Title: "The safeguarding and enhancing of Catholic Special Character and charism in an increasing secular world"

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Executive Summary

The Catholic school system needs to determine how it will respond to the increasingly secular culture in New Zealand and its impact upon families, students, staff and the Catholic culture of the school.

The safeguarding and enhancing of the Catholic culture has always been important to Catholics. This culture is what makes their schools different from others. It was the reason why a Catholic education system was set up in New Zealand initially and became a critical aspect to protect when the Catholic system integrated with the State system in the early 1980's.

Culture does not exist in isolation. By its nature, it must be linked to a community of faith and sometimes it is linked to the particular spirit (charism) of a religious congregation. This community of faith is changing. The actively participating members of this community of faith has fallen from 60 percent in the late 1960's to 25 percent today. It is also changing in its ethnic composition, especially in Auckland, with recent migrants from the Pacific Islands and the Philippines and age structure. While actual figures were not available, casual observation indicates that the elderly make up a very significant proportion of the 25 percent who actively participate.

There is a pattern of students ending their commitment to Church once they graduate from a Catholic secondary school. Given that Catholic schools support the mission of the Church so that, "the Kingdom of God may come and the salvation of the human race may be accomplished" (*Gaudium et Spes*. 1965) this ending of an active commitment could indicate that all was accomplished while they were still at school. Alternately, it must raise questions about the effectiveness and desirability of practice and whether change is needed or whether one should even use on-going participation in the Catholic church as an indicator of the effectiveness of Catholic education.

The current approach towards safeguarding and enhancing the Catholic culture (Special Character) is orientated towards ensuring that there is a critical mass of students, families and staff aligned with the desired values and practices. Ideally, they will also be active members of their local parish as a community of faith. But this is not happening.

New approaches need to be considered. Approaches that might help students and their families maintain a meaningful relationship with the community of faith while they are at school, and post-school. The school could provide an avenue for an alternative approach but it will require an openness to changing the current model of parish and a willingness to embrace new ways of expressing faith.

Consideration also needs to given to the pending retirement of many who hold significant leadership positions within Catholic schools. They are the last of those who have been significantly educated by, and taught with, members of religious orders. Their departure will leave something of a void in the formation of Catholic culture within a school.

Purpose

This research essay looks at how the culture (Special Character) of Catholic schools in New Zealand can be safeguarded and enhanced in an ever increasing secular world, an ever declining number of people being active in the Catholic Church, especially youth.

The aging teacher profession will leave a significant gap in Catholic cultural knowledge when many retire in a few years. The new group of leaders will come from a very different cultural background and exposure to Church.

How will this growing secularity impact upon the *raison d'être* for Catholic schools, the schools' Catholic culture (Special Character) and the charism (spirit) of particular Catholic schools in New Zealand?

What will the new leaders need in the way of support in their key role of promoting and enhancing the Special Character along with the particular charism (spirit) of the school?

Who will be responsible for the safeguarding and strengthening of Catholic Special Character and charism in an increasingly secular New Zealand and how will this be managed?

Background Information

Catholic education was present as early as the 1840's in Auckland and Nelson provinces. Schools had been established by Catholic settlers and were staffed by lay people i.e. those who are not members of religious congregations. The

Provincial governments provided some funding for these schools and allowed for a limited provision of religious instruction. With the arrival of religious congregations in these provinces, religious and lay people worked together in the Catholic education system from the early 1850's.

The passing of the Education Act in 1877 established free, compulsory and secular education for all New Zealand children aged 7 to 13 years. The secular nature of this state funded education meant opportunities for religious education and religious practice was severely constrained in any State funded school.

Consequently, an alternative Catholic education system was sought by Catholic families in New Zealand.   Such a system would require the Catholic community to fund the building of schools and to support the on-going resourcing of such establishments. One way of addressing the cost of teaching staff was to make use of the many members of religious congregations who had a focus upon the education of youth. Given their training, it was also thought that the members of the religious congregations would be better suited for the teaching of religious education and enabling Catholic practices and a suitable vision for the school.

Many of these religious congregations were already present in New Zealand and were active in established schools. Religious congregations such as the three Marist orders from France, Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart (Australia), Sisters of Mercy (Ireland), Dominican Sisters (Ireland), and Christian Brothers (Ireland) now played a far more significant part in the life of Catholic education so that by the 1900's Catholic schools were staffed almost exclusively by members of Religious Congregations (New Zealand Catholic Education Office. 2012)

Sixty years later the ever increasing demand for Catholic education was placing the system under significant pressure. Schools were opening, expanding, and also closing in some rural areas. Lay people were now more numerous on the school staff as there were insufficient religious to meet the demand for teachers'. By the early 1970's lay people made up 38 % of staffing. This situation quickly increased the cost to parents. Government support was needed urgently if the Catholic school system was to survive (Lynch, P. 2012).

The response was the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act (1975). This Act created a partnership between the State and the Church by integrating private schools into the state system in such a way as to preserve and safeguard their 'Special Character'. By 1983 all existing Catholic schools were integrated.

The 1970's also marked the start of a time where there was a steep increase in the numbers who had no religious affiliation. In 1971, 87% of the New Zealand population stated that they were affiliated with an identifiable Christian based religion and 3% said that they had no religious affiliation. By 2013 these figures were 48% and 42% respectively. While religious affiliation, or non-affiliation,

does not say anything about a belief in God, the statistics clearly show that there is a significant growth in the proportion of the population who have no religious affiliation (Statistics New Zealand: *New Zealand Census data 1976 - 2006*).

Today very few Catholic schools in New Zealand have priests, brothers or sisters on their teaching staff. Religious congregations have fewer members and have undertaken other tasks outside of mainstream New Zealand education. This stands in marked contrast to the situation 100 years earlier when almost every Catholic school in New Zealand was staffed by members of religious congregations.

By 2025 it would be likely that almost all of the staff within Catholic schools will have never been taught by, or taught with, a member of a religious congregation. Those teachers currently in their 50's will be the last group to have experienced a school environment with a significant number of priests, brothers or nuns on the staff.

