

## Aoraki No 11 April 2009

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“Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.” Luke 6:38

The wealth of material in this edition of Aoraki has amazed me – so many leaders of Catholic education have been so willing to offer to share their wisdom, and have committed time in their already very busy lives to preparing text for us all. This is our community in action, networking and supporting one another, sharing our gifts.

Recently I have listened to Andy Hargreaves who stressed the importance of networking for school leaders, to inspire them and their schools on the path of continuous improvement. I have also listened to experts in the field of Assessment for Learning talking about enabling both teachers and students to ask the questions of themselves and of each other that lead to next steps in learning. It seems to me that our Catholic tradition and the charisms that many of you draw on place us very much at the centre of sharing with and supporting each other, as we move on a journey towards an ever-deeper relationship with God. That relationship inevitably includes the search for excellence, knowledge and wisdom, which we can only achieve together, for the common good.

We are grateful to you all for your generosity in sharing your gifts so willingly with your communities – you will certainly receive rich gifts back.

Thank you to our writers in this issue for the gifts they have given us. I know you will find much to reflect on, and to enrich your practice, in what they have to say.

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## SUSTAINABLE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLS

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*This is a summary of a research paper completed as part of a Masters in Education, at the University of Otago. Barbara Perry is currently principal of a brand new Catholic full primary school in Wanaka. Prior to her commencement in this position, she lectured in education at the University of Otago and the Auckland College of Education, and was also a classroom teacher for the previous fifteen years. The author can be contacted at [principal@hfw.schoolzone.net.nz](mailto:principal@hfw.schoolzone.net.nz).*

### Background Information:

Currently, in New Zealand, we are experiencing shifts in the socio-political, cultural and economic climate in New Zealand. These conditions particularly affect schools, because the societal context of schooling impacts upon the community's expectations of what it means to be a "good school". In this research, the New Zealand context and conditions faced by schools will be examined in greater detail. A model of sustainable leadership developed by Hargreaves and Fink will be reviewed and then a conceptual framework of sustainable leadership based on the New Zealand context will be proposed.

### New Zealand Context

An increase in state control in the education sector from central government since 1998, with the introduction of the Education Review Office and a higher level of compliance by schools, has led to greater competition among many New Zealand schools instead of a climate of collaboration. This has resulted in increasing pressure upon principals as the educational leaders in schools, for example, planning and reporting data is submitted annually to the local Ministry of Education, for comparison with national data. This concept is based on questionable assumptions about the idea that teaching and learning improves when it is data driven.

The former Minister of Education commented to New Zealand principals in 2008:

We need to reaffirm the principal as professional leader. This means we need to look for ways to reduce paper work and administrative compliance. Are there others who are not principals who can do some of this work? For example, we could trial the networking of small rural schools to reduce compliance and administrative overload. So I want to see principals free to engage with their teachers as professional leaders, focussing on student learning outcomes. (Carter, 2008, p. 2- 4).

In this statement, the Minister is reiterating the role of principal as professional leader in the school and the fact that less focus is needed on administrative compliance. Ironically in New Zealand, it is commonly agreed among New Zealand principals that it is the Ministry of Education which has actually increased the paperwork and compliance levels in schools (Ford, 2008). The Minister then went on to comment about issues of cost and the complexity of Information Communication Technology as an ongoing problem and the need for technical support in this area. Other issues mentioned were the lack of funding for students with special needs and that not enough of the money earmarked for special education was actually getting to the school level, and more importantly, to the individual with special needs. He also highlighted the management of students with behavioural issues as another area which needed attention. The lack of resourcing Minister Carter referred to increases pressure on the principal as the day to day manager of schools in terms of resource allocation.

Minister Carter described the current education system as fragmented, overburdened by red tape and paperwork. Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour funding might need reviewing and the funding of students under the Ongoing Reviewable Resource Scheme. If the government was re-elected a full review of Special Education would need to occur, the Minister went on to say.

Finally, the Minister had this to say about home-school partnership:

The liaison between home and schools is an issue, particularly the link between dysfunctional homes and student behavioural issues. Perhaps we can extend the Social Worker in Schools programmes. However, there is no blank cheque, our priority has to be around how we can more effectively use resources (Carter, 2008, p. 2-4).

Other factors affecting schools are the increasing cultural diversification in the Maori and Pacific Island populations and a new category of "New Zealander" (those who have obtained residency but have come from overseas), both now and in the future (2006 Census, Statistics NZ website). The Ministry of Education has predicted there could be a crisis in education if changes are not made to address the issues of increasing pressures both internally and externally on principals. The current demographics of the teaching profession indicate that almost one third of school principals have either retired or left in the last five years and school leaders are leaving the profession earlier than their predecessors. In a recent address at the New Zealand Principals Conference 2008, the then Minister of Education, Chris Carter, noted that "there is a concern that the average age of principals is 55 years and yet the average age of retirement is 58 years! Clearly we need to support principals to remain in the job, as well as recruit new principals into leadership." (Carter, 2008, p. 3). There will be a crisis in the next five years in the area of principal recruitment unless steps are taken now to address the potential problem of principal shortages. New Zealand is not the only nation facing this crisis. The United States and United Kingdom are facing similar challenges.

### **How then can Principals remain in a profession that is so challenging?**

From the literature reviewed, both within New Zealand and overseas, it is evident that effective educational leadership works to improve educational outcomes, promotes change and is distributed. In essence, it moves beyond self and one's own time at school, in order to leave a legacy of learning behind. This requires staff "buy in" and an ability by the leader to recognise the potential in all.

Leadership competencies needed to be effective are: the ability to provide vision and leadership, build community, strive for excellence, take care of oneself; and the deeply held personal conviction by the principal that it is the right of every student to have the highest quality educational experience they can.

Effective educational leaders must provide a trusting environment which is relationship based and enhances problem solving capacities both in the individual and the organisation. Effective leaders are described as those that are on a journey of seven interrelated learnings, which encompass understanding learning, making connections, futures thinking, knowledge of context, critical thinking, political acumen and emotional understanding. Whilst the model of interrelated learning is an impressive example of the qualities required of effective educational leaders, this author believes certain components are missing when one begins to talk about sustainable leadership in the profession and contextualises it to New Zealand.

### **Sustainable Educational Leadership:**

There are many misconceptions around sustainable leadership but it is primarily concerned with "developing and preserving what matters, spreads, and lasts in ways that create positive connections and development among people and does no harm to others in the present or the future" (Filho, 2000, p. 32).

It becomes apparent from the literature that sustainable leadership in schools needs to be viewed in a long term way, with an understanding that the work of one leader builds upon that of another, and that the development of the culture and teaching practice within a school enhance valued student outcomes.

In summary, sustainable leadership demonstrates a commitment to learning that is unwavering, resilient under pressure, (either internal or external) based upon a commitment to a moral and just form of leadership which is not looking for or interested in quick fixes in student achievement. Hargreaves & Fink (2006) provide a clear outline of sustainable leadership which has been examined, and a model of

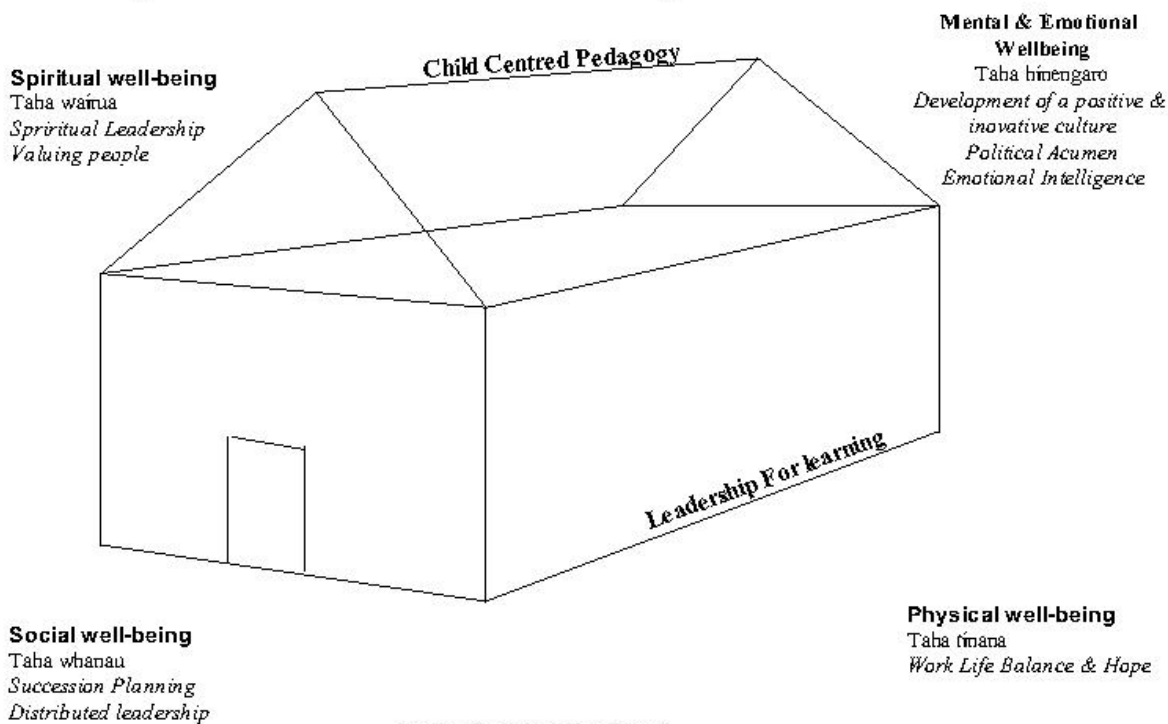
sustainable leadership based upon this, coupled with the New Zealand school context, has been developed by the author.

### Sustainable Leadership in New Zealand Schools Today:

The New Zealand schooling situation is unique. Boards of Trustees were introduced as part of Tomorrow's Schools (1989) and schools are self-managing yet still accountable to the Ministry of Education. With the reality of a diminishing principal workforce combined with dual accountabilities, the author has developed a conceptual framework for New Zealand principals' sustainable leadership. The model is based on the concept of well-being (Durie, 1994) and the notion of the four dimensions of hauora (health) using a holistic approach based on the Maori philosophy.

It combines the four dimensions of hauora with each wall representing a different dimension. The dimensions are: Taha tinana (physical wellbeing), Taha hinengaro (mental and emotional wellbeing), Taha whanau (social wellbeing) and Taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing). In order for the profession of principals to be healthy, it needs to be sustainable, to be able to last the distance and provide for successors and potential principals in schools for the future. The model is based on the notion of the Whare tapawha (Maori meeting house) which, in this instance, represents the school on a local level and the educational leadership whare (nationally) where local leadership is combined. This represents a bottom up, grass roots framework where the educational leadership of our nation rests in the hands of school principals as opposed to the Ministry of Education. Certain conditions must be present for the model of principal wellbeing (sustainable leadership) to occur in New Zealand schools: leadership for learning, critical thinking, work-life balance and hope including distributed leadership, the development of a positive and innovative school culture, succession planning, emotional intelligence and political acumen.

### A Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Leadership in New Zealand Schools



### Summary of Findings

Sustainable leadership puts learning first, addressing it over time, even in the medium term, believing that results will take care of themselves. All other principles of sustainability are secondary to this one. As

such, the school principal must be committed to leadership for learning in the first instance and see leadership moving beyond the tenure of any one person, so that an agenda for change will exist long term.

Key themes emerging from this review emphasize the need for principals to have a work-life balance, as well as the ability to reflect on what is learnt in a crisis in order to remain in the profession. Supervision or a listening ear/critical friend outside of the school is important, because it assists in combating the isolation felt by New Zealand principals, particularly those in rural or small schools. Collaborative networks and reflective journaling have also been highlighted by recent research as valuable tools for professional growth. Another tool which assists in the formation of sustainable leadership is distributed leadership where responsibility is shared in schools and teacher and pupil ownership is evident for long term change to transpire.

A focus on relationships both within the school and its community, the development of a positive school culture, with the principal believing in her/himself and having a strong sense of moral purpose, are all vital components for sustainable leadership in New Zealand. These, coupled with the ability to read the social and political contexts and their effect on schools while at the same time planning for succession and developing capacity in existing staff, are the other components essential for sustainable leadership to occur.

The challenge to provide sustainable leadership in New Zealand schools is great. However, in this age of accelerated change in schools, it is essential that sustainable leadership is highlighted and supported by the Ministry of Education in order to build children's achievement and anchor schools, so they are not tossed about by the latest whim or educational fad. As Hargreaves & Fink conclude (2006, p. 39):

Sustainable leadership defends the depth of learning against the expediency of immediate results. It is not afraid to ignore the overriding preoccupation with short term targets in favour of long term gains. Sustainable leadership creates and protects a nourishing, sustaining and balanced diet of well prepared and tasty learning that contrasts with fast school reform policies that emphasise quantity more than quality, standardised product and efficient delivery, and a restricted diet of minimal sufficiency.

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## Creating a Sustainable Future

Anna Nicholls RSM, DRS, Villa Maria College, Christchurch

One of the special features of Villa Maria College in Christchurch is a commitment to community service. Over the 90 years history of the College, students have always been involved in some form of service.

In 2008 the Principal Curriculum, Tony Shaw and I used the new Achievement Standards in Education for Sustainability to direct the Year 12 students in their Community Service and explore possible ways to deliver the key competencies in the New Zealand Curriculum.

Perhaps the most important key competency encouraged by the project, according to Tony Shaw, was Participating and Contributing. The projects encouraged the students to be actively involved in the wider community. As well as this, working in a group with one or two other students also gave the girls an opportunity to relate to others and to manage self as they strove to meet the targets set by the group.

During 2008 students were engaged in workshops on sustainability, delivered by the staff of various faculties in the College. Additional to this, Dave Brennan, from the local iwi, presented a session on the Ngai Tahu perspective on sustainability. While on a two-day retreat, the students participated in workshops on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. This showed them that sustainability was not only about care of the environment but it also involved economic and social sustainability.

The projects that the students implemented covered a wide variety of areas from worm farming and composting or growing vegetables for a local food bank, to educating students at a local primary school on the impact of malaria in the developing world.



