It contributes to raising awareness and action for justice within the school and the wider community.

The school supports the Caritas projects and each class has a Caritas box on its prayer focus. The school is conscious of supporting charities that have relevance for the children eg. Ear reconstruction for a student's sibling. Food items are collected and given to the Parish for a Food Bank and food and Christmas presents to St Vincent de Paul at the end of the year. The school is also very aware of underprivileged families within their community and support them where necessary.

The school supports the NZCPA mufti mania, has donated goods to Fiji, supported the Nepal Earthquake appeal, SPCA and Starship hospital. They had an Orange day to raise awareness of Family Violence and Shave for a Cure where a Teacher Aide and her husband had their heads shaved for Cancer awareness.

COLLABORATION WITH THE PARISH

The school collaborates with the Parish of which it is part.

The Parish of Good Shepherd Balmoral welcomes the school's presence:

"The school is one of the 'rocks' of our Parish".

(Parish survey comment)

The Board of Trustees sees having the Parish Priest interested and supportive, as very relevant to the school/parish relationship. The Parish Priest has been in the Parish for three months and is extremely supportive of the school, meets with the Principal regularly, joins the staff for morning tea and is looking at supporting the school in many other ways. The Assistant Priest is also well known to the children, he visits classrooms and is seen around the school often. Communication and co-operation between the parish and school is improving and the Principal now attends all Parish Council meetings and presents a school report. The PTA recently gifted the parish a donation towards work on the parish hall.

Members of the parish are beginning to attend school events. There were many parishioners at the recent unveiling of the Good Shepherd stained glass window. The school supported the Parish Centenary.

The Sacramental programmes are run by the Parish and get full support from the Director of Religious Studies and the Principal. With more participation by the school in Parish life there has been an increase in families attending Sunday Mass. Parents commented that their children wanted to attend Mass.

The school newsletter includes any special Parish news. The school has use of the Parish Hall during school time. The school sometimes changes their timetable and moves cars to accommodate a funeral if necessary.

AREAS FOR CATHOLIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- That the Board of Trustee newsletters be posted on the school website.
- That when reviewing policies the Board of Trustees ensures that specific guidelines are related to the Special Catholic Character. An example is the Curriculum Delivery Policy could state that the Principal “Ensures that the Special Catholic Character of the school is integrated throughout the planning and implementation of all curriculum areas.”

PASTORAL CARE: **Manaakitanga**

The school community nurtures, supports and cares for individuals.

RELATIONSHIPS

The school is a friendly, welcoming, co-operative learning environment where the dignity of each person is respected

As visitors to the school, the reviewers experienced warm and generous hospitality from all members of the school community. Parents acknowledged that teachers were passionate, hardworking, approachable and respectful to them and their children. Teachers had a warm, gentle and caring relationship with the children. The Board of Trustees, staff, parents and parishioners work together with respect and co-operation to provide a nurturing environment. This teamwork and collaboration makes for a happy and cohesive learning environment.

Staff are affirmed and work happily as a team. The support staff spoken to by the reviewers felt valued and saw that they were an important part of the staff. Communication between all staff was open and transparent. Staff felt supported by the school community in times of need. The wellbeing of staff is a high priority at Good Shepherd. The Principal provides weekly advice to support staff wellbeing through the “Good New Habits Book” and the Caretaker provides morning tea for the staff on a regular basis. At least once per term the staff plan a social event.

Parents are welcomed into the school and are acknowledged as first teachers of their children. A New Entrant Information evening is held at the start of each term. Parents, staff and students show an empathy and care for each other. On the first Tuesday of each term a morning tea is offered in the Staffroom for all parents, in particular new parents, to meet and get to know each other. As well

as the PTA, the Holey Fathers group and Mother Superiors group support the school and each other, building relationships and a sense of belonging to Good Shepherd. The Tuakana-Teina (older children looking after younger children) relationship was very evident throughout the reviewers visit.