1.0   The Catholic School in the Catholic Church: *raison d'être*.

"Whether it aids the world or whether it benefits from it, the church has but one sole purpose - that the kingdom of God may come and the salvation of the human race may be accomplished" (*Gaudium et Spes* Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. 1965)

The Church accomplishes this purpose (mission) through its teaching, its practices, its pastoral instruments such as schools and parishes, and vocations such as priesthood, religious life, marriage or the single life.

The Catholic school, as a pastoral instrument, is tasked to proclaim the gospel and promote total human formation. It mediates between faith and culture and does so by, "being faithful to the newness of the Gospel while at the same time respecting the autonomy and the methods proper to human knowledge." (Congregation for Catholic Education. 1988).

It has its own particular set of teachings, practice and personnel which enables it to be an authentic expression of the Church's mission. This is why the Catholic school can be understood as "being the Church in action and an authentic expression of the Church's mission." (NZ Catholic Bishops Conference [NZCBC], 2014).

It is a community of people enabling the mission of the Church. Not via a number of discrete tasks such as teaching religious education, collecting money for charity or having school Masses, but of its very nature: the work of educating the whole Christian person. The whole school must be a place where faith, culture and life are harmoniously integrated. If it gets this right, then the schools should

be, "A place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth." (Benedict XV1. 2008).

To enable the Kingdom of God and the salvation of humanity the school must be connected into a community of faith. Without such a connection, the school would lose its ability to fulfil the mission of the Church. It cannot be a stand-alone entity and call itself Catholic. This was made clear by the New Catholic Bishops Conference when they stated, "The sole reason for the existence of Catholic schools in New Zealand, even under the Integration Act, is their relationship with the community of faith called the Church." (NZCBC, 2014).

2.0   Catholic Special Character.

When the State offered to support the Catholic education system in the 1970's the Catholic schools wanted to make sure that they could protect what was important to them. In essence, this was the protection of their Catholic schools culture. In the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act [PSCIA] (1975), it became known as the protection of a school's special character. In the PSCIA this was defined as, "education within the framework of a particular or general religious or philosophical belief, and associated with observances or traditions appropriate to that belief." (s. 2 (1) PSCIA. 1975).

The proprietors of the Catholic schools needed to make individual school agreements with the State. In most cases the proprietor was the local Catholic Bishop but there were also many other schools that were owned by religious congregations.

When individual schools entered into an integration agreement with the State, the proprietor had, "the responsibility to supervise the maintenance and preservation of the education with a special character provided by the school" and "to continue to have the right to determine from time to time what is necessary to preserve and safeguard the special character of the education provided by the school and described in the integration agreement." (s. 3(3) PSCIA. 1975).

The special character of a Catholic school became defined in all of the Catholic school integration agreements as follows, "The school is a Roman Catholic School in which the whole school community, through the general school programme and in 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."

Schools also had the opportunity to add a statement about their own particular charism within their integration agreement. The Catholic special character

Review and Development document defines charism as being, "A gift or grace given by the Holy Spirit to an individual or a group for the good of the community and to carry out the Mission of Jesus. (1 Cor 12:1-14). "A burning fire" in the heart of a founder or foundress (of a school or community) which inspires others." (New Zealand Catholic Education Office. 2007)

Depending upon their historical connections, schools might therefore promote a particular "Marist", "Josephite" or "Mercy" charism. This would be expressed as particular way of service and behaviour within the school community that reflected certain values and/or aspirations. However, the Catholic church stresses that it must not be thought of as being central to the schools culture/identity. "The charism must highlight in every way the school's Catholic identity , and not relegate it to a secondary place" (NZCBC, 2014)

3.0 Catholic School Culture and Climate

Culture, is the answer to the question of, "Why do you do that?". It is imbedded and slow to change. Culture is based on values and beliefs and thereby constrains the way we do things or the way we think about things. Culture tells us what we should celebrate, leave alone, or anticipate. It can tell us how we should respond to a situation even when we don't feel like responding that way. If the culture of the schools requires formal dress and whole-school singing at assemblies then people will follow that even if they are privately oppositional.

Catholic schools are strongly influenced by a set of shared and unique values which are often expressed in the vision statement of school charters. Prominent amongst these are Christian values, a relationship with Jesus, membership of the Catholic church, and the education of the whole person. These values are embedded in the culture, help to answer of why we do somethings and not others, and influence the way the school operates.

Climate is the sum of the group's attitudes and behaviour. It is easier to change than culture and typically based upon perceptions. It can be felt and seen when one enters a school and it responds quickly when a positive change is made. It is not a measure of happiness (morale) but it does reveal how most of the people are feeling most of the time about certain situations (Gruenert, S. Whitaker, T. 2015). A positive school climate should occur where there is a good alignment between the desired culture of the school and the group's attitude.

From the first moment that a visitor, or new student, sets foot in a Catholic school they ought to have the impression of entering something positive. They should encounter a school committed to the mission of the Church and Christian values and meet staff that are committed to these values and mission in thought, word and deed i.e. culture and climate are aligned.

While it is the role of the Bishop to determine the appropriate values for the Catholic school, the climate is more the responsibility of teachers as individuals, and as a community. They are responsible for the manner in which Christian values are celebrated. They witness to students via their individual behaviour and interpersonal relationships. This is how the, "students will come to appreciate the uniqueness of the environment to which their youth has been entrusted. If it is not present, then there is little left which can make the school Catholic." (Congregation for Catholic Education. 1988).

4.0 Elements of Culture.

Almost everything that goes on in a school reflects the underlying school culture. Something is influencing the way students relate to each other, the willingness of staff to go the extra mile, the way parents are greeted, and the response towards students' and teachers' particular circumstances.

Discussing the culture can difficult because it's hard to identify what it is with any precision. It is typically easier to describe *what we do* (climate) than *why we do it* (culture). If teachers and students have been in a school for a period of time they may not question the "why", or even be aware of it, as they adopt the accepted ways of behaving (Gruenert. S, Whitaker, T. 2015).

Cultures do change. In the face of such change the New Zealand Catholic Bishops state, "The school must be courageous in maintaining a truly Catholic environment and resist pressures to compromise with the local culture". (NZCBC, 2014).

If one desire to safeguard and enhance a particular culture it is important to identify those things which which can influence it. In a collection of essays Geertz (1973) identified elements that help to influence culture. Gruenert and Whitaker(2015) used this work to isolate some elements that were particularly relevant to influencing a school's culture.

