



2026

Handbook for School Boards

of New Zealand Catholic State-Integrated Schools

2026 Edition

Published by
New Zealand Catholic Education Office
Te Tari Mātauranga Katorika o Aotearoa
PO Box 12307, Wellington 6144, New Zealand

www.nzceo.org.nz

© Copyright NZCEO Ltd. Material in this document can be freely distributed and reproduced as long as the content remains unaltered and NZCEO Ltd is identified as the copyright owner.

Contents

Introduction	5
The purpose of this handbook.....	6
Key Resources and Information.....	6
Further information	6
The nature of Catholic state-integrated schools	7
Legal Responsibilities	9
Introduction.....	10
Education and Training Act 2020	11
Integration Agreement.....	12
Canon Law.....	12
Other relevant legislation	13
Integration	19
The Catholic State-Integrated School	20
The founding principles of integration.....	20
Each school has an integration agreement.....	21
Proprietor, Crown and School Board: Building effective relationships.....	22
Cancellation of an integration agreement and school closure	23
Special Character.....	25
Definition of Special Character	26
The Goals of Catholic Education	27
The Nature of Catholic Special Character	28
The Philosophy of Catholic Schools.....	31
Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Special Character	32
Evaluation of Catholic Special Character	33
Professional development for Catholic special character	35
Chaplain.....	37
Other links	39

Governance	41
Introduction.....	42
Governance in a Catholic state integrated school context	42
Board composition and roles	46
Catholic Special Character Responsibilities	50
Policies and Procedures	52
Financial Governance	54
Strategic Relationships	56
Compliances and reporting	58
Board culture.....	59
Key areas of oversight.....	60
Risk Management	61
Board Induction and Training	62
Property	65
Introduction.....	66
Property Obligations.....	66
Maintenance of buildings and grounds	68
School board’s responsibility to inform proprietor	73
Proprietor’s 10-year property plan	73
Board-funded capital works.....	74
Furniture and equipment	77
Insurance	77
Access and use of school premises.....	78
Enrolment.....	81
Context and Overview.....	82
Legal and Integration Requirements.....	82
Roles and Responsibilities	83
Preference of Enrolment	83
Enrolment Process.....	84
Enrolment Obligations of Parents.....	86
School Administrative Requirements.....	86
Managing the Maximum Roll.....	87
Increasing the Maximum Roll.....	88
Enrolment Schemes	89
International Students.....	89
Quick Summary for Boards.....	91

Employment.....93

 Board Responsibilities for Staff Appointments94

 Special Character staffing framework99

 Updating Job Descriptions 110

 Advertising for Positions 111

 Determining Acceptability [Special Character] 113

 Establishing Suitability for Appointment..... 115

 Appointment process..... 116

 Appointment contracts..... 117

 Induction and ongoing responsibility of the Board..... 117

Index..... 119





Introduction

The New Zealand Catholic Education Office (NZCEO) has developed this resource to help school boards focus on the key aspects of a state-integrated school that differ from a state school.

The purpose of the handbook

This handbook is designed for all those involved in the governance of Catholic state-integrated schools, including board members, Proprietors' appointees, principals, and senior leadership teams. Every member around the board table shares collective responsibility for the governance of the school, including upholding its Catholic special character. This shared duty is grounded in the contractual obligations outlined in each school's Integration Agreement.

The online handbook site is the location of the most update information, guidance and resources for school boards.

This handbook is not a legal document and should not be read as such.

A glossary of terms used in the Handbook is available. www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/glossary-of-terms/

More information and support:



Visit the NZCEO website for further information and resources.

There are excellent governance guides available from the New Zealand School Boards Association and Ministry of Education that cover aspects common to both state and state-integrated schools.

The Catholic school

The Catholic school is a Catholic faith community within the wider faith community of the Catholic Church, including parish, diocese, and universal Church. Therefore, the Catholic school is an authentic expression of the Church’s mission to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to create a world of tika justice, pono truth and aroha love. The Catholic school is therefore a major place of evangelisation.

Catholic schools were established in Aotearoa New Zealand by parishes, diocese and religious institutions under the authority of the bishop of each diocese to provide a Catholic education for Catholic children.

Catholic schools were established to promote strong special character formation of young people based on Gospel values and Christian virtues by providing a quality education within the context of the Catholic faith. In doing so, Catholic schools support young people’s spiritual journey, hīkoi wairua and the passing on of faith to the next generation*.

The Aotearoa New Zealand Catholic education community diagram below sets out the relationships between the various Aotearoa New Zealand Catholic education entities within the Catholic education community.

*Excerpts taken from Being Church in Aotearoa New Zealand Catholic Schools [2025]



Refer to the glossary for roles and responsibilities of these entities.

Role of the school board in carrying out the mission of the Catholic Church

The school board exercises leadership, governance and sound decision making to safeguard and maintain the Catholic special character of the school. The board sets the strategic direction that places the special character formation at the centre of school life and makes policy and resourcing decisions that are sustainable and aligned with the school's strategic plan. Through informed, prayerful and evidence-based decision making the board holds the principal to account for educational and faith outcomes, supports staff to integrate faith, culture and learning, and ensures that every significant decision is consistent with the values and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

NZCEO's position on Te Tiriti o Waitangi is grounded in Catholic social teaching, which acknowledges the special role of indigenous peoples and their rights to maintain their culture and heritage. NZCEO emphasises our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through our practice by reflecting its principles in our policies, work practices, documents, actions, decision making and advice.

"Te Tiriti acknowledges the special place of the Māori people as tangata whenua [the people of the land] – that is indigenous. They understand it to be a covenant and a taonga tapu [a sacred treasure]. The Treaty provides the moral basis for the presence of all other peoples in Aotearoa [New Zealand] and guarantees reciprocal rights and obligations between the Crown and Māori."

— NZ Catholic Bishops, 1990



> Legal Responsibilities

Legal and Regulatory Responsibilities

Introduction

This section outlines the key legal and regulatory obligations that frame board decision making, and explains how compliance, good governance and commitment to the school’s Catholic special character must all work together to achieve excellent governance practice.

School boards in Catholic state-integrated schools operate within a legal and regulatory environment. As a Crown entity, the board must comply with New Zealand law, including the Education and Training Act 2020 and all associated regulations, its school’s Integration Agreement, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and the Children’s Act 2014, alongside privacy, employment and human rights obligations.

At the same time, as part of the mission of the Church, the board is also accountable to the Bishop and Proprietor and exercises its responsibilities in a way that is consistent with Canon Law and the Catholic Church’s teaching on education, stewardship and pastoral care.

The diagram below demonstrates the partnership between the Crown, the Proprietor, and the board. It is the Integration Agreement at the centre that makes this partnership binding.



Education and Training Act 2020

Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020 is the core legal framework for state-integrated schools. It sets out what a state-integrated school is, how a private school can integrate, and the key obligations of the Integration Agreements between the Proprietor and the Crown. The agreement covers matters such as: the school's special character and how it must be preserved; maximum roll and non-preference limits; property ownership and responsibility; boards' obligations to accept preference students; staffing and appointments (including the role of the Proprietor in determining acceptability and the board's responsibility to attest their legal obligations under Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020; enrolment and attendance; and the conditions under which a school can be closed, merged or have its integration agreement cancelled. Legislation New Zealand

It is critical that boards understand Schedule 6 because it defines their powers and limits in an integrated school: what they must do (for example, prioritise preference enrolments and operate within the maximum roll), what they must not do (for example, undermine special character or ignore Proprietor rights), and how they must work in partnership with the Proprietor and the Ministry.

Knowing Schedule 6 helps boards make lawful decisions on enrolment, staffing, property and finance. It protects the school from legal and funding risk and ensures that governance decisions support both the State's requirements and the school's Catholic special character.

Schedule 6 of the Act:

- > takes precedence over other named statutes that govern the school, if there is a conflict between it and other legislation.
- > guarantees the school its right to continue through its teaching and conduct to reflect education with a Special Character [Sch 6, Cl 1 (1)]
- > states that integration must not jeopardise the Special Character of the school [Sch 6, Cl 1(2)]
- > gives the Proprietor explicit rights regarding the Special Character [Sch 6, Cl 1 (3) and (4)] to:
 - > supervise the maintenance of the Special Character
 - > determine what is necessary to preserve and safeguard it
 - > take action if, in the Proprietor's opinion, the Special Character is likely to be jeopardised, or is not being maintained or preserved

Integration Agreement

Each school has its own Integration Agreement. A school becomes integrated into the state education system when the Proprietor and the Minister of Education approve the school's agreement to integrate [the Integration Agreement]. This agreement establishes a partnership between the Proprietor and the Crown. This is a legally binding agreement and imposes obligations on the Proprietor and School Board. More information can be found in the Integration section of this handbook.

Canon Law

Canon law is a body of Church laws and legal principles governing the Catholic Church in its organisation and activities, and how Church members live their lives. Canon law helps the Church community to be faithful to its mission.

Those who administer Catholic schools need to keep in mind those Canons that focus on Catholic education. Some of the Canons that are relevant to the establishment of schools and the enrolment of students are paraphrased below:

- > Canon 217: All those baptised into the Catholic Church have the right to a Catholic education.
- > Canons 773 and 776: Parish priests must see to the formation of adults, young people and children.
- > Canon 774 §2: The primary obligation for catechetical formation lies with parents. The same obligation binds godparents and those who take the place of parents.
- > Canon 780: Diocesan Bishops may issue directives for catechetical formation. Catechists are to be duly trained and given opportunity for continuing formation.
- > Canon 792 §2: Teachers are to collaborate closely with parents and listen to them. Parent associations are to be set up.
- > Canon 797: Parents must have freedom to exercise choice in determining which school their children will attend.
- > Canon 798: Parents are to send their children to those schools that will provide for their Catholic education. If they cannot do this, they are bound to ensure the proper education of their children outside the school.
- > Canon 800 §2: Catholic schools are to be promoted and everything possible done must be done to help establish and maintain them.
- > Canon 802 §1: Where there is no Catholic school, one must be established.

- > Canon. 804 §1. The Catholic religious instruction and education which are imparted in any schools whatsoever or are provided through the various instruments of social communication are subject to the authority of the Church. It is for the conference of bishops to issue general norms about this field of action and for the diocesan bishop to regulate and watch over it.
- > Canon 805: The diocesan Bishop has the right to appoint or approve teachers of religion and to remove them or demand that they be removed, if religious or moral considerations require.
- > Canon 806 §1: The diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools in his diocese and to issue directives concerning the general regulation of Catholic schools.
- > Canon 806 §2: Catholic schools are to ensure that the academic standards of the formation given in them is at least as good as that in other schools.

Other relevant legislation

Children's Act 2014

The board is responsible for ensuring that all employees and contractors are safe and competent to work with children. From 1 July 2015 the Act placed increased responsibilities on to boards to protect students.

