



# St Marys School

## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL CHARTER 2018

**Charism Statement:** St Mary's School will work to nurture each child so that they grow and develop, spiritually, intellectually and physically, into caring and responsible members of our school community.

**Mission Statement:** Within Catholic belief and practice, our school will develop the abilities and special talents of each student.

**Vision Statement:** Attitude for Excellence.

St Mary's School is a Roman Catholic integrated primary school for boys and girls from New Entrants to Year 8 offering education with a Special Character.

Our Community consists of:

- The Catholic Parish of Whanganui
- The Roman Catholic community of the Diocese
- The Bishop of Palmerston North
- The students, staff, Board of Trustees, parents and families associated with the school.

St Mary's School has been the primary school of the parish for many years. The Sisters of St Joseph made a significant contribution to the school in terms of teaching its pupils and shaping its development.

St Mary's School draws children city wide. Nearly all children are from families of Catholic background. We have a 5% non-preference roll.

The general school roll is a diverse ethnic community made up of European, Māori, Pacific Island, Asian, African, Middle Eastern and American. Most of our Māori families are from local iwi – Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī from the Whanganui River and Ngā Rauru.

Our immediate district features a number of light industry work sites, lower income housing and retirees.

We are a decile 3 school.

Parents and Caregivers represent a wide cross-section of the community with respect to employment and family composition.

St Mary's School has strong links with the other Catholic Schools in Whanganui. The school has contact with a number of organisations in the City catering for the cultural, educational, recreational and sporting needs of the students. Our year 7/8 students use the facilities of nearby Cullinane College for Technology. The school is part of The Catholic Parish Whanganui and St Mary's is the main Church of the school's parish life. Our students attend Mass at St Joseph's weekly on a roster basis.

St. Mary's has eleven teaching classrooms, grouped in two vertical teams.

Each class is composite which allows for greater choice in placing students which is imperative for forming strong relationships between staff and students.

Our reception classroom is the Junior Learning Centre and this caters for Year 0 - 2. Two teachers work in this learning environment. Room 3 caters to Year 2, Room 4 Year 2/3, Room 5 Year 3/4, Room 6 Year 4, Rooms 7, 8 and 9 cater to Years 5 and 6. Rooms 10 and 11 cater for our Intermediate students, Year 7/8.

Experienced, excellent teachers, specialist teaching and learning programmes, coaching, gifted and talented projects and a great team of trained and expert ancillary staff are a defining feature of our school. They are a hardworking, committed team who have been partners in our vision of education for the future where children succeed. School staff consists of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Director of Religious Studies, 2 Team Leaders, 7 Teachers, 3 part time teachers, 6 Teacher Aids, 1 part time Librarian, 1 Office Administrator, 1 part time cleaner and 1 Caretaker.

We are first and foremost a Catholic School with a primary purpose; to build the faith and knowledge our students need to be committed, active Christians. We are about creating students who will be active participants in New Zealand's future. Students who are authentic and full of integrity. We aim to prepare our students for the next steps in their learning journey, building each year on the strong foundations of the year before. Literacy, numeracy and the key competencies are a priority.

Restorative Practice is a fundamental approach to develop and nurture kind, caring, thoughtful, compassionate and responsible students. This is a shift from managing behaviour to building, nurturing and repairing relationships, a system that holds people accountable to each other not just to school rules. This process has empowered our students to take responsibility for their actions and restore mana for themselves and others.

Underpinning everything we do are our 4 Gospel Values. We run with the tag line of 'In Christ I Can.' The Gospel Values we have chosen are Inclusion, Courtesy, Integrity and Courage. We actively teach and set personal goals and reflection around these values. These are reported on each term through our Learning Journey portfolios. We run a positive reward system to encourage students to reach for these values. We also have a visual measure so students can see what we are needing to work on.

Student leadership and partnership in school management is a major feature in our corporate well-being. Our roles of responsibility feature through our Heads of School, School Council, Service Teams, Liturgy Team, Garden Team, Peer Mediators, Road Patrollers, Milk Monitors, House Teams and classes who run school assembly in turns.

We have a very supportive community, highly motivated and committed staff, an active and skilled Board of Trustees, a great PTA and delightful students. We believe we are the place to be. We run at capacity with a constant waiting list which tells us we are on the right journey.

We have become a Duffy School which will raise the enthusiasm for literacy. Each student will receive 3 books each over the year along with visiting role models who promote reading and a literacy based show. Our library will also benefit from this scheme.

St. Mary's School recognises the unique position of Māori, the dual heritage of New Zealand and New Zealand's cultural diversity and our requirement to honour the Treaty of Waitangi. We begin each year with a unit of study around New Zealand and Whanganui history. As part of our responsibility for Māori educational outcomes, we will consult with our Māori Community and Kapa Haka providers each year to inform our vision and focus for our students. Tikanga Māori and Te Reo are an important part of what we do at St Mary's School as we learn and grow together.

To guide our strategic planning we conduct a yearly community survey, we gather student voice throughout the year and spend time as a Board of Trustees, Senior Management Team and Teaching staff to create a shared vision and direction.

The St Mary's School Board of Trustees undertakes to take all reasonable steps to achieve the purpose, aims and objectives in the Charter and Strategic Plan, which has been approved by the Board of Trustees, following consultation with the community and to take full account of the NEGs, NAGs, National Standards and the National Curriculum.

**Procedural information**

**Annual Cycle**

St. Mary's School will lodge a copy of the annually updated Charter to the Ministry of Education by end of February each year and in all other ways comply with legislative and suggested timetables set down by the Ministry of Education.

Mr Ari Houshangi Board of Trustees Chair  
Mrs Jacqui Luxton Principal