4.1 Climate

Climate is what we do. By adjusting the climate we can begin to change portions of the culture. If students and staff experience well organised liturgy, if they have a good understanding of the associated rituals and observe appropriate role modelling, they will behave in a certain way. In changing the behaviour and attitudes and sustaining this overtime, we can make this part of the new culture. The changed culture will now manage the student and staff expectations.

4.2 Mission and Vision
Mission is our purpose, vision is what we hope to become.

If the schools expressed mission has no buy-in from the staff it will achieve very little. The mission needs to formally institutionalize the school's culture. If there is a conflict between the two: current culture wins.

4.3 Routines, Rituals, Ceremonies

Routines are the day-to-day activities that help a school operate effectively. When a routine is linked into a strong value it can become a ritual that gives public expression of our beliefs e.g. starting the day with prayer. school assemblies.

Ceremonies are enhanced rituals. Prize giving, school masses, leavers' dinner, Ceremonies focus upon certain values and place an emphasis on these. Where ceremonies are changed so that they focus upon values not formally given emphasis, such as "servant leadership" they can give rise to a change in the culture.

4.4 Norms

The unwritten rules that tell us when to be serious, when to applaud, how fast to work, and when staff can go home. The culture is often shaped by the worst behaviour a leader will tolerate. What time should staff get to meetings? Norms often trump the written rules

4.5 Symbols

These are words, pictures, objects, and gestures that carry a meaning understood by those who share the culture. Symbols tell people what is valued. Symbols are frequently visible to the outsider but their cultural meaning may well be hidden. But they need to be explained to the new members and to be appreciated or they won't be adopted long-term.

4.6 Stories/Myths

Stories help to provide information about what we expect and desire . They are our whakapapa connecting us with the past and making it present today. Stories can connect us together because they might be uniquely ours. They may be true or fictional. Stories influence the behavioural choices we make. They need to be embedded and supportive of the desired culture as well as being shared around the school so that they are known to all.

4.7 Values and beliefs

Values are what we hold to be most important for us. They make us prefer one choice to another: study or sport, forgiveness or retribution, work or family time? Our beliefs are our learned responses based on our values. If we value student-centred education then we will have a set of beliefs about what we should, or should not do. If we value truthfulness and empathy, the school will operate a pastoral support system that reinforces such values.

The safeguarding and enhancing of the desired culture in a Catholic school requires the identification of the values and beliefs that need to be sustained.

Without such an understanding the school can overtime come to represent something that is not authentically a Catholic school. This might happen subtly such as by the promotion of values which are not explicitly derived from the gospels e.g. tolerance and kindness, or by the engagement with humanitarian organisations whose basis is not rooted in Catholic social teaching.

Students and parents might well promote the joining and assisting of organisations such as Greenpeace or practices such as mufti days that generate good outcomes but that in themselves are not sufficient reason for their adoption.

Mufti days show that students primarily value, "not wearing school uniform" higher than charity. Ask them to donate a coin to the same end while wearing school uniform and the generosity fall away. Other forms of fundraising for charity could be used which better align values and practice with the desired Catholic culture

According to Schein (1992) the most effective means for leaders to embed particular values and beliefs is to be aware of what they pay attention to and reward, how resources are allocated, through role modelling, how they deal with critical events, and their personnel practice.

4.8 Subcultures

All schools have subcultures. They are the groups that we align with because we share similar values. It might be a group who enjoy a particular sport, a group who share a common background, or a similar genre of books. Subcultures exist and nothing can stop them.

Subcultures need to be managed. They can be a place where a group of oppositional teachers band together and oppose the mission, or more likely the vision, associated with the parent culture. But they can also be a place for innovation and risk taking that can bring forward new and exciting ways of teaching and learning.

Leadership needs to identify the changing patterns of subcultures and identify those which have the power to influence the school culture in desired directions. These subcultures could be given opportunities to give voice to the rest by sharing their stories, rituals and vision with the full staff. Such opportunities help to promote the stories and success that the school values. It might be the academic achievement of a student with particular learning challenges such as the dyslexic student who achieves NCEA. It might be the students who gain scholarships and the teacher who worked with them.

Subcultures can also be created intentionally. Getting a group of like-minded staff together to pilot a new venture is a well proven method of enabling change in a relatively less threatening manner. Such initiatives can take place within the context of professional learning groups where teachers band together to study a particular area of joint interest. A group of teachers gathered together to enhance their understanding of Maori culture and its rituals can result in greater acceptance when such rituals are used in a whole school ceremony.

It is important for leadership to have feedback mechanisms from the subcultures. Feedback provides an opportunity to influence the direction that the group is taking and its potential impact upon the parent culture. Subcultures can be operating on incorrect information and building levels of anxiety unnecessarily. They can also be a magnet for dissenting staff, which if left unattended, can grow to negatively influence the parent culture.

4.9 Facilitation and Formation

Catholic schools should strive to be a place where students are encountering the living God and experiencing his transforming love and truth. But this can be a long way from the day-to day actual experience of students. Facilitating the encounter can be enabled by regular opportunities for quality sacramental liturgy, experience of prayer, school retreats and a pastoral system that is explicitly gospel based.

The teenage years, in particular, are a time when students evaluate much of the lived culture they have experienced to date. It is a time when faith is questioned and subjected to a degree of cynicism. During this time of exploration students need supportive and understanding adult educators who can respond to their doubts and role model adult faith for them.

5.0 Personnel and their influence upon cultural elements

Culture can change if the composition of staff, students or leadership changes so that there is less alignment between the values of community members and the desired values of the school. A new culture may begin to emerge in the school overtime that is not authentically Catholic in nature. Getting the right alignment between people, values and systems is therefore critical for the preservation and promotion of the special character.

Within the Catholic schools structure in New Zealand exist various entities, groups and individuals who are expected to preserve, safeguard and enhance the Catholic special character (Culture). Some of these overlap in terms of personnel and responsibilities but each has their own unique set of responsibilities and/or regulations impacting upon them associated with the Catholic special character.