The Act affects all schools equally; there are no special responsibilities that relate to integrated schools. Proprietors, however, are expected to take particular interest in how well Catholic schools meet these responsibilities, in the values they promote and in their practices.

How it applies to boards

- > Requires safety checking of children's workers (including many school staff, contractors and some volunteers) in government-funded organisations, with checks updated at least every 3 years. More information can be found [here](#).
- > Introduces workforce restrictions – it is unlawful to employ or engage a core children's worker with certain specified offences unless they have a core worker exemption. More information can be found [here](#).

The Act requires increased safety checking of prospective staff, consisting of:

- > Confirmation of the employee's identity by the school
- > Police vetting of all staff (not only teachers) and of any other person likely to have unsupervised access to children during normal school hours (e.g., contractors and the staff of other agencies)
- > risk assessment by the school, based on interviews and referee checks.

Board responsibilities

- > Ensure the school has robust child protection and safety-checking policies and procedures, including police vetting plus the other required components of a safety check. More information can be found [here](#). And also [here](#) Education.govt.nz
- > Monitor compliance [for staff, regular relief teachers, contractors and volunteers who are children’s workers].
- > Make sure the board does not approve appointments that breach workforce restrictions.

Real engagement with health and safety is most likely to come when the whole school community has a heightened awareness and appreciation of its importance.

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 [HSWA]

How it applies to boards

- > HSWA is New Zealand’s primary work health and safety law and applies to almost all workplaces. WorkSafe
- > The school board is the PCBU [person conducting a business or undertaking] and must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and others [students, visitors, contractors] at school. More information can be found [here](#).
- > Board members are also “officers” and owe a due-diligence duty to exercise governance oversight of health and safety, even though individual board members are protected from prosecution for certain HSWA offences. More information can be found [here](#).

Board responsibilities

- > Provide visible health and safety leadership, set expectations and monitor performance.
- > Ensure there is a fit-for-purpose HSW policy and risk management system [hazard identification, risk controls, incident reporting, contractor management, student activities, EOTC, etc.]. More information can be found [here](#).
- > Receive regular reporting and evidence that risks are being identified, controlled and reviewed.

Privacy Act 2020

How it applies to boards

- > Sets 13 Information Privacy Principles governing how agencies collect, store, use and share personal information.
- > Applies to all schools and boards; each school must appoint a Privacy Officer.

Board responsibilities

- > Approve and periodically review a privacy policy that covers enrolment, student records, pastoral notes, health information, CCTV, online platforms, and information sharing with agencies. [Education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz).
- > Ensure procedures comply with the principles [lawful purpose, data minimisation, security safeguards, access and correction rights, limits on disclosure].
- > Confirm staff receive training on privacy principles and that the school can respond properly to access and correction requests and privacy breaches.

Public Service Act 2020 [as it applies to Crown entities]

How it applies to boards

- > Provides the overarching framework for the Public Service, with the Public Service Commissioner leading integrity, accountability and transparency across State services.
- > Through the Crown Entities Act (which applies to school boards as Crown entities), boards are expected to uphold public service principles and values – acting lawfully, impartially, fairly and in the public interest. More information can be found [here](#).

Board responsibilities

- > Lead a culture of integrity, impartiality and stewardship of public resources, consistent with public service principles.
- > Ensure board conduct, conflicts-of-interest management, and decision making meet the standards expected of Crown entities (including transparency and accountability to the Minister and community).

Human Rights Act 1993

How it applies to boards

- > Makes it unlawful to discriminate on specified grounds (e.g. sex, race, disability, religious belief, family status) in key areas of life, including employment and education.
- > Prohibits discriminatory questions and practices in recruitment and employment. [Employment New Zealand](#)

Board responsibilities

- > Ensure policies and practices around enrolment, discipline, learning support and access to activities do not unlawfully discriminate, while also working within Schedule 6 and the school's Integration Agreement [e.g. lawful preference for Catholic students, special character staff positions].
- > Oversee fair employment practices [recruitment, promotion, dismissal, workplace culture] that respect human rights and align with Catholic social teaching.
- > Be aware of how human rights and anti-discrimination obligations intersect with special character requirements for certain roles and enrolments.

Health and Safety

Student and staff health and safety

Health and safety are concerns common to all schools. The Ministry of Education and the NZ School Boards Association have both issued comprehensive guides to this Act.

This section focuses on the features and requirements that specifically affect state integrated schools.

Requirements for Proprietors

For state-integrated schools the major difference is in the shared responsibility for health and safety resulting from the Proprietor's ownership of the land and buildings. Proprietors have to ensure that their buildings and grounds are constructed and maintained to a standard that is safe for all who work at or visit the school premises.

Requirements for Boards

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 the board has the prime duty of care to ensure that:

- > the school is safe for all who work there or visit
- > actual and potential risks are identified
- > all practical steps are taken to eliminate, isolate or minimise them.

The board should have a comprehensive health and safety policy, ensure that it is implemented in the school, and monitor its effectiveness. The Act emphasises the collective nature of responsibility for health and safety.

Under the Act, the board's responsibility is broadened to keep safe all people who are at or visit the school. The Act puts greater emphasis on:

- > staff and student participation and engagement with health and safety
- > active consultation and collaboration with other organisations such as construction companies to ensure a cooperative approach to health and safety at the school, or at school events beyond the school.

Shared responsibilities at state-integrated schools

As in a state school, the board of a state-integrated school has the prime duty of care for health and safety at the school. Since the Proprietors own the integrated buildings and grounds, they are responsible for health and safety on the school premises in relation to:

- capital works projects undertaken by the Proprietor that involve construction and maintenance
- the safe condition of the Proprietor's buildings, grounds and associated plant.

The Ministry's comprehensive practical guide to the Act is available on their website.

Board's responsibilities

The board is required to monitor health and safety at the school premises. The principal and staff are in the best position to identify risks to health and safety, both day to day and through periodic inspections. When these risks result from unsafe buildings and other fixtures, the principal should act immediately to remedy this by commissioning repairs under the school's minor maintenance policy or alerting the Proprietor to the need for remedial capital works, as appropriate. However, the principal must take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of all on the school premises while the school awaits action by the Proprietor. The board should ensure that its health and safety policy provides appropriate guidance and delegation to the principal for such situations.

When the Proprietor commissions capital works on integrated premises, the board or the principal must at an early stage coordinate health and safety measures with the Proprietor and with the contractors carrying out the works. The principal should ensure good overall safety standards on the school premises during the works. There should be close collaboration between the respective 10-year maintenance plans of the board and the Proprietor, with an emphasis on health and safety. The Ministry of Education's Policy One funding of the Proprietor's capital works must be prioritised for health and safety matters.

Board members are encouraged to walk around the school every few months to ensure that they understand the level of safety and risk management that the school is carrying out in the board's name.

Proprietor's responsibilities

The Proprietor is responsible for maintaining the integrated buildings to the required code. It is also the Proprietor's responsibility to ensure that any Proprietor commissioned works on school premises are carried out safely.

This means that when commissioning and carrying out capital works the Proprietor must coordinate health and safety measures with the board or the principal. Likewise, it is the Proprietor's responsibility to require the contractors that carry out the works to coordinate their actions with the school and to monitor the safety practices of their contractors.

Resources and Appendices

- > Actions for boards and relevant clauses of Schedule 6
- > Education and Training Act, Schedule 6
- > Integration Agreement

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/legal-responsibilities/#resources



> Integration

Integration

The Catholic State-Integrated School

Catholic state-integrated schools are state schools, not private or independent institutions. They are part of New Zealand's public education system and receive government funding, but retain their special character, which sets them apart.

There are **three key distinguishing features** of Catholic state-integrated schools:

- > **Catholic Special Character**

The Catholic special character of the school is central to its identity and operations. It influences enrolment policies, staffing decisions, and the delivery of the curriculum, particularly through religious education and the integration of a Catholic worldview based values across the learning environment.

- > **Proprietor Ownership and Shared Responsibilities**

The school's land and buildings are owned by the Proprietor, who is typically the Bishop of the diocese, a religious order, or a Trust Board. While the Proprietor retains ownership, the responsibility for maintenance, insurance, and health and safety obligations is shared with the school board, as outlined in the school's Integration Agreement.

- > **Governance and Proprietor Appointments**

Each school is governed by a School Board, in line with the Education and Training Act 2020. The Proprietor has the right to appoint up to four members to the board. These appointees help ensure that the Catholic special character is maintained in the school's governance and strategic direction.

The founding principles of integration

When the Proprietors of Catholic schools integrated their schools with the state system of education, they entered into a partnership with the Crown. The partnership is based on six fundamental principles:

- > The right to teach, develop and implement the Catholic programme in Christian faith and living, and to follow those religious customs that are normal in the Catholic school.
- > The right to administer staff appointments and arrange that staff composition recognises the Catholic special character of the school.
- > The right to enrol firstly, the children of Catholic parents and secondly, the children of other parents who seek a Christian environment for the education of their children.

- > The right to extend existing schools and build new ones to meet the demands of legitimate expansion and proven need, including schools with special purposes [e.g., to cater for special educational, physical or emotional needs].
- > The right to own the land, school buildings, ancillary educational buildings and facilities that make up the Catholic school system.
- > The right of the Catholic community to make a tangible financial contribution through fees towards the cost of maintaining its schools.

Each school has an integration agreement

Each school has its own Integration Agreement. A school becomes integrated into the state education system when the Proprietor and the Minister of Education approve the school's agreement to integrate [the Integration Agreement]. This agreement establishes a partnership between the Proprietor and the Crown. This is a legally binding agreement and imposes obligations on the proprietor and school board.

The Integration Agreement:

- > defines the school's Special Character
- > sets out the rights of the Proprietor in relation to the operation of the school
- > prescribes the religious instruction and observances that are to be part of the school programme
- > specifies the lands and buildings that are to be managed and maintained by the board
- > sets out special requirements and appointment procedures for certain key positions
- > determines the maximum roll and the maximum percentage of non-preference students who may be enrolled
- > provides for the charging of attendance dues up to a maximum amount approved by the Minister of Education
- > requires the Proprietor to ensure the buildings and any chattels that are owned or held in trust by the Proprietor
- > provides for the appointment of a chaplain [paid for by the proprietor]
- > sets out the rights of the Proprietor to have access to the school
- > sets out other matters agreed to between the Proprietor and the Minister.

Proprietor, Crown and School Board: Building effective relationships

The partnership between the **Crown, the Proprietor, and the School Board** is foundational to how state-integrated schools operate.

State-integrated schools operate within a model that recognises the distinct yet interdependent roles of the Crown, the Proprietor, and the Board. This is a binding partnership which is demonstrated in this diagram.

Each party has defined rights and responsibilities, and all work collaboratively to support the educational success and overall wellbeing of our tamariki.

The Proprietor typically owns the land and buildings and is often the founding body of the school, responsible for defining its core purpose, values, and special character. The Proprietor and the Crown formalise their relationship through a legally binding document known as the Integration Agreement, which outlines the commitments and responsibilities of both parties.



