

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

**Pompallier Diocesan Centre, 30 New Street,
Ponsonby, Auckland 1144**

***He Arotake Whanaketanga mō te Mātauranga
Ahurea Katorika-Te Ture mō ngā Kura Katorika***

Catholic Special Character External Evaluation for Development Report

Rosmini College

Evaluation conducted on 15 – 17 March 2023

Confirmed Report 24 April 2023

School Details

Name of School: Rosmini College

Address: 36 Dominion Street, Takapuna, Auckland

School type: State Integrated Catholic School Years 7 to 13 Boys

Actual roll: 1,118

Maximum roll: 1,200

Non-preference maximum: 56

Actual non-preference number: 55 (4.9% of 1,118)

Roll based staffing entitlement: 67.4

Required number of Special Character CI 47 positions: 30

Filled number of Special Character CI 47 positions: 31

Headmaster: Mr Nixon Cooper

Director of Religious Studies: Mrs Lynne Van Wyk

HOD RE: Miss Olivia Fernandes

Presiding Member, School Board: Mr Iain Gallie

Chaplain: Fr Nathaniel Brazil

Evaluation Team:

Lead Evaluator:	Monica Johnson
Accompanying Evaluator:	Phillip Mahoney
Accompanying Principal:	Jan Waelen

The Aims of Catholic Special Character External Evaluation for Development

Effective evaluation processes enable the school to understand how ākonga are developing in relation to valued outcomes, how improvement actions have impacted on ākonga, what needs to be changed and what further actions are required. Therefore, the Catholic special character evaluation process produces a focused picture of the impact of Catholic schooling and the effectiveness of its goals on the lives of all tamariki and rangatahi. The process seeks to determine whether they have encountered the living God revealed in Jesus Christ, grown in knowledge of Him and His Church, and as a result are forming a deep and lasting relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church. The process also evaluates how the whole school community engages in authentic Catholic Christian witness and evangelisation.

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

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

Introduction

The reviewers are very mindful of the on-going challenges that schools have faced during the COVID Pandemic over the past few years and the impact of recent hurricanes. We are very grateful that the evaluation could be carried out on-site.

Rosmini College is a Year 7 to 13 State Integrated school for boys founded by the Rosminian order to provide a Catholic education *'that supports and develops well-rounded young men while keeping true to the maxims of Antonio Rosmini that fosters a genuine encounter with Christ.'* School Prospectus The values of dignity, integrity, fairness, charity and justice reflect the motto of the founding of the Rosminian order *Legis, Plenitudo, Caritas – Charity fulfills the law.*

The College is situated in extensive grounds on the North Shore in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland and the Mana whenua are Ngāti Pāoa. It has a proud sporting tradition and a reputation for high academic achievement.

The Headmaster, Nixon Cooper, has been in the position for eight years, taking over from long-serving foundation Principal Tom Gerard who was at the school for more than thirty years. The Senior Leadership team includes the Headmaster, three Deputy Headmasters, Head of Year 7 and 8, and two assistant Headmasters. One of these, Kane Wilson was appointed this year in charge of Te Ao Māori.

The team spent three days in the school meeting groups of staff, students, parents and the Board, and visiting RE teachers and a range of other subjects. Many informal discussions were

also held and we were privileged to attend a Wednesday Mass, celebrated by school Chaplain Father Nathaniel Brazil. On arrival we were welcomed with a Whakatau led by a student Tū Rangatira.

The team appreciated the *maanakitanga* throughout our time at the school and found both students and staff to be welcoming, respectful, friendly and polite.

Progress with Recommendations from the Catholic Special Character Review/Evaluation for Development Report

- It was recommended that retreats be staggered. However, the new DRS has chosen to have all levels doing retreats this year. Her reasoning for this is the tremendous disruption to the retreat programme in the last three years due to COVID. External provider, NET, has been contracted to provide some of these.
- A sacramental programme has been initiated for the last two years now and will continue this year. This has the full support of all stakeholders, including the new Chaplain. At the time of the last review, it was being blocked by the Chaplain.
- Further teachers have been recruited to the department and most significantly into the roles of DRS and HOD RE, which have now been split.
- All staff are now required to sign the *Expectations for staff employed in a Catholic School* form.
- The Board plans to engage in an ongoing programme of Catholic character formation in Partnership with the DRS. This has not been possible with either of the previous DRS's.