5.1 The Proprietor's Appointees and Board of Trustees.

All State and State integrated schools must have a Board of Trustees (Education Act, s93. 1989). The Board's function and its exercise of authority are found in s75 of the Education Act (1989)

> *(1) A school's board must perform its functions and exercise its powers in such a way as to ensure that every student at the school is able to attain his or her highest possible standard in educational achievement.*
> *(2) Except to the extent that any enactment or the general law of New Zealand provides otherwise, a school's board has complete discretion to control the management of the school as it thinks fit.*

The Proprietors of an Integrated school are permitted (Education Act, s94. 1989) to appoint up to four trustees on the Board of Trustees. This and other provisions of the Act limit the number of proprietor appointees to be a least one fewer than those who are elected by parents. These appointed trustees have the responsibilities assigned to all trustees but arising from the fundamental characteristics of Catholic integrated schools, the Proprietor's Appointees have some special responsibilities.

"They are to assist the Board to carry out its obligations to ensure that the school remains a Catholic school and that it fulfils the primary objective for which it was founded. This primary objective has implications for the appointment of teachers, the enrolment of students, the Religious Education programme and or other matters relating to the school's special character." (New Zealand Catholic Education Office Ltd. 2013)

5.2 The Principal

Section 76 of the Education Act (1989) conveys authority and responsibility for day-to-day administration to the principal of any State or State Integrated school.

Principal:
> *(1) A school's principal is the board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management.*
> *(2) Except to the extent that any enactment, or the general law of New Zealand, provides otherwise, the principal—*
> *(a) shall comply with the board's general policy directions; and*
> *(b) subject to paragraph (a), has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the school's day-to-day administration.*

However there are additional expectations and requirements for anyone who is appointed Principal to a Catholic school. As a condition of appointment, they have to evidence a willingness and ability to take part in Religious instruction appropriate to the "Special Character" of the School and also to accept and recognise a responsibility to maintain and preserve the special character of the school. Such expectations are typically stated in the offer of employment letter and its associated schedules.

The principal needs to assume leadership of the religious aspects of the school and be a suitable role model for staff, students and parents in a Catholic School. In practice this requires, "that the person appointed must be a Catholic who is baptised, active and in full communion with the faith community." (NZCEO, 2005)

5.3 The Director of Religious Studies (DRS)

Along with the Principal, the DRS has significant responsibilities for the special character of the school. They often have responsibility for the Religious Education Programme in the school along with the liturgical celebrations.

When liturgy, prayer or religious education programmes leave a positive impact upon a person, they generally lead that person towards further engagement. An aspect of the engagement is a desire for further knowledge and a deeper understanding thus reinforcing the desired culture.

In the Catholic school environment, each Diocese runs its own professional development programme to enhance the knowledge of religious education teachers. There is also an expectation that teachers constantly engage in professional development and maintain an appropriate level of certification.

5.4 Tagged teachers

Having a significant number of teachers who are aligned with the school's special character was recognised as being important for its preservation. To safeguard the special character it was a requirement that the school, "employ a sufficient number of Catholic teachers who understand and live by the special character, so that the school is truly a Catholic community." (NZCEO. 2005) Such positions are known as "tagged" and come with the requirement that the teacher has a *"willingness and ability to take part in religious instruction appropriate to that school"*. (PSCIA. 1975)

Section 65 of the PSCIA (1975) allows for a school's integration agreement to identify the proportion of staffing that must be filled by teachers who are in tagged positions In a primary school this is usually a minimum of 60% of the teaching staff while in a secondary school it is a minimum of 40% of the teaching staff.

To be considered for such a position a prospective staff member must meet the expectations outlined by the New Zealand Bishops. (NZCEO. 2005)

Teachers in tagged positions are not just the Principal, DRS and/or those who teach Religious Education. Tagged teachers can come from any learning area. They are appointed to contribute to the *Religious Instruction* of the school. This term includes the whole Catholic Special Character of the school.

Tagged teachers should therefore be active in supporting the special character beyond the context of their classroom. As well as witnessing to the values and practices of the Catholic Church they may also be engaged in running sacramental programmes, school retreats, helping with liturgy, works of mercy or other activities that help students to strengthen their faith.

Letters of offer made to teachers of tagged positions makes the *willingness and ability to take part in religious instruction appropriate to that school"* an explicit condition of appointment. When an offer is accepted it becomes part of the employees "Terms and Conditions of Employment".

Applicants for tagged positions must show that they can fulfil the requirement of a "willingness and ability to take part in religious instruction appropriate to that school" and that they are baptized practicing Catholics. They do so via an S65 form which asks them to specify qualifications and experience related to Catholic special character and to nominate referees who will be consulted. A decision is then made about an applicant's acceptability, in terms of Catholic special character for the position. For Secondary schools, this decision is made by the Proprietor's Representatives on the Board of Trustees. For Primary schools the Consultative Advisory Group of the Catholic Schools Office will check referees.

However, there is some degree of flexibility in applying this clause. The Catholic Schools Office states, "a broad spectrum of acceptability is appropriate", and therefore consideration needs to be given to the specific case being examined. Different levels of ability "to take part in" are expected depending upon the expectations of the job description and life experience of the individual. (NZCEO. 2005)

In a secondary school, students critique many of the values and practices that they have taken on as children. This becomes a time for them when they explore other values which may stand directly opposed to those of the Gospel. Such a process is to be expected as it is marks the beginning of a possible transition time from a handed down faith to a mature faith. Having activity practicing Catholics as a significant proportion of staff aids the student in their, "synthesis of faith and culture which is necessary for faith to be mature."   (Congregation for Catholic Education. 1988)

5.5 All Staff

Irrespective of their personal beliefs and practices, all staff within a Catholic school are expected to support the special character. This expectation applies to teachers, administration and any support staff. In accepting a position at a Catholic school, staff acknowledge their awareness of the expectations associated with working at a Catholic school. These include statements such as: "... all staff are expected to contribute, according to their individual strengths and within their personal convictions, to the total purpose of the school. ……. Staff are expected to support, uphold and be actively involved in the total life of the school and its special character irrespective of their personal beliefs. …. Staff who do not profess Catholicism are expected to promote the Catholic Character of the school, and refrain from doing or saying anything that would be antithetical to the school's Catholic Character." *(*Pompallier Catholic College. [PCC] 2016)

Ideally all teachers will help students to see themselves in a holistic way encompassing both physical and spiritual and develop a coherent curriculum that enables such a religious dimension to flow across all subject areas. This is not just the responsibility of the Religious Education teachers for, "Everyone should work together, each one developing his or her own subject area with professional competence, but sensitive to those opportunities in which they can help students to see beyond the limited horizon of human reality." (Congregation for Catholic Education. [CCE] 1988).