Students Paige and Nicole (pictured) developed a “Lost and Found” database as part of their effort to create a sustainable future. This is located on the College Intranet. Students can access the database, which is updated weekly, to see if an item they have lost has been found or to alert others to their lost items. Nicole and Paige hope that their database will help people to be reunited with their lost items rather than purchasing new things. They found the project a good challenge and were able to utilise skills that they had developed in their Information Technology class. In 2009 they hope to continue the project, to allow parents access to the database and to introduce the idea to primary schools.

I am delighted with the way that students took up the challenge of a sustainable future. Although many students were initially unsure of their ability to make a difference through developing their projects, the response from students once the projects were completed was overwhelmingly positive. I particularly enjoyed reading their evaluations on how their attitudes and actions had changed as a result of doing the projects. They now have a realisation that, although they thought they could not make a difference, they can, and they feel empowered to continue their actions into the future.

Villa Maria College will continue with Sustainability in 2009 as a compulsory subject for NCEA Level 2 students. Level 3 students will have the option of extending the projects they began in 2008.



## Advanced Study for School Leaders – Advice from a Survivor

John Young, Principal, St Joseph's School, Upper Hutt

In May 2004 I enrolled to study for a PhD degree at Victoria University. In September 2008 I submitted my thesis for marking, bringing almost to a close over four years of study. During that time, apart from 20 weeks' study leave in 2007, I continued in my position as principal at St Joseph's School, Upper Hutt. The following reflection is provided to give some guidance for other people working in schools, particularly school leaders who are contemplating undertaking advanced degrees, particularly those that require a thesis. These are my personal views based on the journey I took. I would advise anybody considering going down this path to seek the view of other people as well.

Undertaking an advanced degree, particularly a doctorate, should not be undertaken lightly. It requires considerable sacrifice in terms of time and money. It can mean adopting, at times, an almost hermit-like existence. One of the most important questions anybody considering this route should ask is, how passionate am I about undertaking this project? I consider I have been fortunate in this area. Ever since I turned up for my first stage one education lecture at Canterbury University in 1980 I have found the study of education to be fascinating. I followed the completion of my BA and teacher training in 1985 with an MEd which I completed in 1989. At the completion of the MEd I felt I wanted to go on and that I might have a doctorate in me. This thought stayed with me for the next 14 years, but my career and an increasing family meant other matters held my attention. I did do a few other MEd papers for my own interest. I don't know if studying education and reading education research qualifies as a hobby but apart from family, work and following rugby it has been one of my main interests and pleasures for nearly 30 years. My point here is that I would suggest anybody contemplating undertaking a doctorate needs to get some intrinsic enjoyment out of the process of studying, researching and writing about education rather than just wanting to complete a post graduate degree. In the same way to run a marathon is a great goal to have but should not be undertaken by anybody who does not get some pleasure out of running for its own sake.

To some extent I have the Education Review Office to thank for providing the impetus to move from having an interest in reading education research to enrolling in a PhD. After a challenging ERO review in 2003 I reflected deeply on the state of assessment practice in New Zealand primary schools. Among a number of concerns I had was the large amount of assessment of dubious value that schools were expected to carry out. I felt passionate about the matter, passionate enough to contemplate giving up over four years to study the issue. My advice, therefore to anyone contemplating this journey is to ask themselves do I get some intrinsic pleasure out of undertaking study and do I feel passionate enough about a particular area to focus on this and not much else for a number of years? If the answer to both questions is no there are far more satisfying and creative ways to spend your discretionary time.

For people who believe that they have the required interest to undertake such study the next important issues to consider are the availability of both finances and time. These two can be major barriers for people who aspire to advance study. However it may be case that they are not as challenging as people may initially believe.

At close to \$2,000 a year for doctorate study money can be a major barrier. However, school leaders should consider how much the school is currently spending on their principal, especially attending out-of-town conferences. The cost of this type of professional development can be large when accommodation, transport and conference fees are considered. It is rare for the cost to be less than \$1,000-\$12,000. Principals and other school leaders could consider negotiating with BOTs not to attend these types of conferences in exchange for paying all or part of their university fees. I would like to thank the St Joseph's BOT for allowing me that option over the last four years.

In terms of time it is common in the few books that are written to guide post graduate students to suggest a number of hours a week be devoted to study and the need to be disciplined about this. Such advice is

often also given by the universities themselves. My view is that if anybody analysed their current life style and commitments and asked themselves can they find another 15-20 hours a week nobody would undertake a project like this. While I admire people for whom this type of structured and disciplined approach of a regular number of hours a week of study works, such a style has never suited me. I work better in an approach that allows me to fit in with the demands of school, family and my own energy levels and interest. I refer to this methodology as “white-time management”. It means when the time is available and the energy levels high I work extremely hard but it does take account of the fact there will be periods when there is little time and energy available and all I can do is to go with the current until the rapids approach again. It meant using the school holidays to make substantial chunks of progress in the project. I would spend the weekends and evenings of the last three weeks of terms one, two and three preparing for a major change and the next step of my study. While I used the January holidays substantially, attempting any varsity work in November or December would have been a quick track to a melt down, dismissal and divorce.

I did, however attempt to set some discipline around my time management. I resolved to take up no office-holding roles in any educational or other organisation I was in and not to join any new groups unless it was absolutely essential to the performance of my principal’s role. I would also counsel any person who begins a thesis to refrain from applying for another job for the duration.

I was greatly helped in my study by gaining 20 weeks paid leave through the New Zealand Teachers Study Award Scheme. I felt that it was advantageous to me that this leave was taken during the period of the major write up of my thesis rather than earlier stages of general exploratory reading and field work. It is the writing that requires substantial periods of uninterrupted time.

It is essential for those contemplating advanced study to consider very seriously the structure of the degree, the institution they intend to study at and choice of supervisor. Massey, Auckland and Waikato Universities offer Doctorate of Education as opposed to the more traditional PhD. The Doctorate of Education has advantages in that in a number of the programmes people enrol and study with a cohort of fellow students. Such an approach gives people a network of support and discussion as they progress. The Ed D programmes vary in structure but also have a number of course papers that give candidates a more general background than the thesis only approach. However candidates do still have to undertake a major individual thesis type of research. My own conclusion was that an Ed D looked like substantially more work than just writing a thesis. This was my personal judgement and candidates who are serious about doctorate study should seek the views of people who have completed an Ed D.

There is also a choice of whether to study from a distance or the most local institution. There have been financial advantages in terms of the costs of fees, in studying with one of the large Australian universities and a number of New Zealand teachers have done this. For a number of reasons I decided to *shop locally* with my closest university.

Of all the decisions the most crucial one is not which university but who will be your supervisor. In my view it is crucial that the person knows your particular subject area well. The word subject area is used here in a relatively narrow way. If your interest is in the area of the teaching of reading comprehension strategies it is not advisable to have a supervisor who, while having a general background in reading, has phonics as their research interest. My view is the choice of supervisor should have a greater determination over the final choice than the location of the university.

The search for the most appropriate supervisor should not only consider their subject knowledge and general alignment with your own views, it should also consider your personal compatibility and their working method. If possible ask around the university about the person’s reputation as a supervisor. Information should also be sought about their future plans. If they are due to take a sabbatical during a crucial period in your study you should know this. They may also be contemplating leaving the institution or even retirement.

As stated above the choice of supervisor is crucial as is establishing the common expectations about how you would like to work together. The relationship between student and supervisor is one of the most unusual I have come across. It can be particularly complex if you are a principal and in the rest of your work you have a clear understanding of the relationships, authority and influence you have. The supervisor-student relationship can be conceived in a number of ways. In some ways it is a commercial relationship – you, or in my case my BOT, were paying a considerable amount of money for a service. This means that you have reasonable expectations about punctuality, information and preparation that you should expect. I must admit there were times that I did not quite feel I was getting absolute value for my money.

Finally to move to some more practical points. It will save a huge amount of time if you establish a systematic data base for your referencing from the very start of the project. This means absolutely religiously following the university's prescribed method of referencing. Time given to mastery of software packages such as *EndNote* at the beginning of the course of study will be invaluable. Students should make full use of the university library staff and establish positive relationships with them. You also need to establish positive relationships with key university clerical/administration staff. Always back up your work. In my case this meant have copies on the school server as well as my own computer.

If a reader wants to discuss any issue further please contact me at St Joseph's School, Upper Hutt, [the.principal@stjosephsuh.school.nz](mailto:the.principal@stjosephsuh.school.nz) 04 528 4910.

## School-Community Physical Activity Project – The Ripple Effect

Vicki Aisher, Physical Activity Team Leader, and Leon Mc Givern, Principal, St Dominic's Primary School, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland.

### INTRODUCTION:

Our journey had its beginning in 2006 when we wanted to improve and have better communication with our community “rippling out” from the school in the areas of physical activity and sport. Reporting to our community in the past we analysed, had always been in the form of result-driven sports data. The school was (is still) very proud of its traditional sports programme and participation and this was seen by many as an integral part of the culture of the school. But... with pressure from parents to do more, a dwindling volunteer base and an overloaded teaching staff it was becoming evident there was a danger that this culture could become past glory and subsequently consigned like so many other proud traditions to the scrap heap!

Therefore, to halt this, an improved communication network between the school, the parent community and current community providers was required, to ensure that quality physical activity could, and would be sustainable for the children.

### OUR PROCESS

- Parents and students were surveyed for interests and needs.
- A physical activity team was established from parents, staff and students, and:
  - a) a desired vision was created.
  - b) future goals and directions were set. These were drawn from surveyed feedback from both the teacher and student body and showed a need for water skills and an interest and desire for bike riding.
- Constant reports of findings were made to the committee.
- Promotion of events in and out of school time occurred at assemblies.
- A PA newsletter was established aimed at communicating the physical activity our children participated in.
- Units of Physical Education and five new curriculum documents were compiled and presented to staff on PE/PA.
- Feedback was given to parents and continued feedback asked for.

### OUTCOMES

- A proactive programme of community water sports was implemented.
- A monthly bike day was established here at school.
- A bike ride from the school to a local park for lunch under police supervision was initiated.
- Senior pupils became peer teachers and learners.
- Standard school physical education planning was expanded to include new insights into delivery of the curriculum.
- Professional learning was shared by colleagues.
- Better pooling of resources was established.
- Links were established with community providers to help run programmes within the school.
- Students became more proactive in attending community sporting and physical activity events.
- Positive media publicity for the school occurred in local community press releases.
- Parents became active participants alongside their children.
- Parents and children took the opportunity to join clubs.
- Clubs etc provided support to the school.
- The parental volunteer base expanded to enable the new activities being offered.

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Water activities were brought to the fore, with triathlons, flippa ball (junior water polo) and other pool activities being promoted.
- A photo bank was developed for school use at parent evenings etc.
- 14 clubs and 67 families attended a “club night” held in the school hall with appropriate club activities outside for children and adults to participate in.
- There was a concentration on biking activities such as “bike the bays”, the Woodhill “bike jam”, and other events around the school and locally with lots of parent participation too.
- A SCPAP newsletter was initiated to spread physical activity “good news”. This included highlighting individual successes, school and family achievements, upcoming events, and lots of photographs.
- Student leaders attended leadership seminars and were trained to lead games and activities during break time.
- Selected staff attended seminars and professional development coursework organised by Sport Auckland and TEAM Solutions.
- Parent involvement increased as they began to take ownership of teams and activities, in and outside school time, for example, swim sport, bike jam, bike days etc.
- Links and connections were made with Unitec and secondary schools that were not there before.

## SWOT ANALYSIS ON OUR VENTURE SHOWED...

Strengths: Strengths of the “Ripple Effect” activity/scenario for the school and children:

1. 89.5% of parents surveyed noted a positive, proactive change in their child’s participation in physical activity and sport.
2. 95.5% of the school community surveyed noted that they were more aware of what was available in and out of school for their children with regards to physical activity.

Weaknesses: In our review of what we could have done better we noted three concerns, namely:

1. For 5 – 7 year old children parental expectations of what activities they were able to participate fully in were at times a little unrealistic, for example, some of the swimming activities.
2. Parental expectations of what the school’s responsibilities were/are, and what their own roles were/are, in relation to their children’s physical activity.
3. The lack of time spent with some of our minor ethnic groups within our school to get them on board more.

Opportunities: Some of the opportunities for starting things differently next time would be:

1. To develop our own survey for comparative purposes rather than using a generic survey that gave the school excellent threshold data but was not able to be used again to show comparative data/gains over the two years we have so far surveyed.
2. A need to increase parents’ knowledge and understanding of the physical development stages of a primary school aged child.

Threats: Parents’ expectations biased by their own experiences.

## REFLECTIONS ON OUR JOURNEY FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Students’ participation in outside school-time physical activity has definitely greatly increased.
2. Parents are extremely positive about the physical activity programme that their children are experiencing at our school.
3. Education is needed for the parents of our Year 1 – 3 students about our school philosophy of PA/PE. The importance of free play needs to be further emphasised at this level.
4. The opportunities our families took in accepting the challenges of PA with their children. This was evidenced by the number of our parent community who took the opportunity to exercise at the local fitness club. This was double the numbers of any of the local schools (and we were one of the smaller schools participating).
5. Many parents had excessive expectations of what the school is responsible for.

6. Parent expectations of the school's role appeared to be biased by/from their own personal school experiences.

#### IN SUMMARY

Improved communication and active participation within our community was achieved, with an expectation of/for "what's next?" rippling out from the school. The improvements are continuing to grow, even today!

# The Pastoral Care of Non-Heterosexual Youth in New Zealand Catholic Schools<sup>1</sup>

Charles Shaw, RE Adviser, Secondary, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch

## Non-Heterosexual Students at Risk

New Zealand schools are obliged to meet the provisions of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act (1990) and the Human Rights Act (1993), which make it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against a person on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

Schools are also bound by the National Administration Guidelines which require them to provide safe emotional and physical environments for all their students.

Yet, two recent studies – *Non-Heterosexual Youth: A Profile of Their Health and Well-being* (2004) and *The Teaching of Sexuality Education in Years 7 to 13* (2007) – have highlighted the fact that, despite these legal protections, New Zealand secondary schools often fail to protect their non-heterosexual<sup>2</sup> students from harm and have limited success in enhancing their well-being.

Both studies support the view that New Zealand schools are often unsafe places for those young people who are seen as not fitting the heterosexual norm. Students perceived to be transgender<sup>3</sup>, bisexual<sup>4</sup>, takataapui<sup>5</sup>, gay<sup>6</sup>, fa'afafine<sup>7</sup>, lesbian<sup>8</sup>, or intersex<sup>9</sup> are potentially targets for discrimination and abuse in these environments.