Key points to note are:

- > The reason for the school's existence is set out in the special character definition in the Integration Agreement. It is everyone's role around the board table to maintain and preserve this special character as defined in the Integration Agreement.
- > The school board and proprietor work together to honour the agreements and commitments signed up to with the Crown.
- > The partnership and the binding Integration Agreement are the fundamental elements that make state-integrated schools unique.
- > The Integration Agreement is a binding agreement that can only be amended if both parties agree [Crown and Proprietor]. If there is an amendment to the Integration Agreement, this will be made via a supplement agreement.

If you haven't read your Integration Agreement, take 10 minutes at your next board meeting to read and discuss it together. Find your agreement and any supplementary agreements [here](#).

Effective governance begins with well-defined roles and responsibilities, and clear parameters around how these relationships will work

Cancellation of an integration agreement and school closure

Cancellation conditions and requirements are found in Schedule 6, Cl 11 of the Education and Training Act 2020.

The process for a proprietor wishing to cancel an integration agreement is different from a cancellation by mutual agreement between the Minister and proprietor [under Schedule 6 Clause 14 of the Education and Training Act 2020] which is the usual practice.

Cancellation by Proprietor

There are two reasons for which a proprietor can cancel an integration agreement:

- > Clause 13[1][a][i] the special character of the state integrated school has been or is likely to be jeopardised; or
- > Clause 13[1][a][ii] the Minister or any board is not carrying out their functions and obligations under the Education and Training Act 2020 [the Act] or the integration agreement.

Please see the cancellation guidelines on the APIS website for details of the process.

Resources and Appendices

Please contact NZCEO for an example Integration Agreement

- > Education and Training Act 2020
- > Schedule 6, State Integrated Schools
- > Schedule 6, downloadable pdf
- > Objectives of boards in governing schools
- > Powers and functions of board

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/integration/#resources



> Special Character

Special Character

Definition of Special Character

Special character is fundamental to integration and is defined in Section 10 of the Education and Training Act 2020 and the School's Integration Agreement as

'Education within the framework of a particular of general religious or philosophical belief and associated with observances or traditions to that belief'.

It is further defined in each Catholic school's Integration Agreement:

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.

The following phrases in the above statement are significant:

- > **Roman Catholic:** Roman Catholic is often used interchangeably with "Catholic," though technically it refers to the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church also includes Eastern Catholic Churches [like Maronite or Byzantine Catholics] that are in full communion with Rome but have different liturgical traditions.
- > **School community:** The school community includes the students, their parents/ caregivers (who are the foremost educators of their children), the teaching and non-teaching staff and the Board. The Proprietor is pre-eminently a member of the school community. Because the school is an integral part of the pastoral ministry of the Church, its community comprises the local church led by the bishop of the diocese. The parish primary school actualises the local church in the parish.
- > **General school programme:** By referring to "the general school programme" as well as the "religious Instruction and observances", the definition stresses that the religious goals of the school must not be separated from its other educational goals. Each is embedded in the other; each "exercises the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ".

Values:

The “values of Jesus Christ” are expressed in scripture and in living Catholic tradition. For a Catholic school, the values it promotes must be sourced from the gospels, particularly the parables. Hence, they are referred to as Gospel values. The precept “to love God above all things and one’s neighbour as oneself” sums up the values of Jesus Christ. A Catholic school must ensure that students have a Catholic understanding [opposed to secular] of Gospel values and that an emphasis on values does not replace formation in virtues as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC 1803-1829]. Gospel values and Christian virtues education in a Catholic school is fundamental to the life of the school.

Bishop’s determination: Finally, the statement says that it is the bishop of the diocese who has the ultimate responsibility for determining whether the practices, worship and teachings in the school are indeed Catholic. The bishop of the diocese [in union with the Pope and all other Catholic Bishops] exercises the Church’s teaching authority.

The Goals of Catholic Education

The Catholic school, as part of the Church, shares in the evangelising mission of the Church, helping to advance a dialogue between the Church and the world, for the transformation of society.¹ Thus, the Catholic school is an instrument of this mission, it is the Church in action².

The goal of Catholic Schools, through their educational endeavour, is to:

- > provide a genuine encounter with Jesus Christ, leading to a committed relationship with Him,
- > create a deep desire to grow in knowledge of Christ, his teachings, and his Church,
- > bring Catholic faith, culture, and life into harmony,
- > communicate Christ’s Gospel of love, mercy and justice in both word and deed.³

¹Second Vatican Council, *Gravissimum Educationis: The Declaration on Christian Education*. 1965.

²NZCBC, *The Catholic Education of School-Age Children*. 2014.

³Ibid.

The Nature of Catholic Special Character

The goals of Catholic education are achieved through the school's Catholic special character, which provides the encounter with God, who in Jesus Christ reveals the transforming love and truth of God.¹ This evangelisation is ineffective if it does not consider and include the identity, culture, language, and signs of all those it is focusing on. Thus, bringing faith, culture and life into harmony.

Many factors contribute to the Catholic special character, including:

- > the beliefs, values, traditions, and practices of the Catholic Church, and how they are expressed by both Katorika² Māori and Katorika tauīwi³,
- > the religious content of its curriculum,
- > the witness of people living their faith as disciples of Jesus.

It is the interaction of these that creates the Catholic identity of the school⁴

distinguishing it from other state schools. Furthermore, Catholic special character recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi and ensures that te ao and mātauranga Māori [worldview, values and knowledge of Māori] as essential elements of Catholic education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It is the Catholic special character that assists the young person in their journey of discipleship, from an encounter with Christ, growth in knowledge and then to Christian witness, in the following ways.

Encounter with Christ

The school encourages and facilitates the encounter with Jesus Christ, which is the most important event that can happen to a person. As a journeying people, we are constantly encountering Jesus who draws us to the power of the Gospel message. It is through Scripture, the Sacraments [especially Eucharist and Reconciliation], and actions of love, mercy, and justice that we come to know Him personally. This encounter with Jesus Christ will have an impact on a person's heart, mind and will. The school provides the encounter through:

- > the spiritual formation it offers,
- > its evangelising practices,
- > the faith leadership of the Principal, Director of Religious Studies, those teachers in Clause 47 special character positions and the witness of other disciples in the school.

Growth in knowledge

The transformative encounter with Jesus Christ should create a deep desire to grow in knowledge of him, his teachings, and his Church. In their transmission of knowledge, the school passes on culture to the next generation, therefore in a Catholic school all knowledge must be presented in light of the Gospel, providing a Catholic worldview. In doing so it provides a synthesis of faith and life and faith and culture. The school assists its community to grow in this knowledge and understanding of Jesus Christ through:

- > the leadership of the Principal and DRS in the religious instruction and observances within the school,
- > an effective and high-status Religious Education curriculum,
- > integration of the Catholic worldview into the daily practices and all curriculum areas of the school.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference [NZCBC] has determined that Catholic schools will follow a national curriculum for Religious Education at both primary and secondary level. The National Centre for Religious Studies [NCRS] has developed this curriculum in consultation with schools.

The amount of time schools should devote to Religious Education at various year levels has also been set down by the Bishops Conference [see Catholic Special Character Fact sheet: Time Allocation for the Religious Education]. Boards are responsible for ensuring that professional development and formation, school budgets, staffing allocation and timetabling allow these requirements to be met.

Health and Sexuality Education:

All Health and Sexuality Education programmes within a Catholic school are based on several core Catholic teachings:

- > We are made in God's image and therefore we are good,
- > We are unconditionally loved by God,
- > Life is precious and our bodies are a gift from God,
- > We recognise the tapu and dignity of all people,
- > That life is a journey, Te wa, in which people are challenged to grow to be their best selves and become more Christ-like.

In Catholic Schools the relationships/sexuality component of the Health Curriculum is usually part of the Religious Education programme, and all planning should be overseen by the Director of Religious Studies [DRS]. Health Education teachers need to collaborate with the DRS when planning other aspects of the Health Curriculum.

NCRS have developed a document *He Mea Hanga Mīharo ki tō te Atua Āhua – Wonderfully Made in God’s Image* to assist schools in the planning and delivery of a Health Curriculum this is true to Catholic teaching.

Board’s must ensure funding for teachers who teach sexuality and relationships education to attend NCRS’s professional learning and formation course *Having Life to the Full*.⁵

The board should consult with the Proprietor on the Health Curriculum to ensure that it and its delivery reflect the Catholic special character of the school.

Christian witness

- > After having encountered Jesus Christ and having been formed in Him, the Gospel calls us to communicate his Gospel of love, mercy and justice in both word and deed. The school provides a hope-filled Christian witness which empowers its community to integrate their faith and life through:
- > being an authentic Catholic school community that promotes and supports active Christian witness and practice in the school and parish,
- > partnership and collaboration with all groups it relates to, including mana whenua, whānau, its parish(es)/Māori Eucharistic communities, its founding religious congregation, its Proprietor, and its Bishop,
- > developing an understanding of and respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the cultural diversity of Aotearoa, New Zealand,
- > pastoral care where each member of the community is known, respected, cared for and aware that they are loved unconditionally by God,
- > service and outreach that takes care of others and works for justice and equality, based on the Gospel message.

¹Ibid.

²Catholic

³People who are not Māori-foreigner [as in ‘coming from elsewhere’]. This is a now in common usage as a term to include Pākehā and other immigrants.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Each diocese delivers this formation programme.

The Philosophy of Catholic Schools

Catholic schools are established to carry out the Church's mission to share the Gospel of Christ and to form Christ in the lives of others. They provide a Catholic faith environment that enables young people to develop the attitudes, knowledge and skills to become active and committed members of the Faith Community and to contribute positively to the world community. The philosophy of Catholic schools in Aotearoa New Zealand is based on a Catholic understanding of Christianity.

The following guiding characteristics are fundamental to Catholic schools:

- > The development of the spiritual, intellectual, moral, emotional, physical and social dimensions of students, since authentic human life and openness to God are inseparable.
- > The search for excellence as an integral part of the Christian message.
- > Evangelisation – that is, the encouragement to grow towards the vision of human life and wellbeing that God revealed in Christ, as expressed by the Church.
- > A culture of love, based on God's love for us, that enables each person to develop the inner autonomy of self-love, self-discipline and self-direction so that they can love God and others and respect the rights, freedoms and intrinsic worth of all other people.
- > Moral principles based on the teaching of Christ and the dictates of right reason, and put into practice in every aspect of life.
- > Religious Education programmes that challenge each student and deepen their understanding of Catholic teaching.
- > Education that is inclusive and that focuses on:
 - > the development of each individual's unique talents
 - > students and families with particular needs
 - > the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi
 - > multicultural issues.
- > Service – the will and vision to contribute a Catholic dimension to the development of the values and wellbeing of the wider community.
- > Co-operation and solidarity, as principles of right relations with all members of the school and wider community.
- > Parish interaction, which builds up the community of the Church and supports parents, teachers and students.
- > Social justice in the face of discrimination, and commitment to an option for the poor at the local, national and international levels.
- > Leadership that enhances the life of the Church and the wellbeing of the national and international community.

Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Special Character

The Catholic special character framework that supports the students' faith journey from encounter with Christ, through knowledge, to Christian witness must be safeguarded and strengthened. Under the terms of Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020 the proprietors of Catholic schools have a particular responsibility for determining, maintaining and enhancing the special character of Catholic Schools. Schedule 6: Clause 1, Education and Training Act 2020 protects the school's special character by ensuring that:

- > the school shall continue to have the right to reflect the special character of its education through its teaching and the conduct of its staff
- > integration shall not jeopardise the special character of an integrated school

The Proprietor shall continue to have:

- > the responsibility to supervise the education with a special character
- > the right to determine what is necessary to preserve and safeguard the special character
- > if in the Proprietor's opinion the school's special character is threatened, the Proprietor may invoke its powers under Schedule 6: Education and Training Act 2020.

However, the whole school community are kaitiaki stewards of this taonga for future generations. The taonga is kept alive, vibrant, and aligned with the goals of Catholic education through:

- > effective governance and management,
- > engagement of the school board in Catholic special character professional learning and formation,
- > effective and ongoing Catholic special character evaluation
- > sound employment policy and processes,
- > sound enrolment policies and procedures,
- > compliance with the school's integration agreement.

For some schools their charism is defined in their Integration Agreement. Whether it is so defined or not, in every case the school works to maintain and develop its particular charism, which is the lens through which Catholic special character is lived.

Evaluation of Catholic Special Character

To ensure that Catholic special character is safeguarded and strengthened a school's Catholic special character is regularly evaluated. This 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 for external evaluation and a model for internal evaluation can be found in *He Arotake Whanaketanga mā te Mātauranga Ahurea Katorika-Te Ture Tāuke mā ngā Kura Katorika: Catholic Special Character Evaluation for Development* document. Support and guidance in the implementation of external and internal evaluation is also available from the diocesan Catholic education office.

Annual internal evaluation

The school board should plan for regular and strategic Catholic special character internal evaluation taking a narrowed focus or a question arising from ONE of the four dimensions of the *Catholic Special Character Evaluation for Development* document i.e., Encounter with Christ, Growth in Knowledge, Christian Witness, or Safeguarding and Strengthening Catholic Special Character. These should be covered over a cycle of four years. Examples of planning for internal evaluation can be found on the NZCEO website under Special Character resources [Resources – New Zealand Catholic Education Office].

The board must also annually provide the Proprietor with the *Special Character Compliance Attestation* report that shows how the school complies with its statutory obligations in Catholic special character. The attestation form is available from the Proprietor and can also be found in the *Catholic Special Character Evaluation for Development* document or on the NZCEO website [Catholic special character evaluation for development – New Zealand Catholic Education Office].

The table below indicates under which sections of this handbook these compliances are explained.

Staffing of special character positions	Employment
Maximum rolls	Enrolment
Preference and non-preference students	Enrolment
Religious education	Special Character
Board policy and practice	Governance
Safeguarding practices	Governance
Consulting and collaborating with the Proprietor	Property, Governance, Employment, Special Character, Enrolment
Health curriculum	Special Character
Attendance dues and donations	Enrolment

External evaluations of Catholic special character

External evaluation of Catholic special character is facilitated by mandated diocesan evaluators every three to four years. Schools are expected to respond to the recommendations in the evaluation reports and prepare an action plan for their implementation. The diocesan education office provides support for this.

The Education Review Office [ERO] is legally required to monitor the special character of all state-integrated schools as part of its regular evaluation process. Liaison between ERO and Proprietors at both national and local levels facilitates these evaluations.

Professional development for Catholic special character

The school board should receive ongoing Catholic special character professional learning and formation, including on the principles of Catholic social teaching and their application to board responsibilities.

All teachers in Catholic primary and secondary schools are expected to engage in planned and ongoing professional development and formation in Religious Education and/or Catholic special character.

Certification, as outlined in the *Certification Handbook for Staff and School Boards in Catholic State Integrated Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand* [2025] is a key element in safeguarding and strengthening Catholic special character. Certification recognises that all teachers have a role to play in building and maintaining the Christian community dimension that is central to the Catholic special character of a school.¹ Therefore, the Certification system applies to all teachers regardless of their position, or their religious affiliation or stance.² A full break down of the Certification framework can be found in the Certification Handbook.

Teachers and leaders are expected to be appropriately qualified and certificated or in the process of achieving an appropriate level of Certification. Principals and DRSs should have gained Leadership Level of Certification. Any teacher appointed to a special character position and all teachers of Religious Education should have gained Classroom Level of Certification.

NOTE: Teachers holding a Secondary DRS position or Head of Department/Faculty Religious Education or their equivalent, which require specialist subject knowledge, should have an appropriate graduate qualification.

The board must ensure that the school's professional learning and formation budget meets these requirements.

Ongoing formation

The NZCBC requires teachers in primary schools to undertake at least 12 hours of professional development and formation in Religious Education and spiritual formation each year [see Special Character Fact Sheet-Professional development and spiritual formation for teachers].

Each diocesan Catholic education office can provide advice and support regarding Catholic special character formation, including Religious Education, for staff and school boards.

Links with Wider Church Networks

As well as the networks that every state school has across the education sector and the wider community of Aotearoa New Zealand, Catholic schools have a network of agencies and organisations within the Church.

Every Catholic school is, by definition, part of the Church. This community includes the diocese, the deanery or pastoral area, diocesan pastoral councils and parish organisations such as parish councils.

Parish links

The school's most obvious link is to the parish or parishes from which it draws its students. It is important that schools and their local parishes collaborate with and support one another. Activities that can help forge these links can include:

- > Joint school and parish celebrations of Mass and the sacraments
- > School visits by the priests or pastoral leaders of the parish
- > School support for and cooperation with parish programmes that prepare students to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and the Eucharist
- > School representation on the parish pastoral council and parish representation on the school board [Proprietor's Appointees]
- > Parish information in school newsletters and on school websites [and vice versa]
- > Joint social and/or fundraising ventures

Parish priests and lay pastoral leaders

Parish priests and lay pastoral leaders have a pastoral responsibility towards all their parishioners, including the students in the school and their whānau. The school needs to give the parish priest/lay pastoral leaders every opportunity to fulfil that pastoral ministry. When appropriate, teachers and guidance personnel in the school may liaise with the parish priests of students in their care.

An outline of the role of the parish priest in relation to the school and the roles of the Principal and Director of Religious Studies in relation to the parish priest can be found in the Fact Sheet The Parish Priest and the New Zealand Catholic School.

¹Certification Handbook for Staff and Boards in Catholic State Integrated Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand [2025]

²Ibid

Chaplain

Section 53[2] of the Education and Training Act 2020 Act allows for a chaplain, who is appointed by the proprietor, not by the board. The bishop of the diocese must endorse the appointment. The proprietor must inform the board of the name of the chaplain. Remuneration for the chaplain's services cannot come from the school's salary or operational grant, or any funding allocated by Parliament, but can be provided from the school's other sources of income.

The parish priest will normally act as chaplain in a parish primary school or a regional school for which he or one of his associates has pastoral responsibility. The chaplaincy of a secondary school may be undertaken by another priest or be shared among the priests of the deanery.

Chaplain's role

The chaplain's role is to minister to the pastoral and sacramental needs of the students and school staff and to help develop the school as a community of faith and worship within the local Church. Ideally, the chaplain, the DRS and the principal will work together to link the Religious Education programme into the activities of the local parish and the diocese.

Chaplain's rights

As an agent of the Proprietor, the chaplain has access to the school at all reasonable times. It is expected that the chaplain and the principal will have a good working relationship; the chaplain should not interrupt normal school activities or interfere in the professional work of the teachers, and the principal should not frustrate the chaplain's work. Chaplaincy teams also work closely with principals and specifically designated chaplains.

The Chaplain as teacher

A chaplain who is appropriately qualified may be appointed by the board as a part-time teacher. In that capacity the chaplain is, like any other teacher, responsible to the principal.

Campus ministry and chaplaincy teams

More and more secondary schools are developing different models of chaplaincy when working with students. The concept of campus ministry and chaplaincy teams that work in association with the Religious Education Department are becoming commonplace.

Links between primary and secondary schools

Catholic schools in a particular geographical area such as a deanery or pastoral area cooperate with one another. A seamless relationship between primary and secondary schools is vital for ongoing Catholic faith education for students. Leadership is required to set up and carry through practices that support this.

Diocese

Catholic schools were founded by dioceses, parishes or religious institutes under the authority of the bishop, who has the unique role of chief pastor of the Church in his diocese.

Schools that have the Bishop as their Proprietor [i.e., all primary schools and some secondary schools] are connected to their Bishop as the owner of the school.

All Catholic schools, including those that do not have the Bishop as their Proprietor, receive support from a number of diocesan agencies. The local Diocesan Catholic Education and/or Religious Education Office is the first source of advice on Catholic special character matters. These offices support and monitor the Catholic special character and provide Religious Education advisers who help and guide the principal, DRS and other staff in areas of Religious Education and run professional development and formation courses and seminars for staff and board members on Catholic special character.

New Zealand Catholic Education Office [NZCEO]

NZCEO is the national administrative arm of all Catholic school Proprietors and works closely with the NZCBC on their education requirements. NZCEO co-ordinates national policy and operations for the Catholic education network providing advice and guidance to Proprietors. NZCEO is, also, the point of liaison between Proprietors and the government.

NZCEO produces a national e-newsletter twice termly in weeks two and eight, as well as other publications, papers, resources and information. The NZCEO website has a wide range of information and resources [Resources – New Zealand Catholic Education Office]

Other links

Catholic schools also work with other Church agencies such as the National Centre for Religious Studies, Te Kupenga-Catholic Theological College, Caritas and Catholic Social Services, St Vincent de Paul. Schools can seek specialist support and guidance from these agencies.

Resources and Appendices

- > Professional development and spiritual formation for teachers
- > The parish priest and New Zealand Catholic schools
- > Principles of Commitment for staff in Catholic schools
- > A collaborative school-parish approach to evangelisation
- > Example policy for counselling and health services
- > Some easy practical ideas to foster parish-school relationships
- > Time allocation for Religious Education
- > Wonderfully Made in God's Image: A revised Framing Document for Human Sexuality Education
- > The Catholic Education of School-Age Children
- > Statement of Expectations for staff in a Catholic School

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/special-character/#resources



> Governance

Governance

Introduction

The work of the board in a Catholic school is to ensure that every student achieves their highest possible faith and educational outcomes supported by the Catholic faith and Catholic culture of the school.

All board members have responsibility for the protection of the Catholic special character of the school as set out in legislation, the school's integration agreement and strategic plan.