5.6 The Students

Section 29 (1) of the PSCIA (1975) provides for the preferential enrolment of students whose parents have a "particular or general philosophical or religious connection with an integrated school" and such a connection has been stated by the proprietor. Such students are widely known as preference students.

The proprietor provides guidelines for their agents to assist in the determination of whether a student meets the preference criteria. These guidelines were revised in 2009 in an attempt to make them more explicit and to lessen the possibility of arbitrary decision making by some agents.

In most Catholic School Integration Agreements, no more than 5% (a few have 10%) of the student body (based on the maximum roll) can be outside of the preference criteria (i.e. non-preference). Therefore, in almost all New Zealand Catholic schools a minimum of 95% of students would have some degree of connection into Catholic culture. This helps to create an environment which has a distinctive Catholic flavour.

5.7 Parents

The Catholic school is not an institution but an open faith community. The school is characterised by a partnership between school, parish and families and operates to support the goals of all. The partnership is one based on faith, not convenience and recognises that God has bestowed on the family its own unique educational mission. (CCE.1988)

In reality, most parents today do not attend Church and would not see the Church as a partnership that they actively engage with but for the occasional family event such as a wedding or baptism. However those who send their children to Catholic schools are positively orientated to the special character of the Catholic school and readily sign agreements to support programmes that give the College its special character (PCC. 2015) and to have their child participate in such programmes.

5.8 The Bishop

The Bishop's responsibility and authority in regard to Catholic schools is addressed in the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act (1975), Canon Law, and Church documents such as *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School. (1998).* These publications are reference points for many other guides written for Catholic schools.

Section 3 (1) of the "Handbook for Boards of Trustees, Principals and Staff of New Zealand Catholic Integrated Schools" says that it is the Bishop of the diocese who has the ultimate responsibility to determine whether the practices, worship and teachings in the school are indeed Catholic. (New Zealand Catholic Education Office Ltd, 2013). The statement echo's s38 of *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School. (1998)* which states, "...the recognition of the school as a Catholic school is, however, always reserved to the competent ecclesiastical authority."

In the Integration agreements of the Catholic schools recognition is given to the Bishop's authority to determine authentic Catholic teaching, practice and worship. The standard description inserted to define the special character of the school is, "The school is a Roman Catholic School in which the whole School community through the general School programme and in its religious instruction and observances, exercises the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ. These values are as 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 of …."

Canon Law states that all those baptised into the Catholic Church have a right to a Catholic education (Canon 217) and that parents should send their children to schools that provide a Catholic education (Canon 798) while recognising that such a choice needs to be freely made (Canon 797). The Bishop therefore has the duty to establish, maintain, and promote Catholic schools.

Canon Law (Canon 805) also states that the Bishop has the right to approve and remove teachers of religion while maintaining a watch over the schools of their diocese. While this has no legal authority in New Zealand, aspects of this appear in New Zealand law at both a governance and management level. The composition of Boards of Trustees for Integrated schools allows for the Proprietor to appoint a maximum of 4 trustees (Education Act.1989) while s63 of the PSCIA (1975) requires a proprietor's representative to be involved in the appointment of any secondary teacher.

In matters of discipline referred to the Board, Trustees can rely on documents signed by staff to uphold the Special Character. Actions contrary to the signed agreement might be used as evidence to support a dismissal decision.

5.9 The Parish Priest

The priest has many roles relating to a Catholic school. He is frequently the person who determines whether an individual student meets the preference criteria. In meeting with the family and the prospective student the priest has an opportunity to discuss expectations and to get a commitment from the family to support the faith development of their child.

The priest also has the ability to influence the special character of the school via the provision of sacramental programmes, the provision of school liturgies, as an occasional teacher, and to just spend time being a supportive member of the community to enable students and staff to depend their relationship with God.

Sacraments of initiation provide an opportunity for cooperation between school and parish to grow students' faith. Students may have limited contact with a parish so the school becomes a means to follow up on any interest expressed by parents when they were seeking a preference enrolment with appropriate sacramental programmes.

Some priests may also have a direct role in school governance as a Trustee appointed by the proprietor. This will provide a ready opportunity to monitor the special character of the school on behalf of the Bishop.

Most importantly, the parish priest and school leadership must enable the connection between school and the parish. If there is no such viable and sustained connection that provides a means for students, families, and past-students to form a relationship with the community of faith called the Church then the school has no reason to exist. (NZCBC, 2014).
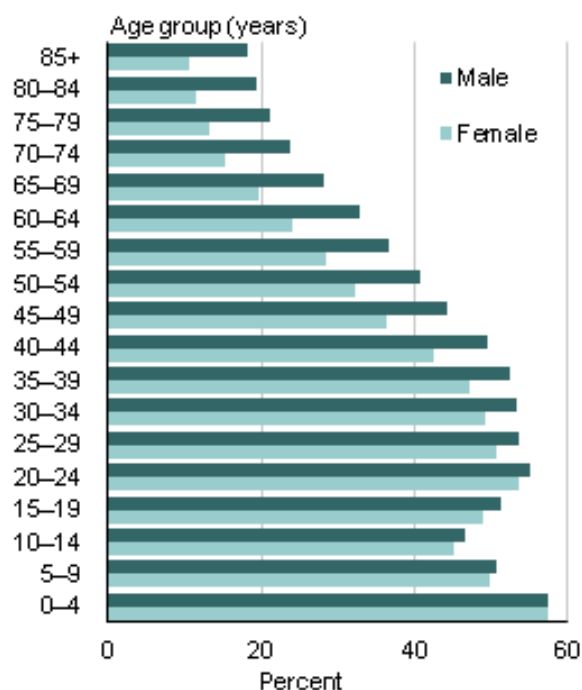

6.0   The Trends

Nationally, the percentage of people who associate with a Christian religion has fallen from 60% (2001) to 48% (2013). During the same period the proportion of people indicating they had no religious affiliation increased from 29.6% to 41.9 %

People stating no religion
By sex
2013 Census

Age group (years)

Source: Statistics New Zealand

The number of Catholics rose from 2001 to 2006 but had then dropped slightly in 2013. Auckland's Catholic population was reported as 188,865 in 2006 and grew a little by census night 2013, to 189,561, or by 0.4 per cent. The Catholic population of the five other dioceses fell by an average of about 5.4 per cent in the seven years. In New Zealand as a whole, almost one third of those who identified as Catholic in 2013 were born overseas, predominantly in the Philippines, England and Samoa (Statistics New Zealand. 2013).