Initiatives in 2023

- Two levels of sacramental programmes with targeted invitations
- Extension of Catholic Character leaders to include leaders at all levels
- Programme of staff formation
- More active involvement by staff in retreats and Masses
- Exposure to different types of traditional and contemporary prayer
- Further promotion to encourage increased membership of the College's Catholic based service groups

Dimension 1: Te Tūtaki ki a Te Karaiti-Encounter with Christ

How effectively does the school encourage and facilitate the development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ who reveals the transforming love and truth of the living God?

Rosmini College is effectively encouraging and facilitating the development of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through ongoing spiritual formation of staff and students, increasing evangelisation and authentic faith-based leadership. The College understands its ecclesial role and has prayer and liturgy as a daily part of school life and regular celebrations of the sacraments.

Evangelisation

A faith practice survey that was carried out last year, to which 20% of the students responded, showed that a lot were disconnected from faith practice outside of school and for many the school was the only faith community they have.

The College is delighted that they are now able to offer Sacramental programmes again even though they have been interrupted by Covid when initially reinstated. In 2022 fifteen students received sacraments at the local St Joseph's Catholic Church Takapuna. This year it is planned to have two programmes, a senior and a junior one and targeted invitations will be sent out. The programme has the full support of the school Chaplain. This faith witness is a powerful message for the community. While over 90% of the 2022 intake were in the 5.1 preference category there are a significant number who are yet to receive the sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation. A targeted approach to these students and 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 with invitations to join a sacramental programme could be discussed at enrolment interviews.

Prayer is part of the daily life of the school. The school prayer is prayed every morning at form time and the school diary for junior students has traditional prayers and school anthem including te reo translations. *'Our morning prayer and prayers before a sports game always remind us that we are never alone'* Year 12 student. Creative prayer is more evident in years 7 and 8, and less at older levels, where there are prayer books but largely teacher led. As mentioned above a focus throughout the year will be exposing both staff and students to different traditional and contemporary forms of prayer.

This year the opening school Mass was delayed due to the unforeseen flooding and closure of schools over what should have been the first week back at school. It was decided to hold two

special Ash Wednesday Masses on 22 February. The leaders for 2023 and the teachers new to Rosmini College were offered a special blessing at this Mass.

There is a beautiful school chapel where Mass is celebrated on Wednesday lunchtime and is attended by a range of students and staff. A peaceful lawn and garden space at the entrance provides a space for quiet reflection and is available for all to use. *'I occasionally spend time in the chapel or the garden outside to reflect'*. Year 13 student

In recognition of the College's 50th jubilee in 2012 a jubilee cross was commissioned and made by local artist and iconographer, Michael Pervan. This is carved with the school motto, a quote from St Paul to the Romans, and is displayed outside the auditorium. Visuals such as this are significant reminders of the Colleges Catholic faith and it has been identified that this is an important way of reinforcing the teachings of Jesus and the schools values. A project is underway to have the theme for the year displayed in every room in the school as well as the school values of dignity, integrity, fairness, charity and justice. Other visuals including statements could also be considered. For example in the sports pavilion.

Faith-based Leadership

The faith-based leadership and witness of the Headmaster and Senior leadership team is fundamental in all they do. They are a relatively new team with a wide range of skills who are working collaboratively on the key areas for development they have identified. A new strategic plan is being prepared. Led by the Headmaster who is well grounded in his faith, and an active member of a local Parish, he has a calm, pragmatic approach to all he undertakes. He is well-respected by all in the school community. He in turn is very affirming of the new senior leadership team describing them as loyal, highly skilled and very supportive of the Catholic character.

In 2023 a new Director of Religious Studies has been appointed. Her passion and empathy is already evident in the way she has gained the support of staff in such a short time. In the Headmaster's words *'I look forward to the revitalization and expansion of our liturgical, sacramental and social justice programmes.'* This also includes the leadership of the Religious Education Department and positive steps have now been put in place to develop this with the appointment of a new HOD Religious Studies who is totally committed to her role. Both are willing and open to seek support in the development of these

important roles, and the Headmaster is supportive of this. The DRS did express a desire to be working fully in the RE Department when staffing allows.