Governance in a Catholic state integrated school context

The focus of state integrated school boards extends beyond typical state school governance, encompassing unique responsibilities around special character preservation and proprietor relationships. Board members must navigate a complex landscape of legislative requirements, contractual obligations, and educational achievement expectations.

Governance

The term 'Governance' finds its roots in various languages. The Greek word 'kubernan' which means to steer, the Latin word 'gubernare' which means to steer or rule, the old French word 'governer'... all led to the finalisation of the word 'govern' in Middle English which means 'to control, influence, or regulate [a person, action, or course of events]' or 'to conduct the policy, actions, and affairs [of a state, organization, or people] with authority'.

"Governance encompasses the system by which an organisation is controlled and operates, and the mechanisms by which it, and its people, are held to account. Ethics, risk management, compliance and administration are all elements of governance." ~ Governance Institute of Australia

Decision making

Catholic social teaching and Gospel values provide a moral and spiritual compass for decision-making on a Catholic school board. These principles call boards to act with justice, compassion, and respect for human dignity in all governance matters.

Decisions should reflect solidarity with the vulnerable, promote the common good, and uphold stewardship of resources. Gospel values such as love, service, and integrity guide board members to prioritise student wellbeing, equity, and faith formation over purely operational concerns.

In practice, this means policies and strategic plans must align with Catholic special character, foster inclusive education, and ensure that financial and property decisions serve the goals of Catholic education.

By using these values as a basis for board decisions, the school stays true to its Catholic goals and purpose and creates a place where faith and learning grow together.

Purpose of Governance

Governance involves the systems, processes, and rules through which organisations are managed, decisions are made, and boards are held accountable to their community and stakeholders.

The **purpose of governance** in a Catholic state integrated school is to ensure the school is authentically Catholic, educationally excellent, and sustainably managed in partnership with the Proprietor and the Crown.

The board's role is to set the school's strategic direction so that teaching, learning, and school life are clearly aligned with its Catholic special character and the integration agreement. It establishes policies and frameworks within which the principal and staff can lead and manage day-to-day operations, while safeguarding resources, managing risk, and ensuring compliance with the Education and Training Act 2020 and other legal and regulatory obligations. As stewards of the goals of Catholic education, the board represents the interests of students, whānau, parish and community by asking the right questions, monitoring outcomes, and holding itself and the principal to account so that each learner is supported to grow in faith and to achieve educational outcomes.

Governance and Management – one vision, distinct roles.

One Vision, Distinct Roles

Achieving a unified organisational direction requires clear roles and responsibilities, with the principal acting as the vital link between strategic oversight and operational execution.



The Board

Defines the strategic vision and sets the overarching direction for the school in harmony with special character objectives.



The Principal

Serves as a conduit, translating the board's vision into actionable strategies for management.



Management

Implements strategies and manages daily operations to achieve desired outcomes.

Governance and management are a partnership which may work differently from school to school. State integrated schools are subject to the provisions of the Education and Training Act 2020. The legal responsibility of school boards and principals are outlined in Section 125 and 130 of the Act and allows each school board to define its governance model.

Successful schools are characterised by both the proprietor, board and the principal having a very clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and functioning as a leadership team in a professional manner.

Purpose of the Board

The board governs the school; the Principal runs it on a day-to-day basis, in accordance with board policies.

The board has three main sets of responsibilities. These are to:

- > ensure an overall operating framework for the school that:
 - > sets out the school's aims and values (including how it defines the school's Catholic special character)
 - > incorporates these in policies
 - > allocates resources
 - > monitors the outcomes;
- > employ the principal (the school's chief executive), agree on the principal's goals and priorities, and hold the principal accountable for the management of the school.
- > engage with the parents and the school's Proprietor.

Paramount objective of the board

The paramount objectives of the board are set out in Section 127(1) of the Act, and are summarised as follows:

Your main job as a school board is to ensure every student is able to attain their highest possible standard in educational achievement. Here's what that means:

- > **Focus on Learning:** Help every student achieve the best they can.
- > **Keep Everyone Safe:** Make sure the school is physically and emotionally safe for students and staff.
- > **Respect Rights:** Uphold students' rights under the law.
- > **Stop Bullying and Discrimination:** Take steps to prevent racism, stigma, and bullying.
- > **Include Everyone:** Support students with different needs and backgrounds.
- > **Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi:** Through our commitment to Catholic special character, we would recommend that school boards give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through policies and practices.

What you must do:

- > Follow national education priorities [NELP].
- > Use the national curriculum and monitor student progress.
- > Manage money responsibly.
- > Follow all laws that apply to schools.

Your role is about creating a safe, inclusive, and high-achieving school for every student.

Section 125 of the Act states that:

Board is governing body

- > A board is the governing body of its school.
- > A board is responsible for the governance of the school, including setting the policies by which the school is to be controlled and managed.
- > Under section 130, the school's principal is the board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management.

Board composition and roles

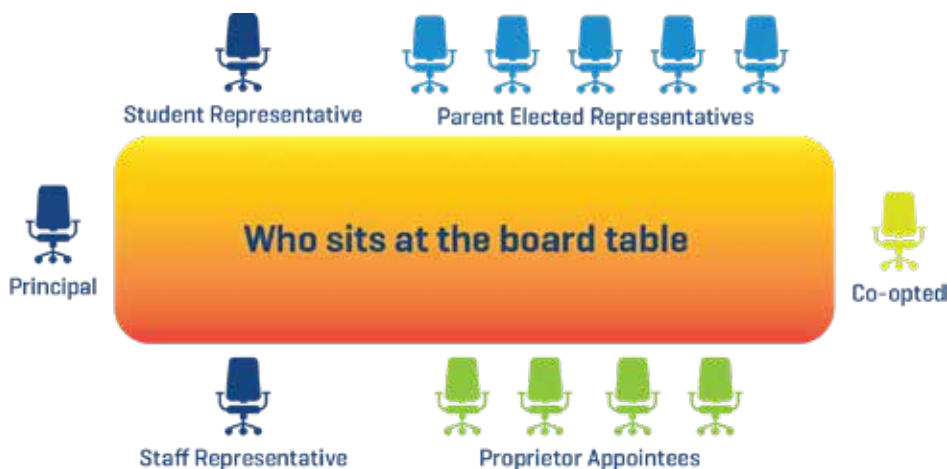
Effective governance begins with well-defined roles and responsibilities, and clear parameters around how these relationships will work. All board members have responsibility for the protection of the special character of the school as set out in the school's integration agreement and strategic plan.

Make up of the Board

It is important to know who sits around the board table as the composition of the board in a state integrated school is different from a state school.

The board consists of between three and seven parent elected board members and up to four Proprietor Appointees. The ratio is 5:4, with change only being made with the approval of the Proprietor. The board also includes the principal and a staff representative. A school with year 9 students and above, will also have a student trustee. The presiding member (board chair) can be either an elected or appointed trustee.

The following image demonstrates those who are school based board members (blue chairs), those who are elected by the school community (red chairs) and those who are appointed by the proprietor (green chairs), plus the option for a co-opted board member (yellow chair). There must always be fewer appointed and co-opted board members than parent elected board members. If a state integrated school board wants to co-opt a board member, then they must meet with the Proprietor to discuss changing the number of proprietor appointees.



School based board members

Principal – The principal is the board’s chief advisor and the professional leader of the school. The day to day management of the school is delegated to the principal within a clear policy.

Staff representative – elected by the staff every 3 years.

Student representative – elected by the students every year. Schools with students enrolled full-time above year 9.

Proprietor

Although they do not sit around the board table it is important to know your Proprietor and understand what responsibilities they have. The Proprietor’s Appointee is their appointment on the board.

The Relationship Between the Proprietor and the Principal

The relationship between the Proprietor and the Principal is foundational to the effective governance and operation of a Catholic school. While the Proprietor does not participate in the day-to-day management of the school, they play a vital role in safeguarding the school’s Catholic Special Character and overseeing property matters.

The Principal, as the professional leader and chief advisor to the board, is responsible for implementing policies and managing the school in alignment with the values and expectations set by the board and the Proprietor. Communication between the Principal and the Proprietor, which is often facilitated through the

Presiding Member and/or the Proprietor's Appointees on the board, is essential to ensure that strategic decisions, staff appointments, enrolment practices, and property developments uphold the mission and integrity of Catholic education. This collaborative relationship supports a shared commitment to faith-based learning, student wellbeing, and community engagement.

Chairperson/ Presiding member

The Presiding Member [Chairperson] of the board has a key role in a Catholic school. The Catholic school is an evangelising faith community; therefore, the board presiding member [Chairperson] is expected to focus the board on sustaining and developing the Catholic special character of the school. The presiding member can be either an elected or appointed board member.

Responsibilities of the Presiding Member [Chairperson]

In particular, the Presiding Member [Chairperson] is expected to:

- > promote Catholic special character and the particular charism of the school
- > develop a personal understanding of the nature of the school's Religious Education and evangelising functions
- > attend and promote professional development for board members in Catholic special character
- > ensure that the Principal's performance agreement includes Catholic special character goals
- > ensure that teacher qualifications and certification in Catholic special character and Religious Education] is promoted and enabled
- > ensure that the Catholic special character is a standing agenda item at board meetings
- > ensure Catholic special character is preserved and maintained. This could be through a group including members of the board whose role is to oversee, develop and promote the special character of the school.
- > work with the Proprietor's appointees to review and develop the Catholic special character of the school
- > work with the Proprietor's appointees to ensure good communications with the Proprietor
- > ensure that the school's strategic plan covers Catholic special character, and that the school conducts an annual self-review of its Catholic special character
- > when speaking on behalf of the board, reflect the Catholic dimension of the school.

Proprietor's appointees to the Board

The Proprietor can appoint up to four members of the board. These appointees are full members of the board, with all the rights and obligations of other members, including the right to be elected as the Presiding Member (Chairperson) of the board.

If a board considers that a change in the number of Proprietor's Appointees would provide a better balance, it must request the Proprietor's formal agreement to a change. The board does not have the right to change the number of Proprietor's appointees.

Special responsibilities of Proprietor's appointees

In general, Proprietor's appointees are asked to:

- > ensure that the school's Catholic special character is strengthened and enhanced, and that the school fulfils the primary objective for which it was founded
- > act as a channel of communication between the school, the Bishop and/or the Proprietor
- > ensure that the property of the school is kept in good order and repair
- > report in writing to the Proprietor on the progress of the school, at least annually [more often if requested or if the need arises]. See checklist and example report for more information
- > submit annual report to the Proprietor at the date of annual meeting or a time specified by the Proprietor
- > send copies of board minutes to the Proprietor, their agent, or Diocesan Education Office if requested.

The Proprietor may ask the appointee to sign a statement of responsibilities on accepting the appointment. If a Proprietor's appointee on the board resigns, he or she must inform the Proprietor of this and then inform the Board Presiding Member/Chairperson. The Proprietor will appoint a new board member.