While still relatively full, the Catholic churches in the Auckland diocese are notable for changing ethnicity patterns. As with the schools, there are growing proportions of people from Pacific and Filipino backgrounds who are making up for the falling numbers of those who have been born in New Zealand. They are drifting out and an increasing disconnect is taking place between Christianity and mainstream culture according to Bishop Patrick Dunn (Radio New Zealand

[RNZ]. 2016). However, according to Grace (2014) the growth in Auckland may well not be sustainable If the new immigrants from the Pacific and the Philippines follow the usual patterns of Church attendance, the patterns of loyalty fall away after 10 years.

Approximately 25% of New Zealand Catholics regularly attend Sunday Mass compared to 60% in the late 1960s (Du Fresne. 2013). Casual observation indicates that the majority of these are elderly. Young people are noticeably absent.   According to Lineham, while speaking to Radio New Zealand, (2016), New Zealanders see relatively little benefit in voluntary organisations and organised religion. This seems to be evidenced even more strongly with youth who have been raised in a time where respect and tolerance towards diversity in culture and moral norms is something to be valued. Nailing ones colours to a particular Church or organisation runs contra to such values. However, doing so in the context of a school appears to be less conflicting.

Catholic Student Numbers and selected ethnicity % for three dioceses.

	Auckland			Wellington			Christchurch		
% of Roll	2010	2013	2015	2010	2013	2015	2010	2013	2015
Euro	42	41	41	54	52	51	73	71	69
Maori	9	9	9	13	14	14	9	10	11
Pasifika	28	28	27	18	17	17	6	5	6
Asian	16	16	17	11	12	13	8	9	11
Total	23585	24064	24402	11742	11622	11400	8339	8000	8085

Based on July 1st Roll return. (Catholic Education Office. 2016)

 Catholic school growth tends to mirror patterns in the general population. In the last five years there has been growth in the Auckland dioceses in both church attendance and school population while in the two other featured dioceses, attendance and school rolls have reduced.

Ethnicity proportions also vary from North to South. The further South one goes, the greater the proportion of Europeans on the total roll while the journey North shows an increasing Asian and Pacifica proportion of total roll.

Aging Teachers.

The average age of those in the secondary education sector has been steadily increasing. In 2015, almost 45% of secondary teachers were over 50 years of age.

Secondary Teacher Age Profile 2015
(Provided by Post Primary Teachers Association)

Age	% in age bracket	% of all Male teachers	% of all Female teachers
<20	0.1	0.1	0.1
20-29	10	8.2	11.2
30-39	21.2	20.2	21.8
40-49	23.4	23.3	23.4
50-59	24.4	24.4	24.3
60-69	18.3	20.5	16.9
70-79	2.5	3.0	2.2
>79	0.2	0.3	0.2

Percentage of Secondary Teachers by age group.

	% Less than 45 years of age	% 45 years of age or more
1985	70	30
2004	53	47
2015 *	43	57

* MOE data based on first pay period April 2015. Includes short-term relief teachers

Using the study of Harker and Chapman (2006) and the data from 2015 it is evident that the aging teacher workforce is working its way through the system. In the next ten years a significant number of teachers will retire from Catholic schools. Many of these teachers currently occupy management positions and have significant involvement with the Church along with a depth of understanding of the special character.

The new leaders will come from a very different world from that which shaped the current leaders. They will be selected from a relatively smaller group of teachers than the current leaders. They have lived and socialised in a world where an ever increasing percentage of the total population have no religious affiliation. They are unlikely to have never experienced being taught by, or having taught with, members of religious congregations and thereby reducing opportunities to experience a particular charism.

7.0 Future Direction

At a strategic level, Catholic schools will be required to reflect upon three key issues before it is possible to address other concerns.
1) Where shall our schools be positioned relative to the norms of secular society?
2) How will our schools connect to a community of faith i.e. the Church?
3) What image of Church should schools present to students and families?

Positioning schools: The Melbourne Scale.

The Melbourne Scale was developed in partnership by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Catholic University of Leuven (Sharkey, 2009). It is an aid to generate dialogue about Catholic identity within schools and their community. The model presumes that there is an increasing gap between Catholic tradition and culture and the mainstream culture of society where our students, staff and families live. Such an increasing gap is evidenced in New Zealand.