The school has an inclusive environment where all children are acknowledged for their special talents. They provide for the diversity of learners in each classroom. Good Shepherd School invests heavily in supporting children with Special Education Needs. The classroom teachers and senior team leaders work closely with the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) to organise specific Independent Education Plans for each child depending on their need. The school works closely with many outside agencies such as Occupational Therapist, Speech/Language Therapists, Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLb), Sunnyside Special Education Advisor and Psychologists. A number of teacher aides are employed to work with individuals or small groups and many programmes are available for children to support their learning, for instance Reading Recovery, STEPS, Early Words Literacy, ESOL programme etc. Teacher Aides support each other and meet with the SENCO regularly.

Good Shepherd School has developed a definition for Gifted and Talented identification. Classrooms provide for the needs of special abilities through the SOLO Taxonomy for extended and critical thinking. The senior school group for maths and some children are chosen for special projects such as the art murals and stained glass window designs. An options programme runs weekly for extra curricula activities.

ORGANISATION	<i>The way pastoral care is organised is evident to all members of the school community.</i>
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During the review visit, the reviewers heard of the many times care and support was given to families and individuals in the school and parish communities. The PTA Caring Committee, Principal and staff ensured that all families knew of the support they could receive and organised help and support in times of need, grief or illness. The school has a strong sense of equity for all children and their families. All children are offered the same opportunities and no one misses out.

The Caring Group welcome and get to know new families and organise support for families when required. They provide meals, lunches, baking packs, transport and financial support when needed.

BI-CULTURAL COMMITMENT	<i>The school is committed to the Treaty of Waitangi.</i>
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Good Shepherd School recognises the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi and the status of Maori as Tangata Whenua. The school has identified seven iwi represented in their community. Their goal is to “Create an environment that reflects New Zealand’s heritage and the partnership envisioned in the Treaty of Waitangi, Te Tiriti o Waitangi” (Strategic Plan 2016). Maori consultation meetings are held annually.

The reviewers were welcomed to the school with a powhiri. Parents performed the karanga and one of the senior students spoke as well as the specialist teacher and Principal. The whole school performed waiata and sang their school himene in Maori.

Maori vocabulary and glossaries were evident and The Sign of the Cross in Maori was used in classrooms. The school has employed a Maori language specialist who worked in classrooms last year teaching Te Reo. This year he is empowering teachers to use Te Reo throughout the day in all classrooms. The school has developed a Maori Continuum to ensure student progress in Te Reo and understanding of the culture, throughout their schooling. Teachers were observed giving instructions in Maori and children knew prayers in Maori. Signage around the school was in English and Maori.

The school has two Kapa Haka groups, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. They are trained by the Maori Language specialist and parents.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

The school recognises and honours cultural diversity.

Good Shepherd School is aware of the diversity of cultures within the school. They actively seek ways to involve and include all ethnic groups. In response to the 2012 External Special Catholic Character Review Report the school celebrates the Language Weeks for each of their cultures. The children dress in cultural costumes and parents help with performances and sharing ethnic foods.

In response to the 2014 Pastoral Care Review the school have ensured that Maori and Pasifika art and displays are evident throughout the school. The children learn to say the Sign of the Cross, prayers and greetings in many languages.

Cultural performance groups are an extra curricular and 'option' opportunity provided on one afternoon per week, depending on parent support. A parent runs an Irish Dance group who perform on St Patrick's Day and at performance assemblies.

Pacific Island consultation meetings are held annually.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Discipline processes are just, compassionate, respectful and consistent.

Good Shepherd School has undergone Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) training and with the revision of their charism and values it was decided to 'package' it all together as "The Good Shepherd Way". There has been professional development for teachers and information for parents and this year "The Good Shepherd Way" was launched in February. There is a large visual display in each classroom and for 30 minutes per week all classes learn about "The Good Shepherd Way". Teachers were observed giving positive affirmation for the correct behaviours and asking "Is that the Good Shepherd Way?" when questioning behaviour. A common language is used by all. The children responded well to this. It is suggested that the Behaviour Management Policy now be updated to mention the Good Shepherd Way.

Class Treaties were evident in some classrooms. The school's underlying philosophy is to create a culture where issues are dealt with before they escalate.

SAFETY

The school provides for students and staff an environment that is safe – physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and culturally.