Term of Office

Under the **Education and Training Act 2020**, the term of office for a **Proprietor's Appointee** on a state-integrated school board may be for a term not exceeding 3 years.

For practical purposes, Proprietors align the term of their appointees with the standard three-year board election cycle, but this can vary. Appointees are expected to submit annual reports and may be asked to sign a statement of responsibilities upon appointment. The Proprietor retains the authority to appoint and remove their appointees, and may set expectations around duration, renewal, and reporting obligations.

Consultation with the Proprietor

If any one of the Proprietor's appointees is concerned that some action by the board might have a detrimental effect on the Catholic special character of the school, the matter needs to be referred to the Proprietor so that the Proprietor's comments, advice or determination can be conveyed to the board. In the case of diocesan schools, the Proprietor is normally contacted through the Vicar for Education or the Diocesan Education Office, as appropriate.

Similarly, any unusual matter concerning the Catholic special character of the school, for example, if it is not being maintained and preserved, or if the Proprietor's appointees consider that there are issues that could harm the school (e.g., questionable staff appointments, poor management, enrolment issues, disharmony within the school or its community) – needs to be referred to the Proprietor for information and guidance. It is important to seek such advice early, before the situation escalates to crisis level.

In certain situations where the educational or financial wellbeing of the school or the wellbeing of its students may be at risk, the Ministry of Education has the legal right to intervene. In such a situation the Proprietor should be alerted immediately.

Catholic Special Character Responsibilities

Safeguarding Catholic Special Character

Everyone in the school community has a role to play in the safeguarding and strengthening of the special character. The board has key responsibilities in relation to integration and in particular must safeguard:

- > Religious Education
- > Employment
- > Property
- > Enrolment

In addition to these key areas the board is required to communicate any issues and report annually to the proprietor. The board ensures the strategic plan, policies and objectives reflect the philosophy of Catholic schooling.

Safeguarding and preserving – the key responsibilities of the Board

Religious Education

The board ensures that:

- > the school's charter, policies and plans reflect the philosophy of Catholic schooling, and the special Catholic special character that its Proprietor requires it to uphold
- > the school supports staff and board members' professional development in Religious Education,
- > the board shows its support of Catholic special character through its leadership of the school and its engagement with the local Catholic community
- > the school carries out an annual self-review of its Catholic special character
- > the board communicates promptly on significant issues and reports annually to the Proprietor in relation to its legal obligations.

Enrolment

The board ensures that:

- > preference and non-preference enrolment requirements are observed
- > the maximum roll is managed (the board can request the Proprietor to consider requesting the Ministry of Education to contemplate an increase in maximum roll)
- > the payment of attendance dues is monitored and managed in consultation with the Proprietor; however, no student who is entitled to a Catholic education is turned away
- > the preference/non-preference ratio is maintained, including for international students.

Employment

The board ensures that:

- > the school uses its entitlement to special character positions (historically referred to as "tagged" positions) correctly (for an explanation of special character and non special character positions, see resources below)
- > the process for appointing staff to special character positions is observed
- > the requirements of 'acceptability' for special character positions are observed
- > the legally correct processes are used for job advertisements and letters of appointment.

School property

The board works closely with the Proprietor on:

- > the condition of the school's buildings and grounds
- > joint priorities for the annual and 10-yearly maintenance plans [for an explanation of maintenance plans, go to Property section]
- > the health and safety of all persons on the school premises during Proprietor-commissioned works.

Policies and Procedures

The board's role is one of strategic oversight, leadership, direction, and policy setting. The board develops a governance policy framework and processes. The purpose of the policy framework is to provide a basis for decision making, ensure compliance with legal requirements, and to put in place structures for the principal to effectively manage the day to day operations of the school.

The policy framework provide clarity on responsibilities, safeguard the school's mission, and ensure that governance decisions uphold both statutory obligations and the Catholic special character of the school.

Policy Development and Review

Policy development is a core responsibility of the board, providing the framework for decision-making and ensuring compliance with legal and Catholic special character obligations. Policies must be clear, consistent, and aligned with the school's mission, strategic plan, and integration agreement. The board should adopt a structured process for creating new policies, which includes consultation with stakeholders, alignment with legislative requirements, and integration of Catholic special character.

Regular review is essential to keep policies current and effective. Reviews should occur on a scheduled cycle or when significant changes in law, best practice, or school context arise. This process ensures that governance decisions remain transparent, legally sound, and faithful to the Catholic identity of the school

Code of conduct

The Code of Conduct issued by the Minister of Education under section 166 of the Education and Training Act 2020 is a legal requirement. It establishes the ethical framework and standards expected of all board members. It provides clear guidelines on conflicts of interest, confidentiality obligations, and appropriate behaviour in governance roles.

At the first meeting of the year the board should discuss and sign the code of conduct, with all agreeing to uphold the principles of the code of conduct.

More information can be found on the Ministry of Education website.

Key Requirement

All board members must sign the Code of Conduct annually, confirming their understanding and commitment to upholding these professional standards throughout their tenure.

A copy of the expanded Code of Conduct applying to all Catholic integrated school boards can be found [here](#).

Understanding the governance puzzle

The metaphor of the jigsaw is used to demonstrate how various elements when interconnected create effective integrated school governance.

These pieces include:

- > Role of the proprietor
- > Understanding the legislative framework
- > Knowing your integration agreement
- > Having a governance framework in place
- > Understanding the key partnerships
- > Knowing your community

Each component plays a vital role in creating a cohesive framework that supports student achievement and maintains the school's special character. Once assembled and organised, these pieces reveal a clear picture of what excellent governance looks like in state integrated education.

Visit the NZCEO website to access the interactive governance puzzle.



Safeguarding Practices

The board are responsible for ensuring that they and the principal have knowledge of the:

- > Catholic Church's National Safeguarding Guidelines, promulgated by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) and the Congregational Leaders Conference of Aotearoa New Zealand (CLCANZ) and
- > safeguarding policy of the diocese in which it operates and the safeguarding policy of its Proprietor.

As part of the annual Special Character compliances, the board must confirm that the:

- > safeguarding guidelines, adopted by the Proprietor, is reflected in the wording of the school's Child Protection Policy.
- > School has sufficient measures in place to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults during school related activities.

The National Office for Professional Standards (NOPS) is the national Church organisation that manages complaints of abuse by clergy and religious and supports Church-wide safeguarding through establishing safe practices and providing formation and training in the area of safeguarding.

Financial Governance

Fundraising

The Education and Training Act 2020 allows both Proprietors and boards to carry out fundraising activities on an optional basis and in accordance with the separate responsibilities of each party.

The critical first step is to be clear **from the outset**:

- > **Who is the beneficiary** (board/school or proprietor)?
- > **What is the purpose** of the funds?

That decision determines who should collect, hold, bank, and spend the funds.

Fundraising by the proprietor

The proprietor may raise funds for purposes that sit within proprietor responsibilities (for example, proprietor property and special character), including by:

- > running fundraising activities at the school **outside normal school hours**, and/or
- > inviting parents to make regular voluntary contributions to support costs such as debt repayments relating to proprietor land or buildings.

Governance and accountability requirements for proprietor fundraising

The proprietor must:

- > keep proper records of all fundraising income and voluntary contributions,
- > have fundraising accounts **audited at least annually**, and
- > make the accounts available to parents **on request**.

Participation during school hours

Schedule 6, clause 35 provides that the board, staff, and students must not take part in fundraising for the proprietor during normal school hours. Participation may occur outside school hours, by choice.

Use of funds

Money raised for the proprietor may be used for buildings owned by the proprietor and other proprietor purposes. Schools should ensure communications clearly state the funds are being raised for the proprietor.

Fundraising by the board

Boards may raise funds to supplement Crown funding for the benefit of students.

Board-raised funds are treated as Crown funds and must be managed accordingly.

Key requirements include:

- > fundraising proceeds must be deposited as soon as practicable into an account in the name of the school/board [Crown Entities Act 2004], and
- > board-raised funds cannot be used to meet proprietor responsibilities, including funding proprietor-owned buildings.

Holding funds temporarily for the proprietor

The board may **temporarily hold** funds or voluntary contributions intended for the proprietor in the school's bank account (as permitted under the Crown Entities Act). Where this occurs, the school should keep clear records so funds remain identifiable and are transferred appropriately.

Voluntary contributions by parents [donations]

The board must ensure information provided to parents [including on the school website] complies with Ministry of Education requirements on fees, charges, and donations. This applies to both state and state-integrated schools.

Schools should refer parents to Ministry guidance, which explains:

- > what schools can charge for,
- > what parents are required to pay for, and
- > what counts as a voluntary donation.

Communication principle [applies to all fundraising]

For any fundraising activity, schools must make it clear **who the funds are being raised for** (board/school or proprietor), and must follow the relevant statutory requirements and agreed protocols.

Funds raised through Attendance Dues

Parents/caregivers are legally required by law to pay **Attendance Dues** to the Proprietor. Annual attendance dues for each state integrated school are capped at a maximum level by the Crown.

Key points are as follows:

- > These are compulsory for students attending state-integrated schools, regardless of whether the school has opted in to the donations scheme.
- > Payment can be enforced and GST is payable. A tax credit cannot be claimed.
- > State-integrated schools cannot increase attendance dues without the approval of the Minister of Education.

Grants and lending

Grants from community organisations

Schools sometimes seek funding grants from community organisations for items such as the provision of an asphalt netball/basketball court. The resulting structure or infrastructure is owned by the Proprietor, not the Crown.

Lending money to the Proprietor

It is illegal for boards to lend board money [which is Crown money] to the Proprietor to help provide a school building.

Strategic Relationships

With Proprietor

A strong strategic relationship with the Proprietor is essential for effective governance in a Catholic school. The Proprietor safeguards the school's Catholic special character and oversees property matters, [new footprint, major maintenance and replacement], while the board governs educational and operational aspects [minor repairs maintenance].

This partnership requires clear communication and collaboration, often facilitated through the Presiding Member and the Proprietor's appointees on the board. Strategic engagement ensures that decisions about enrolment, staffing, and property development align with the mission of Catholic education. Regular consultation with the Proprietor helps address issues early, maintain trust, and

uphold the integrity of the school’s special character. By working together, the board and proprietor create a unified approach that supports faith-based learning, student wellbeing, and sustainable management.

Formal Communication and Consultation process

Below is an example of a checklist with suggested approaches to ensure formal processes are in place.

