



## STAFF FACT SHEET

### Expectations for staff of a Catholic school

Not all employees of a Catholic school have to be Catholic. However, every teacher (and every member of staff) is obliged to uphold and support the Catholic Character in all they do and must do nothing to damage or undermine it. This requirement applies to both staff members' professional activities and their lives outside the school.

The Board needs to develop a policy to ensure that each teacher or staff member has a clear understanding of what they undertake when they accept a position at a Catholic school. Candidates can be asked if they are prepared to actively support the specific values that a Catholic School stands for, both in their teaching and in the behaviour they model.

It is strongly recommended that this document in Appendix 4.2 is included in the application pack, and that the Board require candidates to sign this document to show that they have read it and understand what is expected of them. This may be done when the offer of employment is accepted, and the signed document may then be filed with the appointee's records.

The Board's policy document needs to specify what a tagged position requires in relation to Catholic Character.

### Appointment of teachers

When determining which applicant is best suited to a particular teaching position, the Board must balance the following requirements:

- the Board's obligation to appoint teachers so that the school will reflect the Catholic Character in its teaching and conduct
- the need to have competent teachers to fulfil the educational objectives of the school and provide for the special needs of the students
- the need to be just and equitable to all who wish to apply for the position
- the gender and ethnic balance of the staff as well as the proportion of Catholic teachers to teachers of other faiths and beliefs already in the school.

The Board needs to ensure that it appoints teachers who can contribute actively to the school's special character, or at least are sympathetic to the school's objectives, as set out in the school charter or elsewhere.

## Statement of Expectations for staff of a Catholic school

This statement is to be read in association with the School Charter, a copy of which is available from the school.

The Catholic Church has developed an international network of schools because it believes the Church has a pivotal single intention:

- that God's kingdom may come, and that the salvation of the whole human race may come to pass

Gaudium et Spes, 45a: Second Vatican Council

The special character of a Catholic school is defined in the school's Integration Agreement 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 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.

Most schools also have a defined charism which may be specified in the school's Integration Agreement. A person applying for a position in a Catholic school needs to understand the commitment this involves as follows:

- All staff, whether Catholic or not, are part of the whole school community. Each staff member is therefore expected to use his or her specific strengths and skills to support the mission of the school.
- A Catholic school shares the mission of the Church by developing students with knowledge, faith and values, all of which are in harmony.
- The curriculum and specific subjects are taught for their own value and with their own objectives. Seeking truth, wherever it is found, is fundamental to a Catholic school.
- The Religious Education programme is an integral part of the curriculum. The principles, truths and ethics of this programme permeate the whole life of the school. The students are taught that:
  - o God is creator
  - o Jesus Christ is God-made-man
  - o Humankind's ultimate goal is heaven
  - o Authority to teach and interpret God's revelation was entrusted to the Church by Christ, and is exercised by the Pope and the Bishops.

The school subscribes to the Apostles' Creed, which is the oldest of the formulas used by the Christians to express their faith. It accepts the two-fold commandment of Christ, love of God and neighbour and the other values expressed by Christ as norms for living. The focal point of the whole school is Christ.

No staff member will be required to act against their own conscience or personal philosophy of life. Such a requirement would not be in keeping with Catholicism and is contrary to the aims of the school.

However, in accepting a position in a Catholic school it is assumed that staff members realise that:

- Staff work as a team. Therefore, all staff are expected to contribute, according to their individual strengths and within their personal convictions, to the total purpose of the school. No school can operate successfully if any staff member undermines the positive efforts of others.
- 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 are role models for students, colleagues, parents/caregivers in living the mission and values of the school.
- Staff who do not profess Catholicism are expected to promote the Catholic Character of the school, and to refrain from doing or saying anything that would be antithetical to the school's Catholic Character.
- Staff are expected to abide by the Code of Ethics for Staff and Boards of New Zealand Catholic Schools.
- In schools with a defined charism staff are also expected to uphold that charism.

New staff will find others who are willing to assist them in gaining a fuller understanding of the school and its Catholic Character, and in solving any difficulties that may arise in the course of their work. In addition, the following resources will be helpful:

- The Catholic Education of School-Age Children (NZ Catholic Bishops Conference, 2014)
- Sharing the Gospel Today: NZ Catechetical Directory (NZ Catholic Bishops Conference, 2012)
- Catechism of the Catholic Church (June 1994)
- Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (NCRS, 1996)
- Understanding Faith: Religious Education Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools Year 9–13 Aotearoa New Zealand (NCRS, revised 2010)
- The Declaration (New Zealand Council of Proprietors of Catholic State-Integrated Schools, 1997, revised 2007)
- The Catholic School (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977)
- Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982)
- The Church’s Confession of Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults (German Bishops’ Conference, St Ignatius Press, 1987, San Francisco)
- The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988).
- The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (Congregation for Catholic Education, July 1998)

I agree to uphold the expectations outlined in this document.

Staff member:

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Principal:

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Date: .....