Good Shepherd School is a Travelwise School. They have Walking Buses run by parents. The school provides a safe, caring and protective environment. Teachers and Teacher Aides are always on duty at break times.

Recently the Travelwise team held banners on Dominion Rd to make drivers aware that a school was nearby and to slow down.

SERVICE

The students assist people in need through service and outreach opportunities provided by the school.

Leadership opportunities are provided throughout Good Shepherd School. All children are given the opportunity to lead prayer and act as monitors and class leaders in their own classrooms. All Year 6 children are given leadership roles as School Council leaders, House Captains, librarians, Special Character team, Mini Disciples, Physical Education team, ICT Angels, Kapa Haka leaders and Journalists. A Leadership camp, at Marine Education and Recreation Camp (MERC) Long Bay, is held at the very start of each year for Year 6. All Year 6 children proudly wear a badges specifying their roles. They start with a white badge for doing the role, they can gain a silver badge if they think up an initiative for their team and then can gain a gold badge if they continue the initiative for a length of time.

The School Council includes two children from each classroom who meet with the Principal on a regular basis. Children of all levels are also involved in the mini disciples, Gardening Club, Enviro Group and TravelWise Team. The Special Character Team help with Masses. The Mini Disciples organise lunchtime activities such as meditation or creation walks. The Journalists write articles for the school newsletter and put together the school year book.

The school choir sings at Lexham Gardens Rest Home and Residential Care and the school was represented at the ANZAC service at Balmoral Memorial on ANZAC day. The children make cards to give to Starship patients.

AREAS FOR PASTORAL CARE DEVELOPMENT

- That the Behaviour Management Policy be updated to mention the Good Shepherd Way.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Te Whakaakoranga Whakapono

The school helps to fulfil the teaching mission of the Church.

LEADERSHIP

The Principal and the Director of Religious Studies provide leadership and sound management in Religious Education.

The Director of Religious Studies has taught at Good Shepherd School for 11 years, she has been in the role of Director of Religious Studies for 3 years. She works collaboratively with the Principal, staff and parish personnel to ensure that a good working relationship exists between the school and parish. She is to be commended for her flexibility and understanding through the many changes in Parish personnel over the last few years. Her efficient approach to the job ensures that professional development, liturgies and Masses are carried out effectively. She is a valued member of the Senior Leadership team where she ensures that the Catholic Character is at the centre of all that is done at the school.

The Director of Religious Studies plans and prepares all full school Masses and celebrations. She supports new teachers to the school and teachers new to Catholic schools. She liaises with the Special Character Committee and with the Principal she leads the internal Special Catholic Character review annually and reports back to the Special Character Committee. The report and findings are collated as Part C in the Bishop Appointee's annual report to the Bishop. She uses the findings to identify areas for future development.

Professional development for Religious Education is planned and organised by the Director of Religious Studies. She facilitates staff meetings, using Strand material, which are based on the theological focus. Staff meetings were also facilitated recently for the review of the school charism. Observations of classroom prayers and Religious Education lessons are completed by the Director of Religious Studies in each classroom annually. Her feedback/feedforward is delivered verbally and in writing. The written reports of the observations are very affirming and mention next steps for the teacher. She supports teachers with their personal Special Character inquiry goal for appraisal and oversees all teacher Religious Education planning and evaluation. She attends professional development provided by the Religious Education Advisors for Directors of Religious Studies.

As a full time classroom teacher, the Director of Religious Studies is an excellent role model for all teachers and she shares her skills freely. She is becoming more confident to share her wealth of ideas and pedagogy with the staff.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM *The Religious Education programme is professionally delivered.*

"Good Shepherd recognises the uniqueness of each individual's part of God's creation and supports this through the development of the individual's spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual and physical ability. Good Shepherd School acknowledges that education is provided within the Catholic context".

(Good Shepherd School Curriculum Policy Rationale)

The classroom and foyer displays throughout the school were evidence that Religious Education and the Special Catholic Character have a high status at Good Shepherd School, Balmoral. The Religious Education Curriculum is very full, the strands and modules are well covered and the Special Catholic Character is being integrated into unit planning. Teams plan for Religious Education together in year levels. Planning is consistent across the school and Digital Resources are integrated into the planning. All composite classes cover the Strand year levels in alternate years. It is suggested that a record is kept of student coverage of year levels to ensure that they cover each year level in their time at the school.