Area	Checklist Items
Clear Communication	> Agree on protocols for regular updates between Board Chair, Principal, and Proprietor’s appointees. > Share board minutes promptly with the Proprietor or their representative.
Regular Strategic Meetings	> Schedule termly or annual meetings to review Catholic special character, property priorities, and enrolment trends. > Include the Proprietor in long-term planning and major project discussions.
Alignment on Catholic special character	> Ensure strategic plans and policies reflect the Proprietor’s expectations. > Collaborate on annual Catholic special character self-review and share findings early.
Early Consultation	> Refer concerns about Catholic special character, staffing, or enrolment before they escalate. > Seek advice promptly on issues that could affect the school’s mission or reputation.
Transparency in Property and Finance	> Work closely with the Proprietor on property maintenance and development priorities. > Clarify responsibilities for fundraising and ensure compliance with legal requirements.
Formal Reporting	> Submit annual reports and compliance attestations as required. > Include strengths, challenges, and supporting documents such as ERO reports and self-review findings.

With Parish

A strong strategic relationship between the board and the parish network is vital for sustaining the Catholic special character of the school. **The parish provides spiritual leadership and a faith community that complements the school's goals, while the board ensures governance and student achievement.** Collaboration should include regular communication with the parish priest, joint participation in liturgical events, and shared initiatives that strengthen faith formation for students and families. By working together, the board and parish create a unified approach to evangelisation, community engagement, and pastoral care, ensuring that the school remains deeply connected to its Catholic roots and serves as an active part of parish life.

More ideas are given in the downloadable Factsheet “Fostering school-parish relationships” in the Resources section.

With Diocesan Office

A strong relationship between the board and the diocesan office is essential for maintaining the integrity of Catholic education. The diocese provides oversight, guidance, and resources to ensure that schools operate in accordance with Church teaching and legal obligations. Collaboration should include regular communication with diocesan education staff, participation in diocesan training and formation programs, and alignment with diocesan policies on Catholic special character, property, and governance. By working closely with the diocese, boards gain access to expertise, support for compliance, and opportunities for shared initiatives that strengthen faith formation and educational quality. This partnership helps ensure consistency across schools and reinforces the mission of Catholic education within the wider diocesan community.

Compliances and reporting

Proprietor Appointee special character report

It is a condition of appointment as a Proprietor's appointee that the appointee submit a report to the Proprietor at the date of the Annual Meeting [i.e., between 31 March and the third Tuesday in May] or at a time specified by the Proprietor. See checklist and example report for more information.

The report should:

- > cover both the strengths of the school and any weakness observed.
- > attach copies of other documents that will help the Proprietor get a good picture of the school, such as a recent ERO report, the board's annual report, self-review findings, etc.

Please note:

- > this report is a different document from the board's annual report, and it is good practice for the two reports to be written in collaboration.
- > the report of the Proprietor's Appointees is their own report and contain their own views, even if these are not shared by the rest of the board.
- > Good practice would be to send a copy to the principal and the board, so that all members know what is being reported and can make any comments before the report is sent to the proprietor.

Annual Compliance Attestation

The board must also provide the Proprietor with an Annual Compliance Attestation that shows how it complies with its legal obligations in the area of special character. The attestation form is also available from the NZCEO website and the Resources tab.

Board culture

Board culture refers to the shared values, behaviours, and ways of working that shape how the board carries out its governance role. In a Catholic state-integrated school, board culture should reflect the Gospel values of respect, service, integrity, and care for others. A healthy board culture is characterised by trust, openness, disciplined decision-making, and a commitment to acting in the best interests of students and the school community. When board culture is strong, governance is more effective, disagreements are managed constructively, and decisions are grounded in both legal responsibility and moral purpose.

Creating an Effective Board Culture

An effective board culture does not develop by chance; it is deliberately shaped through clear expectations, shared understanding of roles, and consistent behaviours. This includes a commitment to collective responsibility, respectful challenge, confidentiality, and preparedness. Boards build strong culture by grounding their work in prayer or reflection, maintaining a focus on mission, and ensuring that discussions are principled rather than personal. Regular evaluation of board performance, induction of new members, and agreed ways of working all contribute to a culture that is reflective, accountable, and aligned with Catholic values.

Leading from the Top

The Presiding Member, together with the Principal and Proprietor representatives, plays a critical role in modelling the culture the board expects of itself and the wider school. Leading from the top means setting the tone for respectful dialogue, ethical decision-making, and constructive relationships, particularly when facing difficult or sensitive issues. How the board conducts itself in meetings, handles conflict, and engages with others sends a powerful signal about what is valued and expected. Consistent leadership at board level reinforces trust and credibility across the school community.

The Board's Role in Organisational Culture

While the board does not manage the day-to-day culture of the school, it has a significant influence on organisational culture through the values it promotes, the policies it sets, and the behaviours it models. The board's stewardship of the Catholic special character, its support of the Principal, and its expectations around staff conduct and wellbeing all shape the environment in which students and staff learn and work. By governing in a way that is just, compassionate, and mission-focused, the board helps create a school culture where faith, learning, and wellbeing are at the centre of everything you do.

Board prayer and reflection

It is expected that board meetings will begin with prayer, which may include a reflection. Meetings will also end with prayer.

Key areas of oversight

Engagement with the community

Boards should actively engage with parish, whānau, and alumni to build strong relationships and support for the school. This includes regular communication, events, and feedback mechanisms. Example: Host termly community forums and publish a board newsletter.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi Integration

Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Through our commitment to Catholic special character, we recommend that school boards give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through policies and practices.

Example: include Treaty principles in strategic planning and appoint a trustee with expertise in Māori education.

Cultural Responsiveness

Boards should foster inclusive environments that respect and celebrate cultural diversity, particularly Māori and Pasifika communities. This includes culturally responsive teaching practices, staff training, and community engagement.

Example: Host cultural events and consult with Māori and Pasifika whānau on school initiatives.

Digital Governance

Boards are responsible for overseeing digital safety and the use of technology in school operations. This includes cybersecurity policies, digital recordkeeping, and use of online platforms for meetings and reporting.

Example: Implement a digital governance policy and use secure cloud-based systems for board documentation.

Risk Management

Crisis Management

Boards must have protocols for responding to emergencies, including natural disasters, health crises, safeguarding/student wellbeing issues and reputational risks. This includes having a crisis communication plan, designated response roles, and regular drills. It is recommended that boards develop a crisis response manual and ensure all board members are familiar with it.

Informing the proprietor

In the event of a crisis, whether educational, financial, or related to student wellbeing, the board must adopt a “no surprises” approach by informing the Proprietor promptly and transparently. Early communication allows the Proprietor to provide guidance and support before issues escalate. When sharing information, the board must protect the privacy of individuals and comply with legal and ethical obligations, ensuring that sensitive details are disclosed only on a need-to-know basis. This proactive and confidential approach fosters trust, safeguards the school’s reputation, and ensures that decisions uphold the Catholic special character values.

Protecting Special Character – Proprietor and Board Responsibilities

Catholic state integrated school proprietors have a statutory duty to maintain and preserve special character in partnership with school boards. Boards, particularly the proprietor’s appointees, must ensure governance and operations reflect the special character defined in the integration agreement. Both parties share responsibility for creating a safe, positive environment, including addressing issues such as abuse.

A strong, collaborative relationship built on a “no surprises” approach is essential for protecting Catholic special character and student wellbeing.

Guidelines for sharing information

More information and guidelines can be found here about sharing information between the board and the proprietor.

Use of Honorifics and naming practices

Catholic schools should exercise caution in the use of honorifics and titles, ensuring they are respectful and appropriate in all communications. When naming buildings, awards, or scholarships, boards should avoid using the names of clergy or religious personnel or lay persons to prevent perceptions of favouritism or undue recognition. Instead, names should reflect the school’s mission, Catholic values, or significant aspects of its history and charism. This approach promotes inclusivity, safeguards reputational integrity, and maintains focus on the school’s educational and faith-based purpose.

Board Induction and Training

Induction

Induction is the first step in preparing new board members for their role. It should be structured, welcoming, and comprehensive. Induction can take the form of informal meetings with key stakeholders, training, formation, attending school mass etc.,. Key components include:

Mission and Catholic Special Character

- > Understanding the school’s mission and values.
- > The role of the board in safeguarding and promoting Catholic special character.
- > How Catholic social teaching informs governance decisions.

Legal and Governance Responsibilities

- > Overview of the Integration Agreement
- > Overview of the Education and Training Act 2020, especially Section 127.
- > Board’s statutory obligations, including health and safety, Child protection, financial management, and compliance.
- > Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi and a commitment to equity for Māori learners.

Strategic Direction

- > Introduction to the school’s strategic plan and annual goals.
- > How board decisions align with long-term priorities.

Policies and Procedures

- > Key governance policies [e.g., governance framework, child protection, complaints, financial delegations].
- > Meeting protocols and decision-making processes.

Practical Orientation

- > Tour of the school and introduction to leadership team.
- > Access to board documentation and digital platforms.

Ongoing Professional Development

Governance is dynamic, and board members need continuous learning to remain effective. Professional development should include:

Regular Training

- > Annual workshops on governance and best practice.
- > Updates on legislative changes and Ministry of Education requirements.

Catholic Formation

- > Opportunities for reflection on Catholic values and their application in governance.
- > Sessions on integrating faith into strategic planning and policy.

Special Topics

- > Cultural competency and Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles.
- > Financial literacy and risk management.
- > Student well-being and inclusive education.

Networking and Collaboration

- > Participation in diocesan or national Catholic education forums.
- > Sharing best practices with other boards.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Boards should review the effectiveness of induction and professional development annually. Feedback from members can guide improvements and ensure training meets evolving needs.

Resources and Appendices

Work of the Board

- > Planning and Reporting Fact Sheet
- > Understanding the governance puzzle
- > Governance Framework
- > APIS website – How proprietors and School Boards work together
- > The work of the board

Legislative Framework

- > Education and Training Act 2020
 - > Schedule 6 State Integrated Schools.
 - > Schedule 6, pdf for download
 - > Powers and Functions of Board
- > Please contact NZCEO for an example Integration Agreement

Catholic Special Character Compliance

- > Role of Proprietor's appointee on the School Board
- > Attestation Form
- > Annual Report Checklist
- > Legal obligations
- > Annual Report – please speak to your local Vicar for Education/Manager for Education for an example

Treaty of Waitangi

- > The Treaty of Waitangi as it applies in schools

Fundraising

- > Please see the Ministry of Education site for information on donations and fundraising

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/governance/#resources



> Property

Property

Introduction

Property is a shared responsibility in state-integrated schools. While the Proprietor owns the land and buildings, the school board is responsible for day-to-day care and use of the school premises, supported by Crown funding. Clear understanding of ownership, funding streams, and decision-making boundaries is essential to avoid misunderstandings and ensure the property remains safe, fit-for-purpose, and compliant.

The requirements of integrated schools differ from those of state schools as follows:

- > legislative and regulatory requirements for ownership and property standards as laid down in Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act and the school's Integration Agreement, which can be found [here](#).
- > the maintenance of buildings and grounds – funding minor and major maintenance
- > new buildings – the funding of expansion and new schools
- > furniture and equipment – funding and maintenance
- > insurance – responsibility for this is shared by the proprietor and the school board
- > other use of the school premises.