## Non-Heterosexual Youth: A Profile of Their Health and Well-being (2004)

*Non-Heterosexual Youth: A Profile of Their Health and Well-being* (2004)<sup>10</sup> provides a valuable insight into the experiences of non-heterosexual students attending secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The following general findings provide a useful context for understanding specific health and safety issues facing non-heterosexual students in our secondary schools:

- In total, 7.8% (701 out of 8997) of all secondary school students surveyed identified as being sexually attracted to the same sex, both sexes, were not sure of their sexual attractions, or were not attracted to either sex (non-heterosexual).

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<sup>1</sup> The main emphasis in this article is on the need for secondary schools to provide pastoral care for non-heterosexual students, primarily those with a homosexual orientation. However, given that a significant number of young people are dealing with issues of sexual identity or orientation from the age of eleven upwards, primary schools need to be mindful that there will be students in years 7 and 8 who also require support and education.

<sup>2</sup> A term used of those who identify as being sexually attracted to the same sex, both sexes, are not sure of their sexual attractions, or are not attracted to either sex.

<sup>3</sup> An umbrella term that describes someone expressing characteristics that do not correspond with those traditionally ascribed to the person's sex. Just because someone is transgender does not mean that they want to have gender reassignment.

<sup>4</sup> Someone who can be emotionally and physically attracted to both females and males.

<sup>5</sup> A traditional Maori term that means intimate companion of the same sex. Many gay Maori use this term because it acknowledges both cultural and sexual identity. "Takataapui wahine" refers to females and "takataapui tane" to males.

<sup>6</sup> Someone who is primarily attracted to people of the same sex. The term "gay" is predominantly, but not exclusively, a term used by males.

<sup>7</sup> A Samoan term that describes males living as females. Some Samoan gay men may take on this term, because it is an identity that incorporates a cultural dimension; these men are typically more feminine.

<sup>8</sup> A female who is predominantly both emotionally and physically attracted to other females.

<sup>9</sup> A person born with an anatomy or physiology that differs from cultural ideas about male or female. Intersex people may be born with "ambiguous genitalia" and/or experience hormone-production levels that vary from those of culturally "ideal" females and males.

<sup>10</sup> In 2001, the University of Auckland's Adolescent Health Research Group (AHRG) undertook *Youth2000*, a national survey of secondary school student health and well-being. In total, 9699 students from 114 New Zealand secondary schools, including 27 integrated schools, participated. In 2003, the New Zealand Aids Foundation approached the AHRG and requested an analysis of non-heterosexual data from the *Youth2000* Survey. The resulting report was *Non-Heterosexual Youth: A Profile of Their Health and Well-being* (2004).

- One in twelve students in secondary schools in New Zealand identify as non-heterosexual – in a class of thirty or so adolescents, it is likely that at least two of those students are not exclusively heterosexual.
- The majority of students reported that they were 13 years old or younger when they first became aware of their same-sex attractions. One-third (35.2%) of students reported that they were aged 11 or younger when they first became aware of sexual attractions to people of the same sex.
- The majority of the students who identified as attracted to both sexes, or the same sex, report they have not come out to people close to them about their sexuality (68.7%). About one-third (31.3%) of these students reported that they had come out.
- For the students who had come out (n=109), over half (54.2%) reported that they had come out when they were 13 years old or younger.

An analysis of data relating to the emotional health of non-heterosexual students reveals high levels of distress for many of those surveyed:

- 22.9 % of non-heterosexual students report having a significant number of depressive symptoms that are considered to be serious and in need of professional intervention.
- 30.0% were unsure or thought it unlikely that they will live to the age of 25.
- 15.3% of all non-heterosexual students reported that they had attempted suicide in the 12 months prior to participating in the survey.

Significant levels of victimisation and bullying at school are reported by non-heterosexual students:

- 9.1% of non-heterosexual students did not feel safe at school most or all of the time.
- 24.5% of non-heterosexual students reported that they felt safe only sometimes.
- 12.9% of non-heterosexual students reported they were bullied at least once a week.
- 46.4% of non-heterosexual students reported that they have been hit or physically harmed intentionally by another person, at least once during the last twelve months.

The study also reveals concerning rates of substance use among non-heterosexual students:

- Around two in ten non-heterosexual students report having used party drugs.
- Over 10% of non-heterosexual students smoke cigarettes daily and use marijuana at least weekly.
- Nearly one-third of non-heterosexual students reported binge drinking at least once in the last four weeks.

### ***The Teaching of Sexuality Education in Years 7 to 13 (2007)***

The Education Review Office's *The Teaching of Sexuality Education in Years 7 to 13 (2007)*, a report on the quality of sexuality education in one hundred New Zealand schools (18% of secondary schools and 12% of intermediates), found that only 20% of schools had sexuality programmes that provided opportunities for students to explore and challenge issues such as homophobia, diversity and acceptance. These schools offered broad perspectives on sexuality and tended to have other pastoral initiatives that supported students' diverse sexuality education needs. Programmes in the majority of schools reflected an assumption that their students were heterosexual.

Almost half the schools (43) took all reasonable steps to provide a safe and inclusive school environment for staff and students. In secondary schools some students were confident in expressing or disclosing their sexual identity to peers and teachers and were able to report incidents of bullying. In these schools there were strategies in place to make sure that staff and students with a range of sexual identities were safe and respected. The remaining schools (57) were less safe and inclusive and teachers and students did not feel safe about disclosing their sexual identity, and reported that bullying – including text bullying – occurred.

### **The Role of Catholic Schools in the Pastoral Care of Non-Heterosexual Students**



The Catholic Church is unequivocal that the fundamental human rights of homosexual persons<sup>11</sup> must be defended and that all of us must strive to eliminate any forms of injustice, oppression, or violence against them<sup>12</sup>:

*They [homosexual persons] must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2358)

*It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or in action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the Church's pastors wherever it occurs. It reveals a kind of disregard for others which endangers the most fundamental principles of a healthy society. The intrinsic dignity of each person must always be respected in word, in action and in law.* (The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons, 1986, no. 10)

As instruments of the Church's wider pastoral mission, Catholic schools are called to be "ever more effective in proclaiming the Gospel and promoting total human formation"<sup>13</sup>. Thus, Catholic schools have a clear mandate from the Church to promote the health and wellbeing of all students, including those who are – or who are perceived to be – non-heterosexual. In this, Catholic schools are challenged to follow the example of Jesus, the perfect model of pastoral care. Like the shepherd in the parable, who leaves ninety-nine sheep behind and goes after the one that is lost.

Catholic schools have a duty to reach out to those in their communities who are marginalised – sometimes because aspects of their sexuality distinguish them from the majority:

*If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.* (Matthew 18:12-14)

The pastoral care offered to non-heterosexual students in a Catholic school will, therefore, go beyond protection from physical bullying or zero tolerance of anti-gay comments. Genuine pastoral care will be characterised by generosity of heart and a welcoming attitude that supports those struggling with issues of sexuality in their efforts to live like Jesus and to grow in integrity.

### **Principles for the Pastoral Care of Non-Heterosexual Students in Catholic Secondary Schools**

In developing pastoral care policies and practices that address the needs of non-heterosexual students in a Catholic school the following principles need to be upheld.

The first two are foundational. When these principles are given priority in a school community and become established, it becomes possible to create a climate of pastoral care which is authentically Catholic, where the other principles can find their expression.

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<sup>11</sup> By extension, the Church's teaching in regard to the pastoral care of homosexual persons can be applied to other non-heterosexual persons.

<sup>12</sup> The Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality is summed up in three paragraphs of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, each of which deals with a different aspect of this complex issue. Paragraph 2357 focuses on the moral status of sexual relations between people of the same sex, something which the Church considers "contrary to the natural law," closed to the gift of life, and therefore unacceptable in any circumstances. Paragraph 2358 provides a pastoral dimension, recognising that there are many men and women with "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" and that these people who experience same-sex attraction should be accepted with "respect, compassion and sensitivity" and must be free from "every sign of unjust discrimination". Paragraph 2359 emphasises that homosexual persons are expected to live chaste lives – just as married and unmarried heterosexual people are expected to live chaste lives. They are called to "self-mastery" and, thereby, "inner freedom".

<sup>13</sup> *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome, 1977) paragraph 34.

### **1) Every person is a unique creation made in God's image.**

Every human person, regardless of sexual orientation, deserves to be treated with respect – they have an inherent dignity because they are created in God's image and are heirs to an eternal destiny:

*We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.* (Pope Benedict XVI – Homily at the Mass for his Inauguration)

Human sexuality is a gift from God which, if properly channelled, enables us to share in God's creative love and life. Sexual identity is an important dimension of the human person, but our total personhood cannot be reduced to sexual orientation or sexual behaviour.

### **2) God's love for every person is unconditional.**

God loves every person unconditionally – for the persons that we are, not for what we do or fail to do. God does not love someone less because they are sexually “different”. Because God loves us our lives have great meaning and value. God's love is boundless, always available to those who are willing to receive it. As St Paul says:

*I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 8:38-39)

### **3) The true meaning of sexual love is found in marriage.**

Many young people consider genital sexual activity, including intercourse, to be acceptable behaviour, a “right” that they are entitled to outside the context of marriage. While this response is understandable given the highly sexualised culture that we live in, the Church maintains that sexuality is a God-given gift that must be treasured, respected and nurtured.

The Church teaches that the true meaning of sexual love can only be discovered by men and women who have committed themselves for life in marriage. Genital sexual intimacy, especially intercourse, only achieves its purpose when it takes place within marriage and where it is both love-giving and open to the possibility of producing new human life.

### **4) Students in Catholic schools have a right to accurate and appropriate information regarding homosexuality and non-heterosexual persons.**

We live in a society that is increasingly aware of the complexities of human sexuality and its various expressions. Homosexuality, especially, is a polarising issue in Church and society today. In such a climate, school communities need to ensure they are providing accurate information and formation about all aspects of sexuality.

Students in Catholic secondary schools have a right to have the teachings of the Catholic Church regarding homosexuality presented to them accurately, clearly and sensitively, and in a manner that is appropriate to their age level, their maturity, and their cultural background.

Many people have an inadequate understanding of what the Catholic Church teaches about homosexuality and they assume that the Church condemns homosexuals. While the Church firmly rejects homosexual genital acts as being “contrary to the natural law” and maintains that “under no circumstances can they be approved,”<sup>14</sup> the Church accepts the persons concerned unconditionally. The Church's distinction between a person's identity and their sexual behaviour is a significant one:

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<sup>14</sup> The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 2357.

*We wish to emphasise immediately that this judgement on homosexual activity does not imply any judgement on when homosexual persons are guilty of sin (only they themselves and God can judge that). Nor does it imply any judgement on the condition of being a homosexual person. Homosexual inclinations or orientation, like heterosexual inclinations, are morally neutral. It is homosexual activity that we regard as wrong. (Dignity, Love, Life – Statement on Homosexuality from the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference, 1986)*

It is important to recognise that because of the language used, some Catholic documents related to homosexuality, while theologically accurate, may seem harsh or pastorally insensitive to many people. The meaning of complex texts will require clarification.

**5) Catholic perspectives regarding non-heterosexual persons and homosexuality must be incorporated into sexuality education and pastoral care programmes in Catholic schools.**

If sexuality education and pastoral care programmes are to be effective those professionals responsible for designing and delivering them must be knowledgeable, skilled, confident – and committed to the Catholic vision of building what Pope John Paul II called a “culture of life”.

*It is an illusion to think that we can build a true culture of human life if we do not help the young to accept and experience sexuality and love and the whole of life according to their true meaning and in their close interconnection. Sexuality, which enriches the whole person, manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love. (Pope John Paul II – The Gospel of Life, 97)*

**6) Young people who are experiencing issues of sexual orientation or sexual identity benefit from seeing their “struggle” in moral terms.**

Everyone, regardless of sexual orientation, is called to grow in personal maturity and responsibility. The recognition that human sexuality can be channelled towards either good or evil challenges Christians to a higher standard of loving. By developing the virtue of chastity – integrating one's thoughts, feelings, and actions in the area of human sexuality according to God's plan for one's state in life – young people can value and respect their own dignity and that of others. Thus, they are empowered to live a more “heroic” way of life.

But chastity is not easily achieved and develops over a long period of time. The grace to live sexually whole and chaste lives comes from the Holy Spirit and is available in so many ways – by personal effort, through the support of parents, family and friends, by listening to the Word of God, through the sacraments of the Church, by prayer, and through the example of Mary and the saints. Catholic schools, through the values they teach and model, also play an important role.

**7) Young people struggling with issues of sexuality, through Christ, can find meaning in suffering.**

Young people struggling with issues of sexuality often find it difficult to make sense of the isolation, depression, anxiety and fear that can be a feature of their lives. While it is essential for Catholic schools to do as much as they can to ease the social and psychological burdens of their non-heterosexual students, it is just as important that they help those students who are experiencing pain to find meaning in what they are going through. Many non-heterosexual young people are “gifted” with insights into the paradoxes of life that those who follow more conventional paths are oblivious to:

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8)*

Catholic schools have the potential to assist non-heterosexual young people to find meaning in their suffering by leading them to an early appreciation of the mystery of the Cross – Jesus’ pathway through death to the new life of the Resurrection:

*Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.’ (Matthew 16:24-25)*

This unique approach to suffering is the mark of Christians and distinguishes them from the mainstream. While Christians are called to ease the misery of others and always to work to rid the world of pain, there comes a point where suffering is unavoidable – it has to be either embraced or rejected. In embracing the Cross Christians open themselves to be embraced by Christ and to receive Christ’s life and love:

*He is calling you (cf. John 11:28)! He wants to take your life and join it to his. Let yourself be embraced by him! Gaze no longer upon your own wounds, gaze upon his. Do not look upon what still separates you from him and from others; look upon the infinite distance that he has abolished by taking your flesh, by mounting the Cross which men had prepared for him, and by letting himself be put to death so as to show you his love. In his wounds, he takes hold of you; in his wounds, he hides you. Do not refuse his Love! (Meditation by Pope Benedict at Lourdes, 14 September 2008)*

**8) Educators must always remain open to the possibility that a particular person may be struggling to accept aspects of their sexuality.**

Teachers and those responsible for pastoral care in schools must not assume that the young people they are dealing with are heterosexual. They must also guard against stereotyping non-heterosexual students or making assumptions about their emotions or interests. Good educators try to learn what a student is thinking or feeling without being intrusive or insensitive. Boundaries are always respected.