Teachers are providing clear learning intentions for children and are using the digital resource and the Faith Alive website where appropriate. The next step in developing pedagogy is for teachers to take a facilitation role and further encourage students to be more self managing and responsible for their own learning.

All learning environments were vibrant and the displays were relevant to the Religious Education Strands that had been covered. Teachers are beginning to introduce creative ways for children to respond to the learning. Student responses to Religious Education learning were presented in a variety of ways such as murals, art, drama, blogs and activities in a Religious Education book. The children were proud of their work in these books and willing to discuss and reflect on what they had done and what they had learned. At the start of each Strand the content outline is pasted into the book. At the end of each Strand of work an evaluation comment was made by the children and teacher and the books were taken home for the parents to share and make a comment. It is suggested that all Religious Education books, throughout the school, have a description of the charism and values of the school at the beginning and that work from the Prayer and Liturgical year modules is also included. A consistent layout of the Religious Education books across the school shows to parents the importance of this work.

A school-wide assessment and evaluation of Religious Education has been trialled since 2015. The Director of Religious Studies is modelling examples of assessment and evaluation and teachers are working on how best to record and document formative assessment with their class level. This will be reviewed and discussed at the end of each strand to determine what works best for Good Shepherd School.

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

Catholic teaching is integrated with other curriculum areas.

At Good Shepherd School a Catholic perspective in all curriculum areas, particularly the Topic theme, is planned for and delivered. There was evidence of this in some class environments and the school should continue to work on ensuring the integration of Catholic Special Character is natural, effortless and visible. The school provides many opportunities for children including 'Options' of language, art, crafts, cultural activities and music. Private music tutors work during school hours to take children for guitar, ukulele and piano lessons. A Chess club is popular and a Drama club is being established this year. There are many sporting opportunities provided by the school. At the time of review the children were training for the Cross Country.

The "Myself and Others" module was integrated into the Life Education programme to ensure a Catholic perspective is provided. The school also provides Kia Kaha and Keeping Ourselves Safe in conjunction with the Police. Pubertal talks are provided by a registered nurse and teachers for Year 6 children.

Identified as a goal in the Strategic Plan, Good Shepherd School is very aware of environmental issues. The Garden club, includes staff, parents and students and works to develop and maintain the

gardens around the school, the vegetable gardens and orchard. They make compost for the gardens and sell vegetables. The Environmental and Sustainability group recycle paper into 'green bins' and ensure the grounds are clean and tidy by "Wombling".

RESOURCES

The school makes financial provision for Religious Education and Catholic Special Character resources.

The school is well resourced and the Director of Religious Studies ensures that all classrooms have the necessary resources to deliver the Religious Education programme and provide an environment that reflects the Special Catholic Character. All class teachers make good use of technology.

The Religious Education Advisors are used by the school to support beginning teachers and teachers new to Catholic schools. The Director of Religious Studies shares all resources with the staff and creates resource packs for upcoming liturgies and celebrations.

An ample budget is set each year for Religious Education and Catholic Character resources. For larger initiatives a proposal is put forward to the Board of Trustees. An example was the upgrade of the foyer which saw the whole community working together to create the financial support needed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The school provides opportunities for regular Religious Education professional development and spiritual formation for staff.

In response to the 2012 External Special Catholic Character review report, the Director of Religious Studies ensures that Religious Education professional development is delivered at one staff meeting per term. All teachers attend Cluster meetings and special days where guest speakers are provided by the Religious Education Advisors. As a professional learning community, Good Shepherd provides induction days where the Charism and Special Catholic Character are unpacked and discussed. Extra meetings are held for particular projects such as the development of the school charism, the visual model and supporting material.

The Principal reports to the Board of Trustees on all Religious Education Professional Development. At the Teacher Only Days at the beginning of the year, Special Character is part of the agenda. All beginning teachers and teachers new to Catholic schools attend the professional development provided by the Diocese.