The prefect team has a Catholic Character leader who is supported by a team of eight. They take their responsibilities seriously and are able to articulate links between their roles, the values of the school and Gospel messages. At a recent school assembly they received their badges along with the Young Vinnies Leader, Peer Support and the Student Volunteer Army Leader. The latter was established last year and promotes the Gospel message '*carry each other's burdens, so you will fulfil the law of Christ*'. It currently has over 200 members.

It is planned to extend the liturgy training programme to all levels to work as Catholic Character Captains alongside the year 13 Catholic Character leaders.

In January 15 Rosmini students from years 9 to 13 attended St. Joseph Youth *Life teen* summer camp at Sunshine Ranch in Clevedon. The theme for the camp was *Always Forward*. This theme captured the essence of perseverance and resilience required to reach their life goals; and challenges they may face. A great sense of community was created amongst all students from North Shore schools, but especially between the Rosmini boys who attended. This bonding experience reinforced the brotherhood theme.

The faith leadership of teachers in Special Character positions (tagged teachers) is another important aspect of Catholic character in a school and ways to enhance this should be explored as well as supporting staff who are not Catholic in their understanding of what it means to work in a Catholic school.

Next Steps for Development

Target invitations for students to give those 5.3 and 5.4 students, and 5.1 who have not received all the sacraments, to provide an opportunity to be fully received into the church and join a sacramental programme.

Continue to explore ways to include more variety of prayer in the daily life of the school and expand the prayer resources available to all staff, including in te reo Māori.

Introduce more visual reminders of Special Catholic character throughout the school, including staff areas, classrooms, auditoriums and gymnasium.

Continue to develop faith leadership at all levels of the school.

Continue to engage with Diocesan programmes that are offered throughout the year for staff to strengthen the development of a personal relationship with Christ.

Consider the roles of teachers in Special Character positions (tagged teachers) and how they can be used to support and enhance the Special Catholic Character of the school.

Dimension 2: Mā te Mātauranga ka Tipu: Growth in Knowledge

Religious Education

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

The Religious Education department is in a rebuilding phase with new staff and recalibration after three challenging years. The appointment of a new DRS and HOD RE is already having a positive effect and has the potential to further assist the community to grow in knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ, his teachings and the Catholic Church. Also raising awareness of the new *He Pūrongo Arotake Mātauranga Ahurea Katorika ā Waho Catholic Special Character External Evaluation* document for all staff would be beneficial to explain how special character is embedded in authentic Catholic schools and to encourage a more evaluative lens across the school.

The HOD RE is well qualified and the DRS is working towards her Graduate Diploma in Theology. Other teachers in the department who don't have qualifications are being encouraged to begin study at Level 5 and 6. Of the 8 teachers in the Department, 5 teach in other areas also. 10 staff have qualifications in CFLE or have attended the *Understanding Sexuality Course* or *Having Life to the Full*, with 2 more planning to attend. Some key staff also attended the *Aroha and Gender Diversity* run by the Diocese.

The nationally mandated RE curriculum is delivered across all levels, with all levels now receiving the regulated time. A significant amount of work is underway to review programmes and begin to introduce the new RE curriculum *To Tātou Whakapono Our Faith*. A trial is underway with a year 11 standard. This will take time and professional development for all

teachers in the department and should include refreshing pedagogy as well as content. Consideration should be given to making this a priority for funding over the next few years.

The RE department is currently developing resources to prepare for the new curriculum. At present, work from Year 7-13 is being developed with schemes of work, digital resources which will be trialled in RE classrooms over the course of the year, RE teachers from Years 11-13 will be attending the To Tātou Whakapono workshops in Auckland to prepare for the upcoming changes to the RE curriculum.

When we visited religious education classes during our time at the school students were generally engaged and could articulate what they were learning. Most classrooms had teacher led activities, with students willingly participating in class discussion or answering questions. With the new curriculum there is an opportunity to explore other methods of teaching that increases student agency in the acquisition and interpretation of knowledge.