**9) Young people struggling with issues of sexuality are nourished and strengthened by the sacraments.**

Participation in the sacramental life of the Church is essential to the spiritual growth of all who are baptised. Young people who are struggling with aspects of their sexuality should be encouraged to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion often. In doing so, they strengthen their relationship with Jesus and with the Church community.

Through the regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation young people have the opportunity to grow in understanding, acceptance, and inner peace. Catholic secondary schools serve their students well by making the Sacrament of Reconciliation available to them on a regular basis.

By participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, young people struggling with their sexuality come face to face with the mystery of God’s love and experience God’s forgiveness first hand. The Sacrament of Reconciliation helps young people to appreciate they are responsible for their own lives, for how they think and act. It empowers them to live holy lives by renewing their commitment to Jesus and to his Gospel.

**10) Young people who feel “different” from their heterosexual peers benefit from positive role models.**

In the moral, philosophical and theological debates about homosexuality, what often gets lost is the personal – how having a same-sex attraction affects real people. Young Catholics who feel “different” from their heterosexual peers can find life within the Church challenging and painful.

But many non-heterosexual young people have fulfilling lives, doing their best to live chastely and faithfully in a society that is increasingly accepting of both heterosexual and homosexual promiscuity. While many have experienced prejudice, hurt and condemnation through the words and actions of fellow Catholics, they still seek to remain in relationship with the Church, participating in its life and sacraments.

Catholic secondary schools assist young people struggling with their sexuality to develop a greater sense of self-worth when they present them with positive role models, those who are achieving some success in grappling faithfully with the same issues.

**11) Catholic schools need to reach out to parents whose children are experiencing same-sex attraction.**

At times, Catholic school communities will need to reach out to parents of non-heterosexual young people, especially to those whose son or daughter is experiencing same-sex attraction. These parents often get messages that they somehow are responsible for their child's homosexual orientation, and consequently they feel ashamed and isolated. Other parents may observe attitudes and behaviours that cause them concern – such as an adolescent fascination or “crush”. In such situations, parents may be confused or upset, and come seeking guidance and reassurance from school staff.

*Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers*, produced by the United States Bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family (first published 1997, revised 1998 with Vatican approval), was designed “to reach out to parents who are trying to cope with the discovery of homosexuality in a child who is an adolescent or an adult.” It encourages families to draw on their untapped reserves of faith, hope and love, as they together face “uncharted futures.” It is a very useful resource, not only for parents of non-heterosexual young people, but also for schools wishing to take initiatives in pastoral care.

**Summary**

Catholic secondary schools are challenged to become more knowledgeable and accepting of non-heterosexual students following the example of Jesus who accepted all people but called them to a deeper faith – despite the fact that some of his followers questioned his association with social outcasts.

Schools need to explore how, in concrete ways, they can best meet the pastoral needs of homosexual students and other young people who are struggling with issues of sexual identity, while remaining faithful to the Catholic understanding regarding the nature and purpose of human sexuality.

In the long run, it is better that a school community be proactive in meeting the needs of its non-heterosexual students than be forced to react when a crisis occurs.

## Reflections from Sabbatical Study

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### a. Executive Summary

The study was undertaken during April to July, 2008. The sabbatical study focused on two primary and distinct areas:

- the use of interactive white boards (IWBs); and
- the maintenance of the special character in a number of schools in Ireland and England.

The opportunity was taken to present a paper "Catholic Schools – what's ahead?" and facilitate a workshop at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of Secondary School Principals in Galway, Ireland. The paper explored the opportunities that lie ahead in the short- and medium-term for Catholic secondary schools in New Zealand and compared and contrasted these opportunities with the evolving nature of Irish second level Catholic schooling.

All information was gathered in partnership with the schools, appropriate personnel and teachers with particular focus on student engagement with learning where IWBs were being used, and staff and student participation in special character activities. Observations were made in classrooms and around the schools. Interviews were held with key management personnel, chaplains, teachers and students.

The gradual introduction of IWBs in secondary schools in England started over seven years ago. There is now a growing field of empirical studies, especially related to the effective use to enhance teaching and learning in foreign languages and mathematics. Observations in several schools indicate that where there is a planned and sustained approach in introducing IWBs, the use is likely to be more effective. The planning included the identification of teachers who are already literate and committed to the use of other technologies (e.g. laptops, data projectors, visualisers, digital video, etc.) in their classrooms. Ongoing professional development, reflective circles and peer modelling helped teachers build their expertise and confidence to integrate IWBs into their array of teaching tools.

The issues confronting Catholic secondary schools in Ireland and England are similar to those facing New Zealand schools. There appears to be in both overseas countries a higher involvement of the diocesan clergy in supporting the liturgical life of the school. Most of the schools observed employ a lay chaplain, who has a critical role in organising co-curricular religious activities, events and celebrations. Most schools indicate that there has been a planned and smooth transition from a religious chaplain to a lay chaplain. The question of how the position is funded (state or locally raised) is contentious in Irish schools.

### b. Purpose (as in the proposal)

- i. How widespread and effective is the use of inter-active information and communication technology (IWB) in the classroom?
- ii. How do the Catholic (Marist Brother) Schools in Ireland and some schools in England (Birmingham and Manchester) maintain their Special Character charism, given that lay principals are leading the schools?
- iii. How has the Birmingham Secondary School Partnership evolved over the last 5 years?
- iv. How do the management structures and curriculum delivery support the high achievement ethos at a highly successful academic school?

The findings will be reported in terms of an evaluation of the use of inter-active ICT (e.g. whiteboards, data projectors, audio-visual equipment, laptops, etc) in classrooms and what direct links the teachers are making in terms of how this technology is assisting teaching and learning and improved student outcomes.

### c. Background

#### *Interactive White Boards*

Interactive White Boards (IWBs) are becoming a noticeable feature in many primary and secondary schools in New Zealand, and it is only now that locally based empirical evidence is becoming available to identify the effect of such technology on teaching and learning.

Overseas research has gathered momentum in the last five years, while it is only very recently that academic papers have started to appear in professional publications in New Zealand, rather than anecdotal descriptive stories. A research paper “Teaching and Learning with an interactive whiteboard: a teacher's journey” by Sue Hodge and Bill Anderson, published in *Learning, Media and Technology*, 32:3, September 2007, pp 271-282, uses a self-study methodology to explore the impact of introducing interactive whiteboard technology to a primary school classroom. Several key insights, described as 'nodal moments', provide the impetus for the teacher to review her practice, reconsider her students' learning approaches and explore the relationship between the introduction of a new technology and the teaching and learning that was occurring in her classroom. In particular, she considers the nature of engagement and the ways in which the technology initially moved her away from an active pedagogy.

The principal, as the professional and instructional leader in the school, would need to evaluate several imperatives when considering the introduction of new (and expensive) technologies into the school. The view held by some people that if School A has acquired IWBs, then School B must get them is not a valid criterion for decision making. The assumption that if School A has acquired IWBs and promotes itself with its community that teachers have the latest technology, then its teachers must be better teachers and students have become better learners, does not necessarily follow. The same applies for claims that IWBs will improve teaching and learning. Owning a tool does not necessarily mean that the tool is being used effectively. On the other hand, appropriate teaching tools used appropriately should make teaching more effective and learning more engaging.

#### *Special Character*

Catholic Schools are bound by an Integration Agreement signed by their proprietor and the New Zealand government, where mutual undertakings are entered into. The “school is a Roman Catholic school in which the whole school community, through the general school programme and its Religious Instructions and observances exercises the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ. These values are expressed in the Scriptures and in the practices, worship and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, as determined from time to time by the Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese.”

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference approves the definition of “Special Character” for Catholic Integrated Schools. As part of its responsibilities, the school is required to review several dimensions relating to the special character, partly to ensure that it is fulfilling its obligations and adhering to Integration Agreement commitments. One dimension for review relates to ‘Catholic Community’ where the school evaluates the extent it is a Christian community, where gospel values are central, where faith is nourished, and where Christian celebration in the Catholic tradition is highly valued. This part of the evaluation focuses on spirituality, evangelisation, partnership, values, school culture, leadership, stewardship, worship, service and collaboration with parish.

Given that almost all Catholic secondary school principals in New Zealand are lay people; that religious institutes have withdrawn from schools; and that most chaplains are also lay people, new opportunities, responsibilities and challenges to maintain and enhance the special character abound. Catholic schools in England have gone through this development several decades ago and have developed and evolved models and practices, while Irish second level schools have been experiencing in more recent years the same situation as New Zealand schools. It was, therefore, appropriate to compare the Catholic special character maintained and enhanced in several Irish and English schools with practice in New Zealand.

#### d. Activities undertaken (methodology)

##### SCHOOLS VISITED DURING SABBATICAL

Name of school	Location
<b>Ireland</b>	
Marian College	Ballsbridge, Dublin, Ireland
Loreto College	Foxrock, Dublin, Ireland
Moyle Park College	Clondalkin, Dublin, Ireland
Our Lady's Boys Primary School	Ballintier, Dublin, Ireland
Marist College	Athlone, Ireland
<b>England, Lancashire</b>	
Stonyhurst College	Clitheroe, Lancashire, England
St Mary's Hall, Preparatory School	Clitheroe, Lancashire, England
<b>England, Birmingham</b>	
Cardinal Wiseman RC High School	Kingstanding, Birmingham, England
St Edmund Campion RC High School	Erdington, Birmingham, England
Bishop Walsh RC High School	Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, England
St Paul's Girls RC High School	Edgbaston, Birmingham, England
Archbishop Ilsley RC High School	Acocks Green, Birmingham, England
St Thomas Aquinas RC High School	Kings Norton, Birmingham, England
<b>England, Manchester</b>	
St John Vianney Special School	Stretford, Manchester, England
Loreto 6 <sup>th</sup> Form College	Hulme, Manchester, England
Loreto RC High School	Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, England
St Peter's RC High School	Gorton, Manchester, England
St Matthew's RC High School	Moston, Manchester, England
Xaverian 6 <sup>th</sup> Form College	Rusholme, Manchester, England

##### Other activities and meetings:

###### Ireland

21<sup>st</sup> Annual Secondary Schools Principals Conference

Galway, Ireland

Presentation of paper and facilitation of workshop on "Catholic Education – what's ahead?"

The plan to go to Scotland to attend the Catholic Secondary School Principals conference had to be cancelled as the conference coincided with the Irish conference.

###### England, Birmingham

Board meeting of Head teachers of the Birmingham Catholic Schools Partnership;

Meeting for ICT co-ordinators of Catholic Schools Partnership;

Meeting of in-school partnership co-ordinators of the Birmingham Catholic Partnership; and

Several informal meetings and discussions with the Partnership co-ordinator (CEO)

###### England, Manchester

MANCEP (Manchester Catholic Education Partnership) Heads of Department of Religious Education; and

Several informal meetings and discussions with the Partnership co-ordinator (CEO)



## Malta

Meeting with Minister of Education to discuss methodology of review of schools and the use of interactive whiteboards and other information and communication technologies.

### *Information gathering*

All information was gathered in partnership with the schools, appropriate personnel and teachers with particular focus on student engagement with learning where interactive whiteboards were being used and staff and student participation in special character activities. Observations were made in classrooms and around the schools. Interviews were held with key management personnel, chaplains, teachers and students.

## e. Findings

### *Interactive whiteboards*

One hundred per cent of primary schools and 98% of secondary schools in England have introduced IWBs in their classrooms. All the schools visited in England had IWBs. Second level schools in Ireland have started to invest in IWBs with two of the 4 schools visited having two IWBs each. Two primary school teachers (one in Ireland and one in England) were observed and they were very versatile in using the equipment and engaging students to interact directly with the board. A teacher at a special needs high school in Manchester was also very effective in engaging the students, who participated with confidence in the lesson, receiving immediate feedback from a self-evaluating exercise they were asked to complete.

It is not clear in the schools why one brand was preferred over another. The two brands are Promethean and Smartboard, teachers indicating that each brand has its own special features that are more suitable for a particular subject (e.g. the Arts and Humanities or the Sciences and Mathematics). Primary schools have a preference for Smartboard, similarly the Arts and Humanities in secondary schools, while the Sciences and Mathematics appear to prefer Promethean.

Teachers who have participated in timely and ongoing professional development are more likely to be using interactive whiteboards effectively. Professional development beyond how to operate the IWB is conspicuous by its absence in most schools. Most of the teachers observed in the secondary schools use the IWB to project data onto the board and talk to the information projected on the board through their laptop computer. Very few interacted with the board and fewer teachers asked students to interact directly with the board.

Where teachers are confident, reflective, innovative and give personal time to trial and error sessions, they are effective in the use of the IWB and students participate in using the tools appropriately.

Other technologies are available in classrooms and, depending on the subject, the teachers participated in the decision to acquire those technologies, such as visualisers and voting pads.

Teacher training in the use of IWB focused mainly on:

- Writing and drawing on boards in various colours and shapes
- Using an infinite number of pages left or right
- Using an infinite number of pages top to bottom
- Teaching essay writing with RM Tutor, as well as the whiteboard
- Showing students how to do an exam/how not to
- Making movies of IWB based lessons/explanations
- Making notes on video clips to produce pdf handouts consisting of stills from the movies people watched, complete with the annotations the teacher added to those stills when the movie was paused.

- Lifting copy, graphics (including moving graphics) or text, from sources like the Net, to create teaching materials by click and drag, e.g. the teacher can (re)create an article from a newspaper on the board and save it without any word processing of text
- Adding movies, including flash movies, downloaded clips from YouTube, etc. straight into the whiteboard file
- Teaching innovatively using symbols, pictures, etc. as aide-memoires
- Saving the whole lesson of writing/drawing/other items:
  - As a Smartboard file (to deliver the same lesson again, share it with colleagues)
  - As a pdf (to export what is on the board as a pdf and put it in staff intranet shared drive)
- Using content-specific materials from the board:
  - Graph paper
  - Shapes
  - Maps
  - Flash objects.