In 2016 all teachers are supported to complete at least one paper through The Catholic Institute (TCI), new teachers have attended RE101 and all others are attending TH101 – "Introduction to Catholicism". One of the support staff is also doing this paper. The Principal is attending "Strategic Leadership for Principals" through the Springboard Trust. She also attends the ACPPA Forum day and Conference. The Senior Leadership Team attend the ACPPA Middle Management day each year.

The Principal has achieved Graduate Level Certification, the Senior Leadership Team members all have Endorsed Leadership Level Certification, two teachers have Classroom Level and all other teachers are working towards Classroom Level.

COMMUNICATION

The school communicates with parents/caregivers about Religious Education.

The Principal shares her faith through the fortnightly school newsletter. The newsletter includes notices about Special Character and Religious Education, PTA and parish news. An update is sent out in alternate weeks. The school has developed a new website which is informative and updated regularly. The Board of Trustees sends a newsletter home each term to report on governance.

The children's Religious Education books are sent home regularly and at the end of each Strand for parents to discuss with their children and to write a comment. Parents commented that it was an excellent way of discussing the Religious Education programme with their children. Parents receive a Good Shepherd School postcard in the mail from their child's teacher, explaining how and when their child has done something special at school.

Parents, families and parishioners are encouraged to attend all school liturgies, class Masses and School Masses. They also join in class prayers if they are in the classroom at the time. The Principal, Director of Religious Studies and teachers chat to parents informally each afternoon as they pick up their children. The open door and welcoming attitude at the school invites families and the parish to participate and contribute.

All new families to the school attend an information session about the Special Character of Good Shepherd School and the Religious Education Programme and receive an induction letter. In response to the 2012 External Special Character review report, the Director of Religious Studies sends an outline of the Religious Education Strand work for each year level, every term. A 'Meet the Teacher' evening is held each year where the Religious Education programme, values and charism is discussed.

The Foyer displays are informative and provide a 'snapshot' of the school's history, culture, success and ethos.

AREAS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

- That a record is kept of student coverage of year levels to ensure that they cover each year level in their time at the school.
- That all Religious Education books, throughout the school, have a description of the charism and values of the school at the beginning and that work from the Prayer and Liturgical year modules is also included. A consistent layout of the Religious Education books across the school shows to parents the importance of this work.
- The school should continue to work on ensuring the integration of Catholic Special Character is natural, effortless and visible.

CONCLUSION

Good Shepherd School, Balmoral provides a nurturing learning environment that focuses on holistic learning and the achievement of excellence. The leadership of the Principal, DRS, and the Senior Leadership Team, the Board of Trustees, a dedicated staff, enthusiastic and positive parents and the links with the Balmoral Parish, together combine to form a successful Catholic community. The Good

Shepherd charism and values, modelled by St Mary MacKillop, provide the school with an ethos that permeates the school and is now known as "The Good Shepherd Way".

The senior children interviewed by the reviewers are living testament that the school is achieving what the community aspires to in their Mission Statement:

"The Year 6 students:

- *Have a personal relationship with God and grow in the knowledge of Jesus the Good Shepherd, living and experiencing his values on a daily basis.*
- *Are motivated, active seekers, users and creators of knowledge, critical and creative thinkers and informed decision makers.*
- *Are resilient, positive in their own identity and have a sense of belonging to their community.*
- *Are global citizens".*

(Good Shepherd School Charter)

The children are confident, happy and enjoy school. Along with their families they are proud to be members of Good Shepherd School.

"Good Shepherd School has a very good reputation in the wider community".

(Support Staff interview comment)

"There is a great sense of belonging to a community at Good Shepherd, with everyone supporting each other and working towards the same goals".

(Staff survey comment)

"As a family we are brought closer together by such a supportive and caring school community. Our children witness the respect and kindness others in the school give to all. We feel included and accepted which gives confidence in other aspects of life."

(Parent survey comment)



Philip Mahoney
Manager
Catholic Education Services



Colleen Gleeson
Review and Development Officer
Catholic Schools Office

Date 13 June, 2016