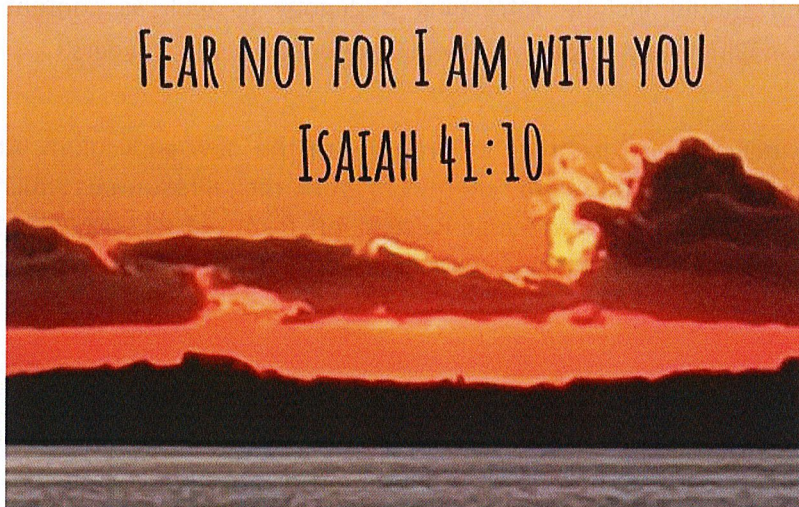
'My RE teachers especially have helped me find my reason for believing. I didn't really connect with my faith when I first came here because I felt I was forced into it at home. Coming to Rosmini has given me a community that understood and helped me learn.' Year 13 student

'I particularly enjoy the deep philosophical and theological discussions especially when they are not censored'. Year 12 student.

Developing and encouraging students to participate in a Religious Education Scholarship programme promotes the subject as an academic one with the same rigor as other subjects. Furthermore, awarding a special prize for Religious Education at the end of the year prize giving for each year level would enhance the status of the subject.

School newsletters and publications contain information about Special Catholic Character and associated activities. A more prominent focus in the school magazine, celebrating the leadership roles and further explanations in the student diary should be considered to make the fundamental ethos more explicit.

The Catholic Character theme for 2023 is *"Fear not for I am with you."* Isaiah 41:10.



This was introduced to all staff at the beginning of the year beginning with a prayerful liturgy that reflected the theme. *'This was especially apt this year in a time when many in our school and community are facing difficulties and challenges after the pandemic and now the recent floods. Staff were encouraged to not be afraid to show our Catholic character and they responded very positively'*. DRS.

Retreats will be held for all year levels this year. The reason for this is that retreats have not been able to take place over the past three years due to Covid. The National Evangelistic Team (NET) encounter team will be leading this for years 11, 12 and 13 at St Thomas More Glenfield and the St Joseph's retreat facilitators for the year 7,8, 9 and 10 cohorts. A further aim is to continue building links with the parish communities. Students found retreats enjoyable and some commented that it helped them learn more about the Church's teachings.

Next Steps for Development

Continue to engage with PLD around the new RE curriculum to review current programmes and introduce the new RE curriculum *To Tātou Whakapono Our Faith* in the near future. This should include refreshing pedagogy as part of this change.

Establish a cyclical evaluation process in line with the new *He Pūrongo Arotake Mātauranga Ahurea Katorika ā Waho Catholic Special Character External Evaluation* document and raise awareness of the dimensions in the framework with all staff.

Support RE staff and tagged teachers to work towards qualifications and certification.

Promote RE scholarship examinations as a way of deepening understanding of the Catholic faith.

Use publications to more explicitly show the wider community how special Catholic Character is lived and celebrated at Rosmini College.

As part of the support for the DRS and HOD RE consider establishing a mentor relationship with another school.

Dimension 3: Te Whakaatu Karaitiana-Christian Witness

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

'Faith is caught through contact with people whose daily life bears witness to it'. Rosmini College Policy Framework, page 3. There are many examples of the integration of faith and life with staff effectively role modelling the Gospel values on a daily basis and students having a sound understanding of Catholic Social teachings.