Such training sessions would invariably take one to two hours, sometimes in teacher non-contact time, e.g. lunch time or after school. Teachers comment that very little training is offered or available in or outside the school to assist them to learn how to integrate the IWB as a pedagogical tool into the lesson or how to plan or adapt lessons integrating IWB features.

### *Special Character*

All schools have a salaried full time chaplain with co-responsibility with a member from the senior management team for the Catholic life of the school in the schools visited in England. Lay chaplains are in 15 out of the 17 high schools or 6<sup>th</sup> Form colleges. Where there is a religious (Jesuit priest or Marist Brother), this person is supported by a part-time lay chaplain. In Ireland the employment of chaplains has become contentious as the Department of Education will only pay the salary of chaplains employed in second level community (state-owned) schools. Currently the Church or religious institute owned schools have to either use their operational grant or locally raised funds.

The chaplain and senior management are very committed to and run the induction programme for new teachers and students to the school, which mainly focuses on the charism and ethos of the particular school (e.g. Marist, Ignatian, etc.) in most schools. This one-day programme is identified as critical to the maintenance and enhancement of the Catholic character. In some schools, this is extended at appropriate times with further sessions to increase the awareness and understanding of Catholic rituals (Mass, Holy Communion, etc.) and liturgical events (e.g. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.). Contribution by teachers to the Catholic life is also an integral part of performance management.

In England, diocesan priests are readily available to support the liturgical life of the school. Several of these priests play an active part on the chaplaincy team. Liturgical celebrations vary from school to school, but mainly these focus on regular school Masses (mostly once a week at lunch time), with voluntary student attendance. Whole school Masses are also celebrated on holy days of obligation (e.g. All Saints Day). While all schools have an inaugural Mass (not necessarily for all students), most celebrate thanksgiving Masses to mark the end of the year for senior students at the different levels. Several schools run programmes for the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion). The Catholic tradition of pilgrimage (e.g. travelling together to holy sites such as Lourdes as a sign of the student's faith and commitment) is encouraged in the English schools. Pilgrimage trips for senior students were an annual event in these schools.

Students at each year level participate in spiritual retreats, and outreach programmes and charitable work are strong features of most schools. Depending on the socio-economic status of a particular school, these take the form of donations of books, uniforms, breakfast; hands-on assistance in old people's homes; free lunches for senior citizens; and voluntary service in England or overseas (CAFOD). Groups of students participate enthusiastically in chaplaincy teams, helping to make Catholic life events appealing to their peers.

Where there is a vibrant chaplaincy team, regular private (in the chapel) and public (in classrooms) prayer is highly visible. Two schools have published a book with prayers composed by their students. Students and form classes are encouraged to pray for individuals and these prayers are noted on a card that is passed on to them.

Catholic life notices and events are mainly recorded in school newsletters and posted on websites. Some chaplaincy teams and Religious Departments have initiated their own newsletter celebrating and promoting events, such as retreats, meditation, outreach activities, traidcraft, peace gardens, religious drama, banner making, etc.

A strong feature in several schools is a concern for social justice, and chaplains highlight contemporary world-wide issues (e.g. Myanmar, fair trade, child labour), challenging the students to take a stand. One school that caters for students from affluent families is noted for inviting people from academia, industry or politics to debate moral, philosophical and ethical issues.

## **f. Implications**

### *Interactive whiteboards*

E-learning and virtual learning environments are becoming more and more an integral part of the everyday pedagogy in schools. Information and communication technologies are conspicuous by their exponential development. One technology arrives on the market and is very quickly superseded or complemented by a host of other technologies. It is critical that schools approach new technologies with informed awareness of their capability to transform, enhance or inhibit learning. There needs to be a participatory professional discussion among staff for the introduction, development and sustainability of such new technologies (as opposed to the acquisition of the new technology for its sake). While there may still be a place for Luddites, e-literacy is a skill that teachers will find very useful for the New Zealand curriculum as this provides opportunities for co-construction of knowledge and reciprocal teacher-student learning.

### *Special Character*

With the withdrawal of religious institutes from schools and fewer diocesan clergy, it is clear that lay people have taken up the crucial commitment to maintain and enhance the Catholic special character of schools. The roles of chaplain, director of religious studies, principal, and deputy principal (with the responsibility to assist in planning and organising courses and programmes at the school to ensure that they reflect the special character of the school) are pivotal. Opportunities for ongoing spiritual growth and professional development for these people would be one of the top priorities as they witness for and support the rest of the staff and students to answer the call to Catholic life.

## **g. Conclusions**

### *Interactive whiteboards*

IWBs are a powerful and exciting tool to be added to the list of strategies effective teachers use to engage students in learning. IWBs may initially increase teacher work load when they are being integrated into unit and lesson planning. If IWBs are to be used successfully in classrooms, then ongoing professional development is required as teachers learn new strategies and embed these into their planning and delivery of effective lessons. Without time and ongoing development, the IWB may become a very expensive and under-utilised piece of technology used mainly as a sophisticated data projector. IWBs are another tool and the overuse of this technology could replace “death by power point” by “death by IWB”. The decision to introduce IWBs into classrooms need to be an integral and well-thought out part of the school’s ICT strategic plan and such a strategic decision should be made after meaningful and professional considerations of all educational priorities.

### *Special Character*

The maintenance and enhancement of the special character of Catholic integrated schools is very much tied up with the expression and witnessing of Catholic life. The Catholic special character review and development document, with its examples of indicators, provides a well-established blue print for self-review. Observations of Catholic life in a number of schools in Ireland and England reveal more similarities than differences with life in New Zealand schools. Catholic life is maintained and enhanced by the whole school community. It is critically essential that staff are totally committed to the charisma and ethos of the school, through their witnessing and 'living the Catholic life'.

### **h. References (where applicable)**

#### *Interactive whiteboards*

[www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk) British Educational Communications Technology Agency - is the UK Government's key partner in the strategic development and delivery of its information and communications technology (ICT) and e-learning strategy. Becta leads the national drive to inspire and lead the effective and innovative use of technology throughout learning. It is Becta's ambition to create a more exciting, rewarding and successful experience for learners of all ages and abilities, enabling them to achieve their potential. There are several resources available here providing advice and guides how to "get the most from your interactive whiteboard" for secondary and primary teachers.

For research into the use of IWBs in classrooms visit: [www.keele.ac.uk](http://www.keele.ac.uk) and [www.mmu.ac.uk](http://www.mmu.ac.uk) as two of the leading universities undertaking graduate research in ICT and pedagogy.

#### *Special character*

[www.cesew.org.uk](http://www.cesew.org.uk)

[www.sces.uk.com](http://www.sces.uk.com)

[www.catholicbishops.ie/education](http://www.catholicbishops.ie/education)

[www.nzceo.catholic.org.nz](http://www.nzceo.catholic.org.nz)

These sites link up to the Catholic Education services in England, Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand.

## Exploring the Key Competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) in a Catholic Primary School Setting.

Cushla O'Connor, Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser 2008, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch.

In 1996 the Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand was published. This curriculum statement had been commissioned by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference in response to the wide reaching curriculum change that had taken place in New Zealand schools in the mid 1990's. The resulting Religious Education Curriculum took the principles and format of the 1992 New Zealand Curriculum Framework into account and in the vision statement the Archbishop of Wellington at the time, Cardinal Thomas Williams, stated that:

*it is truly contemporary in its use of best current educational practice, and in its integration with the other essential learning areas of the curriculum...and is designed for the children in the Catholic Primary schools of Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1990's and beyond.*<sup>15</sup>

In 2007 a revision of the New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in Years 1-13 was mandated. This followed a stocktake period of review during 2000-2002 which resulted in the publication of the Curriculum Stocktake Report (2002) and the circulation of a draft document in 2006. A comprehensive consultation process followed.

The New Zealand Curriculum (2007) is a response to the spiralling social change that has occurred since the mid 1990's. New Zealand's population is becoming increasingly diverse, technologies more sophisticated and the demands on those in the workplace more complex. Consequently school curriculum content and delivery practices need to change to reflect and meet the needs of diverse learners and the world in which they will be functioning.

The New Zealand Curriculum (2007) provides a:

*framework rather than a detailed plan. This means that while every school curriculum must be clearly aligned with the intent of this document, schools have considerable flexibility when determining the detail.... schools are required to base their curriculum on the principles of the New Zealand Curriculum, to encourage and model the values and to develop the key competencies at all levels.*<sup>16</sup>

Schools in New Zealand are on a curriculum design and review pathway, some further along than others. Communities are personalising their school's curriculum to meet the particular needs, interests and talents of their students so as to ensure that the education provided is rich and balanced, embraces the intent of the national framework and reflects the nature of their community.

With this in mind, as the Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser with the Catholic Education Office in Christchurch, I facilitated a series of cluster meetings to look at the structure and intent of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) from a Catholic perspective.

Clusters were made up of groups of schools. Principals and teaching staff attended and contributed ideas. The cluster meetings were supported by in-school staff meetings (where requested) and one on one sessions with Principals and Directors of Religious Studies (DRS) in selected schools. The term meetings with DRSs also had a curriculum focus. The Education Office team facilitated one-day seminar sessions for Middle Leaders and Principals alike. Throughout all of these sessions the vision, principles and values of the document were discussed and explored through a Catholic lens (Appendix 1 and key recommendations).

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<sup>15</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (p.2)

<sup>16</sup> The New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in years 1-13 (p.37)

The purpose of this article is to focus specifically on the key competencies, and how in the context of the broader Catholic school community, and through the delivery of the Religious Education curriculum, they can be embedded in the culture of each school.

Schools can choose to organise their curriculum around either the values, key competencies or the learning areas (or a combination of all three). Alternatively they can decide to deliver their curriculum around central themes, integrating values, key competencies, knowledge and skills across a number of learning areas - it is up to them.<sup>17</sup> Whichever approach is used it is the key competencies that are central to transforming the way that curriculum is delivered.

Dr Rose Hipkins (Chief Researcher, NZCER)<sup>18</sup> refers to the key competencies as the glue that will ensure that the “front end” of the curriculum (the potentially transformative package of the vision, principles and values) and the “back end” (the revised package consisting of the 8 levels, 8 learning areas, 8 sets of Achievements) will meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners in our schools. The five key competencies are:

- Thinking
- Using language, symbols and texts
- Managing self
- Relating to others and
- Participating and contributing.

The key competencies are an adaptation of the ideas promoted in an Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) project which sought to define the competencies everyone will need in order to lead a fulfilling life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. They support those competencies already being delivered within the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* and are aligned with those of the draft tertiary curriculum. The key competencies are crucial to learning in every curriculum area and as Doig (2007) states:

*They (the key competencies) have real power to add value to education.*<sup>19</sup>

Doig (2007) also suggests that each school needs to take time to explore how these five key competencies are going to be developed within the culture of their community.

Furthermore, Reid (2006) discusses a range of curriculum models through which the key competencies can be strengthened. He defines a capabilities-based curriculum model as:

*the idea of teaching one part, knowledge, in order to develop the second part, key competencies... there is a dynamic interaction between the two. The starting point will be knowledge content, a key concept or idea, but the challenge is how one or more competencies can be developed through that concept. That is, knowledge content is important in its own right and is a vehicle through which competencies are developed.*<sup>20</sup>

In line with Hipkins, Doig and Reid, I wanted teachers to see how the key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) could be planned for in the teaching of Religious Education, and developed in the context of a Catholic community.

As stated earlier, schools in the diocese were clustered and a meeting facilitated for each cluster. These meetings were seen as a possible starting point for schools beginning their curriculum design and review process. The findings could also be used as a vehicle for continued ongoing professional dialogue and reflection in those schools that were well down the track. Doig (2007) says that the starting point for each

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<sup>17</sup> The New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in years 1-13 (p.37)

<sup>18</sup> From a presentation by Dr Rose Hipkins, Chief Researcher NZCER held at the University of Canterbury, College of Education, September 2008, “Giving Effect to NZC: some personal reflections on assessment implications.”

<sup>19</sup> Doig, C. (2007) Curriculum: a catalyst for change – challenges for the future. set 3, (p.24-25)

<sup>20</sup> Reid, A. (2006) Key Competencies: A new way forward or more of the same? (pp.11-12)

school when designing a curriculum will be different depending on the journeys already taken. She states that you do not need to reinvent what you already have, if it is working well.<sup>21</sup>

The Cluster meetings followed this format.

1. An overview of the vision, the principles and the values of the revised curriculum was provided from a Catholic perspective. Discussion followed and ideas were shared from the different schools.
2. Each key competency was 'unpacked'. (Appendix 2) Research findings from the 'early adopter' schools (Kick Start, NZCER, 2007)<sup>22</sup> proved that teachers needed to fully understand the intent of each key competency, in order for these to become embedded into the classroom curriculum. This resource was also used to explain the nature of each key competency.
3. Discussions were held around the ideal qualities of a graduate student from a Catholic primary school.
4. Following this, participants were split into groups made up of members from different schools and teaching levels where possible. They were provided with a key competency to focus on. Each group was asked to look at the key indicators of that competency and focus on how it could be developed from Year 1-8 in a Catholic School setting, and within the Religious Education curriculum. (see Appendix 3)

Further to this, a range of examples of how the key competencies could be strengthened within the context of the Religious Education curriculum were developed in collaboration with Natalie Murphy rsm, the Primary Religious Education Adviser from Palmerston North. These examples provide indicators from the content of a specific Religious Education strand. Teachers can use these in the classroom to engage students in writing a more detailed and measurable rubric. Together, the teacher and the students will decide on the language and actions that will encapsulate the progression from a novice learner displaying a particular key competency, through to that of a proficient learner. This rubric can then be used as an intentional teaching tool for development of that key competency. (Appendix 4)

It needs to be stressed here that the key competencies are not separate or stand alone. They will be interwoven into both the explicit and implicit curriculum of each learning area. Schools might decide to write overarching intentional teaching rubrics to ensure that specific competency skills are taught from Year 1-8.<sup>23</sup> The New Zealand Curriculum (2007) states that schools will need to show how the competencies are specifically developed in conjunction with how they are organising their curriculum (around either values, key competencies, learning areas or central themes).<sup>24</sup> Even if generic key competency indicators are used school-wide, I believe that within each curriculum area specific indicators for use in a classroom curriculum need to be formulated. This will ensure that nothing is left to chance and that the development of these competences is not reduced to 'tick lists' at the end of a unit.