Restore

Resign

2016

Reformulate

Catholic Faith

Contemporary Cultu

Reduce

Resist

1950
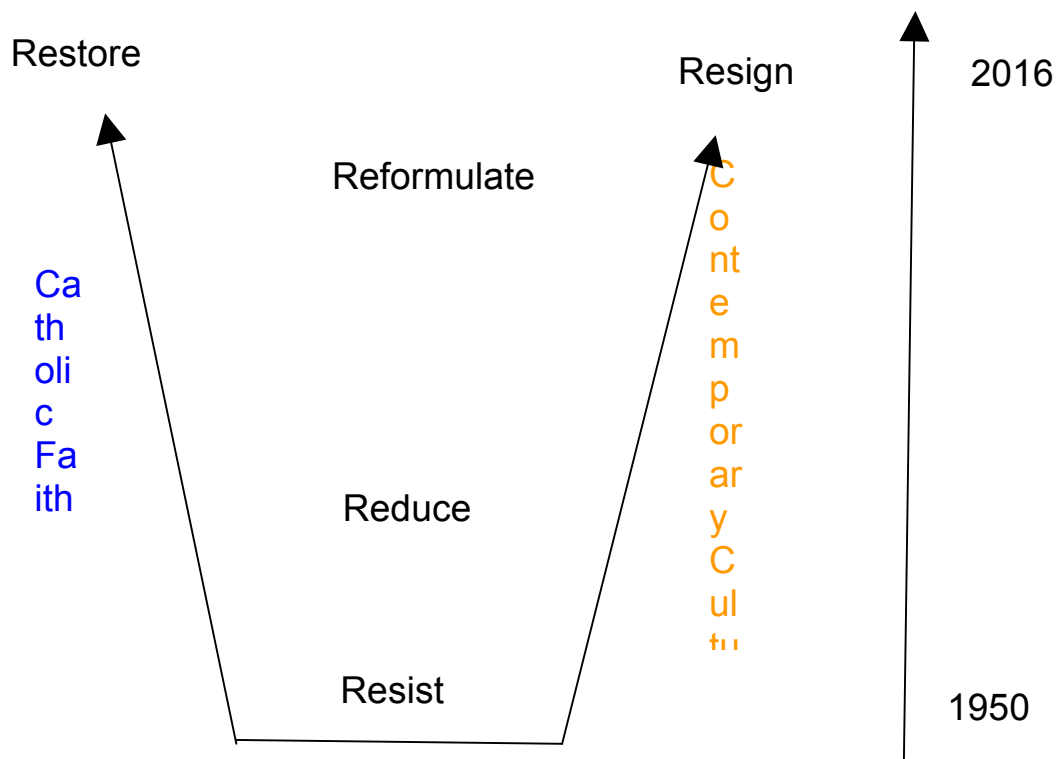
Those who consider that there are no real concerns associated with Catholic identity adopt a "Resist" position. It's business as usual in these schools because they do not perceive that a growing gap exists or if it does, it has no significant implications for the school.

Those who believe that the school's identity has been significantly eroded by secularisation and desire to restore traditional practices and beliefs might place themselves at the upper left of the model in the "Restore" position. They may rename the school with the inclusion of the word "Catholic" and/or restrict entry to those who are less orthodox in practice. They are often proud to be considered as a 'counter-culture' witness to others. But any attempt to impose dogma or practices upon the unwilling will eventually lead to rejection, usually as soon as they get out of the school gate.

This position would appear to reflect much of current practice in the Catholic school system in New Zealand. The criteria associated with being labeled "preference" or classified as "tagged" are structured to ensure sufficient numbers of students and staff are positively disposed towards the school's Special Character. This is unlike the Australian system which allows free entry subject to a student's willingness to support and participate in the Catholic culture of the school. But in both countries the outcome is the same. There is little connection to the parish on a Sunday or when a student leaves school.

The "Resign" position recognises that the allure of secularisation is too strong to resist. If the schools are to remain viable it is accepted that there will be a gradual accommodation made to the dominant culture and diminished use of symbols, rituals, beliefs and practices aligned with Catholic culture. The school is now more secular than Catholic but it is still functioning.

In the "Reduce" position, the school tries to hold onto selected Catholic beliefs and practices that would sit comfortably with wider culture. This will often require a particular interpretation of Catholic beliefs and practices in order to accommodate the norms of society. Values education is promoted based loosely on gospel values but little or no reference is given to the person of Christ, his message or the Church's' teachings. Overtime, this approach can see the emergence of a "good" school taking the place of a Catholic school as leaders seek to eliminate any potential conflict between the values.

The "Reformulate" position reflects leaders' attempts to find new ways to express Catholic beliefs and practices so that they are meaningful experiences for those who are formed in the secular society. An underlying premise behind this is that the traditional forms of faith will be rejected because the gap is now too wide between the language of culture and the language of faith (practice and belief). This position requires religious education to be presented in a manner which recognises the diverse range of perspectives evidenced in the world today and the students freedom of choice.

Connection to a community of faith

Irrespective of what position it might opt for, the school needs a relationship with the community of faith. Without such a relationship, it ceases to be an authentic Catholic school. Sharkey (2015) identifies three forms of possible relationships between the home, parish and school.

One possibility of this relationship is to view the community of faith as comprising of just those who belong to a local parish and gather together on a Sunday. The school is not seen as a pastoral instrument of the Church. It is only Catholic to the extent that the families are at Church on Sunday.

This understanding recognises that schools have very little influence over what families do in their weekends and minimal influence over what the parish offers to families. The school certainly aims to have its values and beliefs extend beyond the school gate but it has no ability to enforce this.

Another possibility recognises that for most families there is no relationship with the parish. The school is the community of faith for these families. This can be true on a practical level as the school provides sacraments of Initiation

programmes for students as well as opportunities to deepen faith via knowledge and liturgical practices. This is probably the most common view today but it has some significant failings. Theologically, one cannot be Catholic on one's own. There need to be links to the broader faith community and these are usually missing. The lack of meaningful connections for students and families gives rise to a situation where students engage while they are at school but as soon as they leave school, they leave Church.

A third possibility for this relationship places the opportunities for expressions of faith within the familiar school environment and are grounded in its culture. It also allows for the accessing of this experience once a student has left school by the family and/or the student. In this way it connects with the wider Church. Such experiences could be a group of people gathered as a prayer group or because they have a particular interest such as fitness or social justice. Because they meet in a familiar environment on a regular basis, they may well be more open to celebrating the sacraments as a natural extension of what one does at school. Here the parish, where the community of faith gathers, is not of the traditional model but in the words of Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium n 28,* "something that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few.   It can assume quite different contours depending upon the openness and the missionary creativity of the pastor and the community" (Francis. 2013).

While not necessarily only in a Catholic setting, we are already witnessing some forms of this relationship. Maori have long ago moved from small centres, where much of their cultural life was organised around the marae, into larger urban centres offering greater employment opportunities. For many years there has been a struggle taking place to get Maori to reconnect to language, customs and marae.

Maori now go to the marae primarily when there is a need. It is no longer a regular part of life. However, Maori remain in contact through other means such as social media, health initiatives and smaller mixed iwi meetings around Maori education in the context of school. Families meet at school to promote initiatives such as "Maori success as Maori" and readily use prayer and hymns as part of these meetings. In some schools they also have access to a Mass in te reo Maori. Groups such as these can readily exist within and beyond the time students are at school.

This could be a way to support the special character of the school so that it becomes a community responsibility rather than the responsibility assigned to some via their job description. It could also help to address the emerging problems associated with personnel, secularism, and the prevailing youth culture.