There is a strong sense of community at Rosmini College and strong emphasis is put on community service and developing positive relationships. The students *'enjoy, capture and live out their faith, creating harmony, building warm relationships and experiencing service opportunities.'* DRS. Relationships between staff and students, and each other are respectful, relaxed, pleasant and courteous.

The sense of community and brotherhood is pervasive and proudly spoken about by all. *'The brotherhood that is formed through the school values has helped me through some difficult periods of my life. The support of people around me is touching'*. Year 13 student

The Tuakana Teina support is valued by students, as is the Peer Support programme.

The range of community outreach is impressive. Groups such as Young Vinnies, CARITAS, De Paul House, Eddies Meals, Chefs for Compassion, homework clubs, rest home visits, Envirogroup, sports coaching and refereeing, over 200 students in the Volunteer Army, Over the back fence, and travelling pots. Response to individual appeals is also impressive. *'We have many opportunities to really put our faith into action'*. Year 11 student.

A good example of effective integration of faith and life is the college's Envirogroup. They are involved in activities and awareness raising such as for World Wildlife Day, Earth Hour, clean-up events, eradication of pests and noxious plants, inspire young Catholics to contemplate their electricity/energy uses, which directly

links to the emissions of fossil fuels and reducing plastic waste.

'The Rosmini Envirogroup helps us personify and demonstrate our Catholic duty to protect our environment. As Rosminians we take pride in our Catholic character and strive to serve God through our actions.....Participating in all these activities is not only life-changing for our planet, but for the Catholic character of the young men at Rosmini College. In 2021, Pope Francis spoke to dozens of religious leaders, with a plea to protect the environment. We as Catholics should strive towards creating a healthier and less polluted world. In Numbers 35:33 it states, "You shall not pollute the land in which you live" which begs the question. Do we as Catholics really do what is best for the planet God made for us? Do we take care of "Our Common Home" (Pope Francis 2015 encyclicalnet.' Envirogroup Leader. They aim to incorporate three specific values into their daily lives: dignity, integrity and fairness.

The College is committed to giving effect to the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi. The newly appointed Assistant Principal in charge of Te Ao Māori has identified seven areas for development. He is in the process of developing a plan called *Tikanga Mō Te Kura Tuarua o Rosmini: Te Ao Maori me Te Matāuranga Māori for Rosmini College: The Māori World and learning through a Māori educational lens*. This includes: regular hui with whanau, supporting Māori students, working with an external agency Pūheke, building Cultural Capability across the staff, developing Te Reo Māori as a subject, connecting with local iwi, incorporating himene and waiata in prayers and liturgies and learning about early Church history in New Zealand. This will take time and resources but has the support of the Headmaster and Senior Leadership team.

Māori students that we spoke to felt that they were supported but the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori in some curriculum areas and school life could be strengthened. There is a school haka, and a long standing tradition of performing a haka as the year 13s depart for the final time which is special. However, the Kapa haka group has been affected by gathering restrictions over the past few years.

The year level Deans are focused on Pastoral care with a well-respected Student Mentor, instead of a Counsellor. *'Deans have a vital role in developing the positive culture of our college'*. Staff handbook pg23. Restorative practices are used and it would be worthwhile reviewing the school's behaviour management procedures and link more explicitly to the Gospel values.

The school timetables one period per week for all students in Year 7 and 8, and contributes health and life skill content across the Years 11 – 13 Health classes. *'The Health and Life Skills programme is developed in consultation with parents, students and the Catholic community.*

Mental Health and Sexuality Education are treated with sensitivity to the Special Character of Rosmini College, especially in regard to the spiritual and individual needs.’ Health Teacher.

As part of the on-going induction programme for all year 7 students they have a period a week called *Learning Enhancement* where they are introduced to the Rosmini way and the College environment. The Headmaster enjoys being part of this programme so that he can meet and interact with all of the boys.