### **Findings from the Cluster meetings**

In a Catholic school I believe that the key competencies of Thinking, Using Language, Symbols and Texts, Managing Self, Relating to Others and Participating and Contributing will all be strongly promoted as part of the Special Character. Existing programmes such as those provided by Caritas, St Vincent de Paul youth groups and Mission Month are just three examples of authentic learning opportunities in which schools can break open the key competencies as part of their commitment to Catholic education in New Zealand. The

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<sup>21</sup> Doig, C. (2007) Curriculum: a catalyst for change – challenges for the future. set 3, (p.24-25)

<sup>22</sup> Hipkins, Roberts and Bolstard. (2007) Kick Starts, Key Competencies the journey begins

<sup>23</sup> Doig, C. (2007, Curriculum: a catalyst for change – challenges for the future. set 3, (p.24-25)

<sup>24</sup> Hipkins, Roberts and Bolstard (2007) Kick Start Key Competencies the journey begins, Pamphlet 1, The nature of key competencies (p.1)

preparation and celebration of class liturgies is another authentic context in which all the key competencies can be developed. (Appendix 5)

The key competency that I believe lends itself best to being interwoven into the Primary Religious Education Curriculum is that of Understanding Language, Symbols and Texts (ULST).

Research findings from the 'early adopter' schools showed that this was the key competency that was the least easily understood by teachers and the one that would require the most "unpacking" by schools.<sup>25</sup> I do not believe that this will be the case in a Catholic school because Catholicism is essentially a religion of ritual signs and symbols through which faithful followers encounter the realm of the divine and the spiritual.

There are many ways in which to consider world religions. One way is to do so in terms of the following nine dimensions: sacred texts, central beliefs, sacred stories, important symbols, sacred rituals, moral and ethical teachings, social structure, religious experience and religious history. The skills, knowledge, attitudes and values relating to the key competency of Understanding Language, Symbols and Texts can be taught to students through four of these nine dimensions; sacred rituals, important symbols, sacred texts and sacred stories.<sup>26</sup>

### **Sacred Rituals**

Sacred rituals are the various religious rites, ceremonies, prayers and practices through which a religion's members worship and celebrate. In the Catholic faith we have seven ritual signs which we call the Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Marriage, Holy Orders, Penance and Anointing of the Sick are examples of sacred ritual. By definition a sacrament is "a visible sign, instituted by Christ, to give grace."<sup>27</sup> Doherty (2008) states:

*The seven sacraments of the Catholic Church use the physical world with purpose. Water, oil, human touch, incense, bread and wine are all employed in touching the sacred. We cannot see God, but we can see fire, we can hear words, we can touch. We can feel oil and water, smell incense. The celebration of the sacraments recognises the deep need we all have for concrete ritual as a way of experiencing the mystery of a gracious and tender God.*<sup>28</sup>

The experiences of learning about and receiving the sacraments in a Catholic community is a powerful way of teaching the key competency of ULST.

### **Important Symbols**

A religion's sacred symbols are the objects, places and, sometimes people, that have a special meaning and are considered holy by the religion's members. In addition to the seven Sacraments in the Catholic faith there are a countless number of sacramentals, devotional rituals and sacred objects that are similar to Sacraments, but do not offer the same divine assurances of grace.<sup>29</sup> These sacramentals include such things as: holy water, the ashes distributed on Ash Wednesday, the crucifix, the palms distributed on Palm Sunday, a pair of rosary beads, a statue of Jesus, Mary or a saint, and the stations of the cross etc. Again through experiencing the use of and learning about these important symbols used in Catholicism, the key competency of ULST is promoted.

### **Sacred Texts**

The sacred texts of a religion are its holy writings. Major world religions have holy books. Indigenous religions which pass on their traditional knowledge and wisdom orally, regard carvings and other works of

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<sup>25</sup> Hipkins, Roberts and Bolstard. (2007) Kick Starts, Key Competencies the journey begins

<sup>26</sup> Religious Education Programme for Catholic Secondary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand: Religions of the World (2006) (p.4)

<sup>27</sup> Doherty, T. (2008) So You're Working for the Catholic Church. (p.26)

<sup>28</sup> Doherty, T. (2008) So You're Working for the Catholic Church. (p.27)

<sup>29</sup> McBrien, R. P. (1995) Inside Catholicism Rituals and Symbols Revealed (p.9-13)



art as sacred texts. In all dimensions of a Catholic community the Bible is central because it contains the truth of God's revelation.

*The inspiration of the Bible has been believed from the beginning and, beyond that, has been the subject of an official definition by the Church...One cannot be true to the Catholic and Christian faith without affirming at the same time the inspired, and therefore finally normative and authoritative, character of the Bible.*<sup>30</sup>

Learning to read, listen reflectively, interpret and record from the Bible is an excellent forum for developing the skills pertinent to ULST.

### **Sacred Stories**

A religion's sacred stories are told and retold by its members because they explain important aspects of the religion's identity and give meaning to people's lives. Listening to and reflecting on the many stories associated with the Catholic tradition is also important for our students. Bible stories, stories of saints, heroes and martyrs, and ancient traditions nourish Catholic belief and provide enormously powerful images through which the key competency ULST can be taught.

### **Key Recommendations**

1. In the design and review process school leaders are encouraged to consult widely. When looking at the school's existing vision it is beneficial to critique what you already have. To do this consider what the graduate profile of your students will be from the perspective of as many of the school's stakeholders as possible; the Bishop, the Parish Priest, the Catholic Education Office Review team, parents, teachers, the Board of Trustees and of course the students themselves. Ask the question "Does our existing vision statement match with our collective graduate profile?"
2. Schools then need to look at how they will embody the principles of the New Zealand curriculum in the design and review process given that these need to:  
*put students at the centre of teaching and learning... underpin all school decision making...and are particularly relevant to the process of planning, prioritising and review.*<sup>31</sup>
3. The principles of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) are the foundation upon which students' learning experiences will be built. A suggested way of articulating these in a Catholic school setting is to use the principles of the current Religious Education Curriculum statement (1996). These can then be linked to the eight principles of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007). The Catholic Special Character Review and Development (2007) document could be used as another point of reference.
4. The New Zealand Curriculum (2007) asks that communities identify their core values. Catholic schools should be turning to the Gospel first and foremost when prioritising a set of values that will form the basis of their values education plan. The theological virtues of faith, hope and love are an excellent starting point. The charism of the school provides another opportunity which can be investigated when deciding on the values that will be taught and modelled in a particular school. Seeking spiritual direction from the Parish Priest is also an important step to take when formulating your school's core values.
5. It is through its Religious Education programme that a school provides opportunities for students to learn what Catholics believe; how they celebrate, live and pray. Catholic schools have an obligation to provide an education promoting Catholic Character in all dimensions of school life. When writing essence statements and planning units of work for each of the eight other learning areas in

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<sup>30</sup> McBrien, R. P. (1981) Catholicism (p. 65)

<sup>31</sup> The New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in years 1-13 (p.9)

a Catholic school, (English, The Arts, Health and Physical Education, Learning Languages, Mathematics and Statistics, Science, Social Sciences and Technology) schools must clearly articulate how they are going to meet their obligation to promote Catholic Character.<sup>32</sup>

6. The embedding of key competencies into a classroom curriculum is strongly dependent upon the effective pedagogy of the classroom teacher. Schools will need to continue to commit time, resources and funding to the professional development of all teaching staff. The seven teacher actions that promote student learning, identified on pages 34 and 35 of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007), draw strongly on the research carried out by Adrienne Alton-Lee. She concluded that:

*Quality teaching is identified as a key influence on high quality outcomes for diverse students. The evidence reveals that up to 59% of variance in student performance is attributable to differences between teachers and classes, while up to almost 21%, but generally less, is attributable to school level variables.*<sup>33</sup>

7. Teachers need to be supported and encouraged to participate in professional development that is based on Catholic traditions and beliefs. This will ensure that the Catholic identity of the school is maintained and indeed continually strengthened. (Guerra, 2006)<sup>34</sup> School managers need to look at ways of promoting the importance of their staff engaging in study, such as the Diploma in Religious Studies.
8. I recommend that prior to designing or reviewing a Catholic school curriculum, a series of staff meetings be held so that every teacher has an understanding of the philosophy and character of Catholic Schools in New Zealand. They will then be better placed to continually monitor and critique the developing or reviewed school curriculum, to ensure it explicitly reflects a Catholic perspective.
9. Within the context of the Primary Religious Education curriculum teachers need to be showing how, through the delivery of the knowledge content, they are developing all five of the competencies.

In conclusion, Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand assist in fulfilling the teaching mission of the Church by developing the person as a whole. The Catholic Character of the school provides a faith environment for children to experience Catholic life.<sup>35</sup> Religious Education is an integral part of the Special Character of Catholic schools. Catholic schools implementing the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) need to view its structure and intent through a Catholic lens. The Religious Education Curriculum statement reflects the vision of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) and is a powerful lens through which schools can design a truly Catholic curriculum. In doing so they will ensure that the key competencies are fully embedded in everything that happens, adding real value to life long learning of those students who are privileged to be receiving a Catholic education.

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Aligning the New Zealand Curriculum into a Catholic Setting.

Appendix 2: Unpacking the Key Competencies for use in Religious Education strand planning.

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<sup>32</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (p.8)

<sup>33</sup> Alton-Lee, A. (2003) *Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis*, Ministry of Education. Wellington. Executive Summary (v-x)

<sup>34</sup> In Miller, M. (2006) *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*.

<sup>35</sup> Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (p.6)

- Appendix 3: Contributions from cluster meetings held in the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch on the Key Competencies in Religious Education.
- Appendix 4: Using the Primary Religious Education Curriculum as an avenue for developing Key Competencies.
- Appendix 5: Developing the Key Competencies through the preparation of a class liturgy.

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<b>Appendix 1: Aligning the New Zealand Curriculum into a Primary Catholic School setting.</b>	
<b>New Zealand Curriculum (2007)</b>	<b>A Catholic School Curriculum</b>
<b>Vision – what we want for our young people</b>	<b>Vision</b>
Confident, connected, actively involved life long learners.	Confident, connected, actively involved life long learners who <b>befriend and follow Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. (RE Curriculum, p3)</b>
<b>The Principles p.9</b>	<b>Linking the Principles of the RE curriculum to those of the NZC. p11</b>
<p><b>High Expectations</b> The curriculum supports and empowers all students to learn and achieve personal excellence, regardless of their individual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Treaty of Waitangi</b> The curriculum acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand. All students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga.</p> <p><b>Cultural Diversity</b> The curriculum reflects New Zealand’s cultural diversity and values the histories and traditions of all its people.</p> <p><b>Inclusion</b> The curriculum is non-sexist, non-racist, and non-discriminatory; it ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities, and talents are recognized and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed.</p>	<p><b>High Expectations</b> The RE curriculum, being the primary Essential Learning Area of the Catholic School Curriculum, supports and empowers all students to learn and achieve personal excellence, regardless of their individual circumstances. It provides objectives and opportunities for children to experience, learn and grow in faith and awareness of Catholic morality, taking into account their ability, background and family situation.</p> <p><b>Treaty of Waitangi</b> The RE curriculum acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, valuing and reflecting the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand. It acknowledges the Treaty as a <i>covenant</i> and a taonga tapu (sacred treasure). Students will acquire knowledge of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga within the context of the curriculum.</p> <p><b>Cultural Diversity</b> The RE curriculum values and reflects New Zealand’s multi-cultural nature and the histories and traditions of its entire people. It initiates children into the history, stories, traditions, practices and beliefs of the Catholic faith, as members of the Catholic Church.</p> <p><b>Inclusion</b> The RE curriculum is an integral part of the Catholic Character of the school, recognizing the special place and purpose that Religious Education has in the whole Catholic School Curriculum. It is non-sexist, non-racist, and non-discriminatory; it ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities, and talents are recognized and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed. It provides flexibility which will enable schools to adapt material to fit the context and needs of their students</p>

**Learning to learn**

The curriculum encourages all students to reflect on their own learning processes and to learn how to learn

**Community Engagement**

The curriculum has meaning for students, connects with their wider lives, and engages the support of their families whānau, and communities

**Coherence**

The curriculum offers all students a broad education that makes links within and across learning areas, provides for coherent transitions, and opens up pathways to further learning.

**Future Focus**

The curriculum encourages students to look to the future by exploring such significant future focused issues as sustainability, citizenship, enterprise and globalisation.

**Learning to learn**

The RE curriculum encourages all students to reflect on their own learning processes and to learn how to learn. It establishes directions for teaching, learning and assessment to meet the needs of all students.

**Community Engagement**

The RE curriculum has meaning for students, connects with their wider lives, and engages the support of their families, whānau, parishes and wider communities. It encourages children to be committed to the truth of the Gospel, to sharing it and to living the gospel values in their communities.

**Coherence**

The RE curriculum is cyclical in its framework, indicating specific areas to be covered in each year of schooling. It offers all students a broad education that makes links within and across learning areas, provides for coherent transitions, and opens up pathways to further learning.

**Future Focus**

The RE curriculum encourages students to look to the future by exploring such significant future focused issues as sustainability, citizenship, enterprise and globalisation. The RE curriculum develops the children's awareness of social justice issues in the light of Catholic social teaching. It promotes an attitude of respect and stewardship for the earth.