A community of faith could be composed of past and present students along with their families, who gather for fellowship and prayer because they belong to the "Pompallier family". Such a community of faith is likely to offer greater contact with the lives and homes of those who are, or have been associated with the school.

The face of the Church

For most students and families, the school is their primary experience of Church. They are already disconnected and/or alienated from the parish and have no strong desire to reconnect or connect.

About 25% of families within Catholic secondary schools are either blended or from a single parent setting and a few are in same-sex relationships. (Authors estimate). Many of these parents already feel isolated from the parish given their family situation. Some also feel hurt, rejected and judged by those who gather on a Sunday. They may well love Jesus, but not his Church.

These parents and children do have a connection with the school. What the school is saying to them, how it treats them, how it makes them feel and how it ministers to their needs is the Church in action.

Pope Francis says, "The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel." (Francis, n 114, 2013).

Therefore one might expect that, "The (school, principal, staff, Board) must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel." If that is the lived culture within the school, then the Church is in a good place.

8.0 Implications.

What we have been doing in Catholic schools for the last 30 years has not arrested the trend of students drifting away from an active practice of their faith once they leave school. We have had, since the early 1990's an academic programme for religious studies, we have had preference criteria, we have had religious orders and large numbers of committed Catholic staff but the trend continues.

Business as usual will not enable the 2020 Beacon Plans Goals. The 2020 Beacon Plan Goals for New Zealand Catholic Schools were set over 20 years ago. The goals were set for the New Zealand Catholic Education system by the New Zealand Council of Proprietors of Catholic Integrated Schools and the Board

of the New Zealand Catholic Education Office in 1998 and were revised in 2006. Among these goals are:

- Quality, effective leadership of schools.
- A Catholic population which is knowledgeable about its Faith and supportive of its schools.
- Well qualified teachers in Catholic schools, especially in the areas of religious education and the Special Character dimension of the school.
- Strong partnership between parish(es) and school(s) to support the revitalisation of the Church's mission in the world.
  (NZCEO. 2013)

It is becoming increasingly difficult to get suitable candidates for tagged positions. This is in part due to the expectations associated with the tagged position and the need for the person to demonstrate a connection with parish life. Conditions for determining acceptability are considered to be too stringent by some Catholic primary principals' and very dependent upon a positive relationship with the local parish priest. (Nicholls. 2016) This will, in turn, impact upon the size of the pool available for leadership in the Catholic school system.

The current provision of courses for the education and formation of teachers' and leaders has a bias towards the larger cities. Schools outside of the main cities incur additional costs to attend training and often have fewer financial resources to draw upon given regional economic disparities. This in turn makes additional recruitment issues for smaller centres.

There is little support for new principals within Catholic school system aside from what is provided by the State system to first time principals. While such support covers much of the day-to-day business of running a school there is no systemic professional development available to support principals in their role of leading Special Character aside from academic study. This will be a significant issue for the schools when the current group of leaders retire.

Will the current structure and practices ensure that there is a sizable pool of applicants available for leadership roles in Catholic schools? The answer is most likely "No". Change needs to occur to facilitate the engagement of families with some form of new vision for parish. The schools are in a good position to facilitate this but it may require additional resourcing.

Targeting resources towards building more schools, offering more of the same formula and hoping for different outcomes does not seem sensible. Resources should be targeted towards existing schools to enable the exploration of different models in order to help the preservation and enhancement of the Special Character and the mission of the Church.

9.0 Conclusion.

There has been a significant decline in the number of people who actively participate in the Catholic church and overall Catholic numbers. There has been a significant increase in those who state they have no religious affiliation and this is even more notable for those aged under 40. New Zealand is becoming more secular.

In the next ten years a large section of the Catholic teaching profession will retire. These teachers grew up in a very different world of faith compared to those under 45 today. The leaders of tomorrow will have had limited exposure to the charism of religious orders, will be selected from a smaller pool of suitable applicants. and are likely to have fewer practising Catholics on the staff to support them. These leaders will need support networks to enable them to meet the expectations of managing a school and promoting the Special Character.

While at school, students generally participate willingly and actively in liturgical events and religious education. Once they leave the school community, the practice falls away rapidly. They are no longer a member of a community to which they felt a degree of allegiance (the particular Catholic school) nor are they inclined to actively participate in another community (local parish) which has no discernible relevance for them.

There needs to an alternative approach to enable the mission of the Church, one that will meet the needs and desires of young people within the context of a familiar environment such as a school. The school is not an alien place to the student whereas the local parish church is for many of them.

A new approach, centred on the school as parish to families, could provide an environment that enables faith and helps to sustain the Special Character and charism of the school and provide support to leadership in this area. It could also help to grow the number of churched people and increase the numbers of teachers who have an understanding and commitment to Catholic Church and its mission.

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SABBATICALS
_____

AN APPROACH TO WRITING YOUR SABBATICAL REPORT

There is no hard and fast approach to writing your sabbatical report; this is entirely up to you. However, your report is likely to have a wide readership, because will be archived in an area of *Educational Leaders* that has public access.

If you would like some pointers on putting your report together, these planning ideas might help you.

1. PURPOSE: Why are you writing this report? What do you want to let other principals know about your sabbatical? Does the title of the report clearly state the focus of your sabbatical?

2. READERS: Your readers are most likely to be other principals:

- What might this mean for the style of writing that you use?
- How might these readers use this report?
- Are your readers likely to know about this topic? If not, what kind of backgrounding information will you need to provide for them?
- What are the key points that you would like your readers to remember?

3. REPORT TYPE: What type of report is it?

- What organising sequence would be best to use?
- Can you 'chunk' your report into sections? This will help readers to digest the information. What will the focus of each section be? It is helpful to label your sections with their own headings.

4. STRUCTURE: A possible structure for writing this report is:

- Title: showing the focus of the sabbatical
- Author, school, period of time sabbatical covers
- Acknowledgements
- Executive summary
- Purpose (as in your proposal)
- Rationale and Background information (as necessary)
- Activities undertaken (methodology)
- Findings
- Implications
- Conclusions
- References

5. PRESENTATION: Preferred fonts for readability are: Arial, Times and Times New Roman. Main headings should be in 14 pt; side headings and body text should be in 12 pt. Clearly label the electronic file with your name.

You should submit your report as an electronic file and use this email address: mailto:leadership@tki.org.nz