The Special Needs Coordinator works hard to understand the needs of students who come from over 45 feeder schools. Everything she and her team do is based on Catholic values. *‘We treat people with dignity and help with patience and kindness in the way Jesus would have done’.*

Next Steps for Development

Continue to support the plan *Tikanga Mō Te Kura Tuarua o Rosmini: Te Ao Maori me Te Matāuranga Māori for Rosmini College: The Māori World and learning through a Māori educational lens.*

Evaluate the school’s pastoral care and behaviour management policies, procedures and practices to establish clear links to the teachings of the Catholic Church and more explicitly to the Gospel values.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the many outreach programmes and prioritise where possible, perhaps linked to the theme or school-wide focus for the year.

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

The Board and Senior Leadership team and Senior Leadership Team ensure that the vision and strategic direction for the College openly reflects the philosophy and ethos of Catholic schools. They take their responsibility as kaitiaki of Catholic special character, including meeting its statutory compliances, seriously.

The opening statement in the Rosmini College policy framework is *‘It is important to understand that whatever content any policy is dealing with, the policy must ensure that it operates within the context of a faith community whose aim is the transmission of values for living.’* Rosmini College Policy Framework Page 3.

The current Board has a mix of longer serving members and some new. They have good

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connections to the community, including Old Boys of the school. The Proprietor's Appointees have an in-depth understanding of their responsibilities and are very willing to engage with the new evaluation model to ensure the safeguarding and strengthening of Catholic Character. With strategic planning underway for the next few years formation for the whole Board is important. This could include Diocesan forums, and familiarisation with documents such as *The Catholic Education of School Aged Children*, *The Handbook for Catholic Boards of Trustees* and the new RE Curriculum and Evaluation Guidelines.

The Special Character compliances School Board Attestation document was completed and signed by the Presiding Member and Headmaster on March 27 2023. Mandated requirements of the maximum roll, preference and non-preference enrolments, tagged teachers and requirements of the Health curriculum are all being met. While just over 50% of the yearly intake is from local Catholic primary schools, the number of 5.1 enrolments is high. Over 90% of enrolments were in this category in 2022. It would be an advantage to discuss the expectation that those students who are yet to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and confirmation be part of a sacramental programme.

Although there is no Special Character committee on the Board, the DRS provides a report to each Board meeting. This could be strengthened to include each of the dimensions of the evaluation framework, and reporting against the special Character action plan goals.

Catholic identity and Charism is enmeshed through various aspects of school life and articulated in some documentation and communications. This is an area that could be reviewed to ensure there is consistent promotion of what it means to be part of a Catholic College and a common language evident across Board and operation levels including curriculum, policy and procedures, pastoral care, behaviour plans, communications, leadership formation and social outreach. Some policies and job descriptions do need to be reviewed to include Special Catholic Character. NZCEO has a set of model policies that build on the NZ School Trustees one, that include a Catholic lens.

Next Steps for Development

Introduce a systematic and targeted evaluation cycle and reporting based for special Catholic Character using the new *He Pūrongo Arotake Mātauranga Ahurea Katorika ā Waho* evaluation framework.

Set clear expectations at enrolment that participation in a sacramental programme is strongly encouraged if sacraments not already received.

Plan a robust formation programme for the Board that includes an understanding of the responsibilities to uphold and enhance the Catholic Special Character.

Consider reviewing the approach to Catholic Special Character reporting to the Board so that the dimensions of the evaluation framework and action plan goals are used.

Incorporate a Catholic lens in all school policies and procedures.

The evaluation team thanks the community of Rosmini College for the welcome, manaakitanga and cooperation extended to them and for the opportunity to experience the way that they safeguard and strengthen their Catholic special character. The organisation and preparation for the external evaluation by the college is greatly appreciated. The evaluation team is confident that the Rosmini College leadership team has the willingness and ability to address these next steps fully before the next external evaluation. The Catholic Education Office staff are available to assist in compiling an action plan to address these if required.

Rosmini College is a school with a Catholic heart, upholding the maxims of Antonio Rosmini. It offers a holistic and authentic Catholic education where students are taught to enjoy, capture and live out the Catholic faith in their daily lives with the opportunity to grow in their understanding of the Catholic Church.

It was a pleasure for the evaluation team to spend time getting to know the Rosmini College's community. We wish you every blessing for the future with the important work that you do.



Phillip Mahoney
Manager for Education Auckland Diocese



Monica Johnson
Lead Evaluator

Date: April 24 2023