New Zealand Curriculum	A Catholic School Curriculum
<p><b>The Values</b> (p.10, The New Zealand Curriculum) (to be encouraged, modelled and explored)</p>	<p><b>Catholic Values – Jesus Christ is the foundation of the Catholic school and from him the school’s vision and values are derived.</b><sup>36</sup></p>
<p>Students will be encouraged to value:</p> <p><b>Excellence</b>, by aiming high and persevering in the face of difficulties;</p> <p><b>Innovation, inquiry, and curiosity</b>, by thinking critically; creatively, and reflectively.</p> <p><b>Diversity</b>, as found in our different cultures, languages and heritages;</p> <p><b>Equity</b>, through fairness and social justice;</p> <p><b>Community and Participation</b> for the common good;</p> <p><b>Ecological sustainability</b>, which includes care for the environment;</p> <p><b>Integrity</b>, which involves being honest, responsible, and accountable and acting ethically; and</p> <p><b>Respect</b>, for themselves, others and human rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a Catholic school the collective values of the institution will be the values of Jesus Christ – often called gospel values.</li> <li>• In a Catholic school the values of <i>The New Zealand Curriculum</i> will always be viewed through a Catholic “lens” and presented from a Catholic perspective.</li> <li>• A Catholic School will emphasize the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love. <i>“And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.”</i> (1 Corinthians 13:13)</li> <li>• Many human virtues – habits that support moral behaviour – spring from the theological virtues . . . sense of duty, self discipline, friendship, honesty, persistence, courage etc</li> <li>• As they grow in faith, hope and love the Fruits of the Holy Spirit become evident in people’s lives...love, goodness, patience, peace, kindness. Joy, self-control, gentleness, faithfulness (Galatians 5:22-23)</li> <li>• The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)</li> <li>• The Works of Mercy (Matthew 25:31-46)</li> <li>• A school’s charism</li> </ul>

<sup>36</sup> From a presentation made by Charles Shaw, Secondary Religious Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch

New Zealand Curriculum	A Catholic School Curriculum
<p><b>Effective Pedagogy - Engaging Students in learning</b></p>	<p><b>Effective Pedagogy - Engaging Students in learning</b>  <i>Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom (new things as well as old.</i>  <b>(Matthew 13:51-52)<sup>37</sup></b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Creating a supportive learning environment</b></li>   <li>• <b>Encouraging reflective thought and action</b></li>   <li>• <b>Enhancing the relevance of new learning</b></li>   <li>• <b>Facilitating shared learning</b></li>   <li>• <b>Making connections to prior learning and experience</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Suppose a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays; will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go in search of the stray? In truth I tell you, if he finds it, it gives him more joy than do the ninety-nine that did not stray at all. (Matthew 18:12-13)</i></li>   <li>• <i>As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)</i></li>   <li>• <i>“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. Everyone who asks receives; everyone who searches finds; everyone who knocks will have the door opened.” (Matthew 7:7-8)</i></li>   <li>• <i>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12)</i></li>   <li>• <i>So give encouragement to each other, and keep strengthening one another as you do already. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)</i></li>   <li>• <i>By the grace of God which was given to me, I laid the foundations like a trained master-builder, and someone else is building on them. Now each must be careful how he does the building. (1 Corinthians 3:10)</i></li> </ul>

<sup>37</sup> From a presentation made by Charles Shaw, Secondary Religious Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch



- **Providing sufficient opportunities to learn**

- *Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it.  
He would not speak to them except in parables.  
(Mark 4:33-34)*

- *Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear?  
And do you not remember? (Mark 8:18)*

*Every teacher who aspires to engage students more deeply in learning is called to be a tireless optimist who courageously introduces new skills and strategies while continuing to draw wisely upon the tried and the true.<sup>38</sup>  
(Charles Shaw)*

Created by Cushla O'Connor, Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser, August 2008

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<sup>38</sup> From a presentation made by Charles Shaw, Secondary Religious Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch

## Appendix 2: Unpacking the Key Competencies for use in Religious Education strand planning.

How can we develop the KEY COMPETENCIES using the \_\_\_\_\_strand?

### THINKING –

- increase understanding
- construct knowledge
- reflect on their learning
- ask questions
- make decisions
- solve problems
- draw on personal experiences and intuition
- challenge assumptions
- shape actions
- create knowledge

### USE LANGUAGE, SYMBOLS AND TEXTS –

- to make meaning of codes in which knowledge is expressed
- to use language and symbols to communicate and to produce written, oral/aural and visual texts of all kinds
- to interpret ideas, images, movement, metaphor in different contexts
- confidently uses ICT to access and provide information and to communicate with others

### MANAGING SELF –

- has a “can-do” attitude and is enterprising, resourceful, reliable, resilient
- to establish personal goals, make plans, manage projects, set high standards
- knows how to meet challenges
- knows when to lead and when to follow
- knows when and how to act independently
- knows and uses strategies to self assess

### RELATING TO OTHERS –

- interacts effectively with a diverse range of people in different contexts
- listens actively
- recognizes different points of view and negotiates and shares ideas
- open to new learning and can take different roles in different situations
- aware of how words and actions affect others
- knows when to compete and when to cooperate
- can work together and come up with new approaches, new ideas, and new ways of thinking

### PARTICIPATING AND CONTRIBUTING

- being actively involved in communities including family, whānau and school
  - participate for the purpose of learning, work, celebration or recreation
  - participate locally, nationally, globally
  - contribute as a group member, make connections with others, and create opportunities for others in the group
  - develop a sense of belonging and confidence
  - understand the importance of balancing rights, roles and responsibilities
  - contributes to the quality and sustainability of social, cultural, physical and economic environment
- The New Zealand Curriculum pp12-13

Prepared from the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) by Anne Kennedy Primary School Consultant, Diocese of Dunedin

**Appendix 3: Contributions from cluster meetings held in the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch on the Key Competencies in Religious Education**

	<b>LOOKS LIKE</b>	<b>SOUNDS LIKE</b>	<b>FEELS LIKE</b>
<b>USING LANGUAGE, SYMBOLS AND TEXTS</b>	<p>Images</p> <p>Liturgical Dance</p> <p>Drama using strands and Bible stories</p> <p>The Bible being read and used for research</p> <p>Bible Picture Books</p> <p>Posters of Religious Themes Liturgical Colours</p> <p>Power Points of prayer, liturgies</p> <p>Prayer</p> <p>Creative prayer – freeze frames of a piece of Scripture</p> <p>Making the Sign of the Cross</p> <p>The Trinity (and symbols of it)</p> <p>The Holy Spirit ( signs and symbols of)</p> <p>Sacred Texts (how to read these)</p> <p>Rosary Beads being used</p> <p>Symbols to tell a story (e.g. The Jesse Tree</p> <p>The Crucifix</p> <p>Classroom environments reflecting the Special Character</p> <p>Signs on buildings</p> <p>Altar layout</p> <p>Lighting the candle</p> <p>Buddy prayers and reading of Scripture</p> <p>Stations of the Cross</p> <p>Ritual and Symbols of the Mass</p> <p>Explicit Catholic ‘language and terms’ being used and what it means</p> <p>ICT for processing data and presenting work</p>	<p>The Sign of the Cross</p> <p>Hymns</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Prayer – People praying</p> <p>The Sign of the Cross</p> <p>Questions e.g. What does this symbol mean?</p> <p>Psalms</p> <p>Liturgy</p> <p>Mass</p> <p>Children’s voices</p> <p>Bible stories</p> <p>Speaking the Word clearly</p> <p>Listening to Scripture/prayers attentively</p> <p>Choral language</p> <p>Reverence</p> <p>Silence</p> <p>Co-operative</p> <p>Correct responses to the Mass rituals, including sung responses prayers</p>	<p>Words and Actions</p> <p>Relating to Others</p> <p>Co operating</p> <p>Looking after members of our community</p> <p>Confidence to participate</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Respectful</p> <p>Peace</p> <p>Warmth</p> <p>Reverence</p> <p>Nurturing</p> <p>Supportive</p> <p>Comfortable</p> <p>Inclusive</p> <p>Elevated mood</p> <p>Spiritual</p> <p>Communal</p> <p>Supportive</p> <p>Joyous</p> <p>Fulfilled</p> <p>Creative</p> <p>Acknowledged</p> <p>Being able to interpret and have emotional responses to Bible stories</p> <p>Responding to liturgical dance</p> <p>Using liturgical dance to interpret the meaning in songs and Scripture</p>

**Appendix 3: Contributions from cluster meetings held in the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch on the Key Competencies in Religious Education**

	<b>LOOKS LIKE</b>	<b>SOUNDS LIKE</b>	<b>FEELS LIKE</b>
<b>PARTICIPATING AND CONTRIBUTING</b>	Participating in Mass Liturgies Social Justice programmes (Caritas) Involvement in the Young Vinnies Celebrations of our faith Organising prayers Leading Liturgies Music at Mass Family/Community/Parish celebrations Giving service Involvement in the Church and the wider community Kapa Haka, Sports, Councils, Choir Altar Serving Year 8 leaders Welcoming, kind actions, opportunities	Music Singing Reading Using Responses at Mass Virtues ‘Walking the talk’ Interpersonal Intrapersonal Sharing experiences of the Spirit working in them Leading Prayer Children as teachers – sharing, being experts Kind words/Prayers Hymns/Songs of Praise Verbalising reflective thinking	Welcoming Inclusive Friendly environment Moved by the Spirit Not alone... a community Family Valued Having Confidence Comfortable Safe Peaceful Ownership Reaching out Hands-on learning through actions

Compiled by Cushla O’Connor, Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser, August 2008

**Appendix 3: Contributions from cluster meetings held in the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch on the Key Competencies in Religious Education**

	<b>LOOKS LIKE</b>	<b>SOUNDS LIKE</b>	<b>FEELS LIKE</b>
<b>MANAGING SELF</b>	<p>Self assessing                      Goal setting with gospel values in mind                      Resourcefulness like Jesus and his disciples                      Fully involved in a community                      Reliable                      Independent                      High standards of behaviour.                      Following the teachings of Jesus in actions.                      Managing self to live like Jesus showed everyday.                      Helping those in need                      Setting up prayer tables                      Managing RE books                      Being responsible for prayer bags                      Showing respect                      Sharing                      Accepting others                      Making good choices                      Responses at Mass                      Being organised for prayers                      Being attentive at prayer time                      Reflecting on the Word of God</p>	<p>Being a leader like Jesus                      ‘What would Jesus do’                      Expressing your beliefs... your convictions                      Informed                      Decisions                      Support                      Living with God’s grace I can do this/achieve this goal                      Can I show that the Spirit lives in me by helping you with that?                      Speaking nicely to each other                      Is this something that Jesus would do ... new thinking hat!                      Do you want to join in with us?                      I will do it                      I’ve done it.                      I can do it</p>	<p>Empowering                      Being prepared                      Community                      Whānau                      Confident in self because of the love of God.                      Reflective                      Positive                      Successful, confident students                      Relating to others                      Values                      Peaceful                      Happy                      Organised</p>

**Appendix 3: Contributions from cluster meetings held in the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch on the Key Competencies in Religious Education**

	<b>LOOKS LIKE</b>	<b>SOUNDS LIKE</b>	<b>FEELS LIKE</b>
<b>THINKING</b>	<p>Using 'Thinking tools' when delivering RE</p> <p>Diagrams</p> <p>Discussions</p> <p>How would Jesus and apostles handle this situation?</p> <p>Adapting to various situations...thinking with empathy</p> <p>Lots of practice to learn and use skills</p> <p>Reflective thinking</p> <p>Actively involved</p> <p>Thinking justly</p> <p>Thinking about the opinions of others</p> <p>Thinking about the needs of others</p> <p>Critiquing my actions in light of what I know about the gospel values</p>	<p>Discussions that include gospel values and WWJD (What do you think Jesus would do?)</p> <p>Think-Pair-Share</p> <p>Comparing changes over time</p> <p>Accepting/Challenging various opinions</p> <p>Appreciating others</p> <p>Good listening and speaking skills</p> <p>Thinking about and praying for others – injustices, current events</p> <p>Discussions on justice issues</p> <p>Let's think of the gospel value of.....</p> <p>What do you think should be your next move?</p>	<p>What will happen next</p> <p>What would/could we do?</p> <p>Why do we need to know this?</p> <p>Acceptance</p> <p>Reflection</p> <p>Transferring what we have learnt/been taught to their own lives</p> <p>Considering others' opinions</p> <p>Finding an action for our learning</p> <p>Confusing/Mystery</p> <p>Affirming</p> <p>We feel like we require more knowledge.</p>

Compiled by Cushla O'Connor, Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser, August 2008

**Appendix 3: Contributions from cluster meetings held in the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch on the Key Competencies in Religious Education**

	<b>LOOKS LIKE</b>	<b>SOUNDS LIKE</b>	<b>FEELS LIKE</b>
<b>RELATING TO OTHERS</b>	Listening and responding with compassion and empathy Acting justly Acceptance of all ideas and opinions Groups working together Living Catholic values Acting like Jesus Being inclusive Accepting diversity Awareness of faith journey of others Working together/harmony Modelling gospel values Acting on morals Cooperative learning Caring for those in the parish, those in need Working together for the common good	What would Jesus do? Parables Scripture quotes Prayer for others Response shows an understanding and application of Catholic values Community centred response to issues Debates in line with Catholic theology Listening actively to the Word of God Listening to others' points of view	Inclusive Spiritually uplifting Intrinsically motivated to improve others' lot Sense of identity in the Catholic community Harmony Safety Acceptance Appreciated

Compiled by Cushla O'Connor, Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser, August 2008

**Appendix 4: Using the Primary Religious Education Curriculum as an avenue for developing Key Competencies.**

**Key Competency: Thinking**

In the Communion of Saints we belong to God and all God’s family. After death we can share new life with God forever.

God gives us free will so we can choose to live like Jesus and the saints in God’s love.

<b>Level 1 – Year 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>Level 2 –Year 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>Level 3 – Year 5 &amp; 6</b>	<b>Level 4 – Year 7 &amp; 8</b>
I will show I am thinking how to live like Jesus when I...	I will show I am thinking how to live like Jesus when I...	I will show I am thinking how to live like Jesus when I...	I will show I am thinking how to live like Jesus when I...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show love and respect to my parents and caregivers</li> <li>• obey my parents and teachers</li> <li>• pray Mary’s prayer with respect</li> <li>• help out at home and school</li> <li>• am kind and good to others</li> <li>• pray each day to God</li> <li>• make good choices when I am playing with my friends</li> <li>• wait to take my turn</li> <li>• accept it and don’t complain when Mum or Dad says “No”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• am kind and sensitive to people who are sad</li> <li>• pray for people who have died</li> <li>• pray for help when I am sad</li> <li>• ask for help from good people when I am finding things difficult</li> <li>• work hard to reach my own goals</li> <li>• pray to the Holy Spirit to help me make good choices</li> <li>• think about what Jesus would do before I act</li> <li>• say sorry and ask for forgiveness when I have hurt someone</li> <li>• obey our home rules and our school rules</li> <li>• use my free will for the good of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show respect for people who have died</li> <li>• pray for people who have died</li> <li>• pray to the saints to help me do as God wants</li> <li>• am kind and loving to others</li> <li>• care for creation</li> <li>• pray and worship God</li> <li>• ask Mary to pray for us</li> <li>• am just and fair to others</li> <li>• look after people who need my help</li> <li>• do something to help people who are poor</li> <li>• invite others to play with me when they are alone</li> <li>• speak out when something happens to another person that is not fair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use my free will to do good</li> <li>• pray before making choices</li> <li>• follow my conscience to make good decisions</li> <li>• show respect for life</li> <li>• look after my health</li> <li>• do to others as I want them to do to me</li> <li>• be honest with myself and others</li> <li>• try to get to know God personally</li> <li>• pray before making choices</li> <li>• respect the gifts of others</li> <li>• act with compassion towards people who are grieving</li> <li>• respect the different ways people of other cultures do things</li> </ul>

Prepared by Natalie Murphy rsm, RE Adviser, Diocese of Palmerston North, based on the work of Cushla O’Connor, RE Adviser, Diocese of Christchurch



# Thinking

## *about my relationship with God*

**When I learn to think like Jesus I will become my best self. I will:**

- u s e    w h a t    a b o u t    t h e    s a i n t s    t o    f o l l o w    J e s u s    a n d    b e c o m e    a    s a i n t    f o r    G o d    t o d a y
- p r a y    a n d    a s k    f o r    G o d ' s    h e l p    w h e n    I    f
- a c t    l i k e    M a r y    a n d    l i v e    m y    l i f e    f o r    J e s u s
- m a k e    c h o i c e s    t h a t    a r e    i n    l i n e    w i t h    J
- r e f l e c t    o n    h o w    I    a m    l i v i n g    n o w    s o    I    c a n    p r e p a r e    f o r    m y    l i f e    w i t h    G o d    i n    h e a v e n .
  - ***How will I show I am doing this?***

**Appendix 4: Using the Primary Religious Education Curriculum as an avenue for developing Key Competencies.**

**Key Competency: Participating and Contributing**

I am called to be part of the Community of Christ’s disciples, guided by the Holy Spirit and called to carry out its mission of service. I show this when I participate and contribute.

<b>Level 1 – Year 1/2</b>	<b>Level 2 –Year 3/4</b>	<b>Level 3 – Year 5/6</b>	<b>Level 4 – Year 7/8</b>
<b>Guided by the Holy Spirit I participate and contribute when I...</b>	<b>Guided by the Holy Spirit I participate and contribute when I...</b>	<b>Guided by the Holy Spirit I participate and contribute when I...</b>	<b>Guided by the Holy Spirit I participate and contribute when I...</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take part in preparing a class celebration</li> <li>• show enjoyment when celebrating with others, especially with my class</li> <li>• show respect when participating in liturgies and at Mass</li> <li>• am happy to share God’s love with others</li> <li>• respond to God’s love with thanks</li> <li>• demonstrate the caring, loving attitude of Jesus when participating in groups</li> <li>• work co-operatively with others, by joining in and doing my part</li> <li>• help others at school at home and in the parish</li> <li>• show I am a follower of Jesus by working to help people in need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show a sensitivity and kindness to people in need in my class, my school, my parish etc</li> <li>• respond to God’s grace and the call to help others</li> <li>• demonstrate a sense of respect when participating in liturgies</li> <li>• join with the parish to celebrate the Eucharist</li> <li>• serve my class by being helpful</li> <li>• serve my family by helping at home</li> <li>• support others with my prayer</li> <li>• participate in the sacraments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• join with people who gather for worship at church</li> <li>• join in the hymns and prayers at the Eucharist</li> <li>• show respect for the dignity of all people</li> <li>• contribute to our class prayers of thanks or petition</li> <li>• read (proclaim) the Word of God reverently</li> <li>• show Jesus’ love for the people in my class by doing my share of cleaning up</li> <li>• show respect to my teachers</li> <li>• use my gifts from God for the mission of the Church</li> <li>• work with others to spread the Good News</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give my appreciation to people who take part in activities in class or parish</li> <li>• become involved in groups that carry out the mission of the Church e.g. Young Vinnies</li> <li>• accept the authority of my parents and teachers for the good of my family and class</li> <li>• get involved in the community life of the Church</li> <li>• find ways to serve others and promote justice, tika and rangimarie e.g. Caritas</li> <li>• act my part in the Community of Disciples by joining in karakia, worship, works of aroha and manaakitanga</li> </ul>

# Participating and Contributing

H o w w i l l I c a r r y o u t t h e C h u r c h

**I can demonstrate that I participate and contribute to the mission of the Church when I:**

- contribute to class liturgies;
- promote tika, justice and rangimarie in my dealings with members of my school community ;
- work with others to spread the Good News;
- participate in the Eucharist reverently.

**Appendix 4: Using the Primary Religious Education Curriculum as an avenue for developing Key Competencies.**

Using the Holy Spirit Strand and thinking of the Key Competency of Relating to Others

Level 1 – Year 1/2	Level 2 –Year 3/4	Level 3 – Year 5/6	Level 4 – Year 7/8
<p><b>When I relate to others well I will show that the Holy Spirit is working in me by:</b></p>	<p><b>When I relate to others well I will show that the Holy Spirit is working in me by:</b></p>	<p><b>When I relate to others well I will show that the Holy Spirit is working in me by:</b></p>	<p><b>When I relate to others well I will show that the Holy Spirit is working in me by:</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being kind and sharing</li> <li>• helping those around me who need support</li> <li>• saying please and thank you to others</li> <li>• listening carefully to others</li> <li>• including others in my games</li> <li>• asking others what games they would like to play</li> <li>• praying together</li> <li>• including others in my prayers</li> <li>• being joyful, full of fun in each other’s company</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acting with love</li> <li>• showing joy in what others do</li> <li>• being patient and self controlled</li> <li>• being peaceful and gentle with others’</li> <li>• being generous and sharing well</li> <li>• listening to others’ points of view and talking about what hurts others</li> <li>• working out ways of showing forgiveness and reconciliation</li> <li>• showing others how to know right from wrong</li> <li>• listening to the Word of God attentively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• speaking and acting honestly</li> <li>• being an advocate for others</li> <li>• listening to the advice of others whom I trust</li> <li>• growing in tapu and mana</li> <li>• respecting the tapu and mana of others</li> <li>• joining in and celebrating with others faithfully and prayerfully</li> <li>• encouraging others to act justly</li> <li>• showing manaakitanga...care for others</li> <li>• taking responsibility for my actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working as a group to help those less fortunate in the community</li> <li>• being welcoming and accepting of those from other cultures or who are different in some way</li> <li>• having a positive approach to promoting justice, peace and love with my friends, in my community, the world</li> <li>• responding to and with others to live a Christian life</li> <li>• persevering with them to solve a problem or lessen a hurt</li> </ul>

Prepared by Cushla O’Connor, Acting Religious Education Adviser, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch

# Relating to Others

What about your relationship with the Holy Spirit?

**When I relate well with the Holy Spirit I will:**

- pray to the Holy Spirit;
- ask the Holy Spirit to guide me in my work;
- listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit to make good choices;
- ask the Holy Spirit to help me to forgive;
- turn to the Holy Spirit when working through a problem.

**Appendix 4: Using the Primary Religious Education Curriculum as an avenue for developing Key Competencies.**

**Key Competency: Using Language, Symbols and Texts in Sacraments**

A sacramental vision “sees” God in all things: nature; history; people; things; rituals.

Sacraments are visible signs of the hidden presence of God at work.

We can meet Jesus through the words, signs and symbols of each sacrament

Level 1 – Year 1/2	Level 2 –Year 3/4	Level 3 – Year 5/6	Level 4 – Year 7/8
I will show I understand the signs, symbols and words we use that tell us God is here when I...	I will show I understand the signs, symbols and words we use that tell us God is here when I...	I will show I understand the signs, symbols and words we use that tell us God is here when I...	I will show I understand the signs, symbols and words we use that tell us God is here when I...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• am quiet and respectful in the church</li> <li>• reverently make the Sign of the Cross with the holy water</li> <li>• enjoy creation and thank God for it</li> <li>• look after God’s creation</li> <li>• put my rubbish in the bin</li> <li>• welcome others warmly with words and actions</li> <li>• join in the words of the welcoming or gathering hymn at church</li> <li>• say people’s baptismal names correctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show forgiveness to others through words and actions</li> <li>• am peaceful on the mat</li> <li>• work and play with others peacefully</li> <li>• make the sign of peace reverently</li> <li>• truly mean the words when I pray a prayer of sorrow</li> <li>• recognise how God is with me in creation</li> <li>• am quiet and reflective whenever and wherever I pray</li> <li>• am respectful of the things in church</li> <li>• am reverent during the celebration of the Eucharist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• am considerate to people who are sick</li> <li>• act kindly to people when I see signs that they are upset</li> <li>• touch others with respect</li> <li>• receive a blessing with respect</li> <li>• show wonder at the amazing things in God’s creation</li> <li>• am a sign of Jesus to others by acting with tika, pono and aroha</li> <li>• give thanks for signs that God is with me in my life</li> <li>• join in the rituals of the sacrifice of the Mass and offer myself to God with Jesus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give respect to priests</li> <li>• willingly love and serve others</li> <li>• act with reverence during the celebration of sacraments</li> <li>• recognise the signs of people experiencing hard times and support them</li> <li>• see signs of disunity among us and work for peace and harmony</li> <li>• see opportunities to be of service and help out</li> <li>• speak well of everyone’s parents</li> <li>• receive Holy Communion with love and respect for Jesus and the Body of Christ, the church</li> </ul>

## Using Language, Symbols & Texts

What about seeing God in all things?

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- I am aware that “God is here” when I am in nature
- I know God’s love through the people in my life
- I hear God’s voice when I listen to the Word of God
- I believe Jesus is with us when we participate in every celebration of the sacraments
- I know it is Jesus who forgives me in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- I believe Jesus comes to me when I receive Holy Communion

## Appendix 5: Developing the Key Competencies through the preparation of a class liturgy.

*Liturgy comes from*

8

*Liturgy is a communal act in which we use symbols and symbolic language...We gather, as individuals, to be formed into a community bound by a covenant of love to our Creator.<sup>39</sup>*

Key Competency	Indicators of Key Competencies being developed (some examples)
<b>Thinking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflecting on prayer, song, silence in a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Engaging in creative thought when preparing liturgies.</li> <li>• Reflecting and responding to God’s word.</li> <li>• Encouraging reflective thought to effect a change in the way students live and learn based on the theme of the class liturgy.</li> </ul>
<b>Using language, texts and symbols</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using and interpreting movement and gesture to communicate ideas in a class liturgy</li> <li>• Using posture, movement and expression in a reverent way to communicate meaning.</li> <li>• Using song and silence to communicate ideas.</li> <li>• Developing works of art for use in a class liturgy to help create an environment for worship</li> <li>• Being familiar with the signs and symbols of the liturgical year to use within the liturgy.</li> <li>• Understands the meaning of and is able to use a variety of symbols (oil, incense, water, fire etc) to convey meaning in a liturgy.</li> <li>• Being able to take part in a procession. (e.g. as the book bearer knowing that this is a powerful symbol of the presence of God among us in the world or when participating in the presentation of the gifts).</li> </ul>
<b>Managing Self</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating plans to help with the preparation of a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Managing time so as to rehearse a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Student takes time to reflect on their contribution to a class liturgy</li> <li>• Knowing their strengths in preparing and celebrating a class liturgy. (e.g. when choosing who will proclaim the Word of God, selecting musicians)</li> <li>• Overcoming their weak points through the preparation and celebration of class liturgies.</li> <li>• Being able to self manage so as to allow time to reflect on the Word of God.</li> </ul>
<b>Relating to others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with others to prepare and celebrate a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Works with others to come up with new approaches, ideas and ways of creating class liturgies.</li> <li>• Accepting the ideas of others in planning a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Being prepared to take on new roles within the preparation and celebration of a class liturgy.</li> </ul>
<b>Participating and Contributing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to God’s word following a liturgy.</li> <li>• Being prepared to be actively involved in all parts of the preparation and celebration of a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Creating opportunities for others to be involved in the preparation and celebration of a class liturgy.</li> <li>• Developing a sense of belonging as a result of prayerful class liturgies.</li> </ul>

Prepared by Cushla O’Connor, Acting Primary Religious Education Adviser, Christchurch, in consultation with Jill McLoughlin rsj, Spirituality Support Services, Catholic Education Office, Christchurch.

<sup>39</sup> Joan Patano Voc in Celebrating School liturgies. Guidelines for planning. 1991 (p.9)



## **Appendix 6: Statement on Learning Areas – Religious Education.**

### **What is Religious Education about?**

Religious Education in Catholic schools is about teaching and learning what the Catholic Church believes and teaches. It enables students to understand and appreciate the ways the Catholic Church celebrates, lives and prays, and teaches them how to respond freely to God according to their gift of faith.

### **Why study Religious Education?**

Catholic schools exist because of their Special Character, and Religious Education is integral to the Special Character of Catholic schools. It is the learning area that develops students' knowledge, skills and attitudes in keeping with the gospel values of Jesus Christ. This is the basis of the philosophy of Catholic education that aims to shape the way students will live their lives. It is in Religious Education that students learn what it means to be Catholic and how they can take their place as members of the Catholic Church. At the heart of Religious Education is the fostering of the spiritual lives of students and the development of their relationship with God.

### **How is the Religious Education Curriculum structured?**

The main body of knowledge in Religious Education is spread across six learning strands. Each strand has a set of Achievement Aims from which a set of Achievement Objectives has been developed for each level. Within the separate strands the content at each level has a particular focus although much of the content is inter-related across all of the strands. The strands are:

- God
- Jesus Christ
- The Holy Spirit
- Church
- Community of Disciples
- Sacrament
- Communion of Saints.

Interwoven throughout the six strands are four Cross Strand Themes which provide contexts for learning:

- Scripture/Tradition
- Prayer/Liturgy
- Doctrine
- Christian Living.

The Religious Education curriculum has been developed into a programme with a series of lessons on the focus at each level. The lessons have a set of learning outcomes, suggested learning experiences and assessment examples.

The strands are supplemented with the following modules, which are used at appropriate times of the year:

- Prayer and Sacramental Celebrations
- The Liturgical Year
- Myself and Others.

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