Property Obligations

Legal requirements and Integration Agreement

The property obligations of the Proprietor and the Crown are set out in Schedule 6 Cl 39 to 42 of the Education and Training Act 2020, and in each school's Integration Agreement.

Minimum property standards for state-integrated schools

Under Schedule 6, Cl 39[2] of the Education and Training Act, property covered by an Integration Agreement must meet minimum standards to ensure that it is safe, in a fit state of repair, and meets all statutory, regulatory and Ministry of Education design standards.

When a school becomes state integrated, the Ministry may identify work required to bring the land and buildings up to minimum state standards. This work will be listed in the Third Schedule of the school's Integration Agreement.

After integration the Ministry may also ask the Proprietor to do other work to maintain minimum standards.

At a minimum, the Proprietor and the Board must be sure that:

- > buildings with specified systems have a current Building Warrant of Fitness [BWOF]
- > the school has a process for managing health and safety issues

The Board is responsible for identifying, eliminating, isolating and/or minimising risks to health and safety on the premises. The Proprietor is responsible for capital work to remedy identified and agreed risks.

- > an appropriate professional consultant, such as an engineer or architect, designs and certifies all structural additions and alterations
- > the school board has a long-term maintenance plan and implements it effectively in collaboration with the Proprietor. [For more information, visit the Ministry Property website]
- > all aspects of the school's property portfolio are compliant with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

Ownership of land and buildings

The Proprietor is the owner of all the land, buildings and other improvements described in the school's Integration Agreement and any supplementary agreements. The school site plan [which is attached to the school's Integration Agreement] shows the school's premises, clearly distinguishing the land and buildings that are integrated from those that are not. The Proprietor meets liens, mortgages and other charges [such as insurance] associated with the land and buildings that comprise the school premises.

The proprietor gives the school board [the school's controlling authority] exclusive right to the use of the school premises, including buildings and chattels.

Unless other arrangements are made with the school board, the proprietor is responsible for any costs associated with the non-integrated areas [such as a chapel or hostel]. The proprietor may allow the school to use such facilities and may require the school board to pay for their use by way of an agreed rental or other usage contribution. [This can be agreed via a MOU].

Any building on the Proprietor's land belongs legally to the proprietor unless, by consent of the proprietor, it is vested in the school board. An amendment to the Integration Agreement between the Minister of Education and the Proprietor will be required before the School Board has exclusive use of a new building that is part of the school's integrated portfolio.

The school board may construct a building or other facility on the school premises using its own [Crown] funds, and own this, but only with the prior agreement of the Proprietor and the Ministry of Education. If agreed to, a Memorandum of Understanding is required between the Proprietor and the Board to ensure that ownership and maintenance of any building that has been constructed with any input of Board [Crown] funds, or funds from other sources [such as the school's Parent, Teacher and Friends Association], are clearly delineated.

Alteration of School Premises

A school board cannot add to the school premises, dispose of any part of the school premises, or otherwise alter its boundaries or dimensions. If a school board considers any of these desirable, it is required to approach the Proprietor with a proposal to that effect. To be implemented, such changes require a Supplementary Agreement between the Proprietor and the Minister of Education.

Maintenance of buildings and grounds

The Board's 10-year property maintenance plan

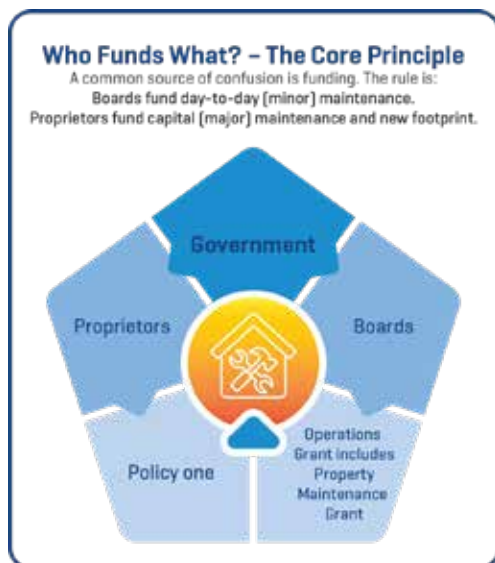
The board is responsible for all expected maintenance of buildings and fixtures within a 10-year period. The board is obliged to have a 10-year property maintenance plan and to set aside an adequate budget to cover maintenance when it becomes due.

The repair [such as painting, fixing broken equipment, and minor repairs to buildings and infrastructure] of damage to buildings caused by reasonable wear and tear, or carelessness is also a cost to the board and is covered by the school's maintenance funding. It cannot be claimed through the Proprietor's insurance.

The Ministry's website provides further information for school boards about items eligible for maintenance funding.

Ministry of Education's responsibility for funding

The Proprietor owns the school's land and buildings; the Ministry of Education provides the funding for integrated buildings maintenance through two categories: minor maintenance and major (or capital) maintenance. It also provides funding for furniture and equipment, and for insuring these.



Funding of minor maintenance – School Board Responsibilities

The **School Board** is responsible for minor maintenance of integrated property. This is funded by the Ministry through the school's operational grant, which includes a Property Maintenance Grant.

The amount is based on the amount of integrated property, up to the maximum gross square meters entitlement as calculated by the School Property Guide [SPG]. You can view the details of your annual Property Maintenance Grant on the Ministry of Education Property Portal.

Each year the Ministry sends the school board an indicative and a confirmed Grant Advice Notice giving details of the school's property maintenance funding for the year. This funding is paid directly into the school's bank account in quarterly instalments.

The school board's legal responsibilities for maintenance are confined to the integrated areas.

Minor maintenance includes:

- > routine repairs,
- > cyclical maintenance painting (even when costs exceed \$5,000),
- > maintenance of buildings, grounds, furniture and equipment,
- > damage caused by wear and tear, fixing broken equipment, repairing a broken water pipe.

Please note: This figure of \$5,000 value is not an absolute guideline for maintenance – Boards, for example, are required to make provision for the painting of all school buildings on a regular cycle. Painting is the largest maintenance cost a board faces and can range from \$10,000 to \$70,000, depending on the size of the school. Painting associated with remodelling or modernisation capital works within the footprint of existing buildings is also the board's responsibility.

Key points:

- > There is a \$5,000 threshold guideline, not a hard rule.
- > School boards must maintain a **10-year property maintenance plan** and budget accordingly.
- > School boards **cannot make structural changes** without the Proprietor's written approval.

Funding of major (or capital) maintenance and modernisation – Proprietor

The Proprietor is required to keep the school's integrated school property up to the standard of equivalent state schools.

The **Proprietor is responsible for major maintenance**, modernisation, and capital works that:

- > cost more than \$5,000 (excluding GST),
- > replace or significantly improve an existing asset,
- > are required to meet statutory or safety standards.

Policy One Funding

- > The Ministry of Education provides Policy One funding to Proprietors.
- > It is calculated on a per-student basis, paid quarterly, and must be used on integrated property only.
- > Funding may be pooled across schools within a Diocese or cooperative.

Policy One funding:

- > must be prioritised for urgent health and safety work and essential infrastructure work and also covers:
 - > roofs, boilers, fire systems,
 - > any property modifications needed for students or staff with special needs
 - > structural alterations,
 - > major emergency works [not covered by insurance],
 - > modernisation projects.

2010 Policy One Guidelines document sets out how the funding should be spent by Proprietors of integrated schools and the processes for managing this expenditure. Also visit the MOE website [here](#).

Capital works or routine maintenance?

The Ministry of Education states that when deciding if a task is capital works or routine maintenance, it is useful to assess the volume or extent of the change required. For example, if a few sheets of iron on the roof need replacing, this is routine maintenance. However, if most of the iron needs to be replaced (so that, in effect, the building needs a whole new roof), this is capital replacement.

In small schools that receive relatively little funding for minor maintenance it may be necessary for the Proprietor to pay for works that cost less than \$5,000, particularly if these works improve the capital value of the property.

The Proprietor has discretion in how far to support Boards that are faced with major maintenance expenses, as happens from time to time. This applies to very small schools in particular.

Funding through Attendance Dues and Voluntary Donations

Parents/caregivers are legally required by law to pay **Attendance Dues** to the Proprietor. Annual Attendance Dues for each state integrated school are capped at a maximum level by the Crown. The uses of attendance dues are set out in legislation [Source: Sch 6 Cl 30].

Attendance Dues may be used for:

- > new building footprint (additional space),
- > SPG (School Property Guide) deficits,
- > insurance and lease costs,
- > cost of collection.



Attendance Dues cannot be used for:

- > staffing,
- > replacement or renewal of existing building footprint,
- > building beyond SPG entitlement,
- > professional development.

Voluntary donations may also be made to the Proprietor to support:

- > property not covered by integration,
- > special character such as chapel.

Attendance Dues are capped by the Crown and any increase must be approved and re-gazetted.

New buildings

Proprietor's responsibility for new buildings

A school may require new buildings or other additional accommodation because of changes in the state school minimum accommodation code, roll growth within SPG entitlement, or approved maximum roll increases. Such additions are the responsibility of the Proprietor. The Crown may sometimes assist through Policy Two capital funding.

School board's responsibility to inform proprietor

Structural changes to buildings or grounds

The school board has no authority to make structural changes to the buildings or grounds (such as putting up or removing a dividing wall or constructing a changing shed or relocatable classroom) without first consulting the Proprietor's Property Office and obtaining the Proprietor's written authorisation.

The school board is required to bring to the Proprietor's attention any maintenance items that are in the major category. The Board and the Proprietor are obliged to coordinate their respective 10-year maintenance plans to ensure that the best use is made of the two streams of maintenance funding.

Proprietor's 10-year property plan

The Proprietor (or their professionally accredited agent) undertakes, year by year, a plan of work that covers the works the Proprietor is obliged to implement.

The Proprietor's Property Office in each diocese (or individual Proprietors, in the case of schools owned by religious orders outside of diocesan cooperatives) prepares a rolling 10-year property plan in which it prioritises and plans those works as funds allow. It is important that the Proprietor's Property Office (or the Proprietor's agent) consults with the Board on these matters, and that the two parties coordinate their respective (major and minor) 10-year maintenance plans.

Comprehensive information related to the management of property in integrated schools is found here

Consequential effects for maintenance funding

As soon as any capital works are completed, the Proprietor or the Proprietor's agent completes a site plan update and lodges it with NZCEO. The site plan update is logged and then sent to the Ministry for review and agreement. The site plan is placed on the Ministry of Education's property system, which is a computerised record of all the assets (including buildings and land) held by every state and state-integrated school. This updated information will ensure that the school's operational funding for maintenance is adjusted to allow for the upkeep of the new accommodation. Not all asset plan updates are for new footprint. Some are major alterations of existing buildings or rationalisation.

School boards can access their details on the Ministry's website and check whether they are receiving the correct amount of property maintenance funding for their integrated school property portfolio.

Comprehensive information related to the management of property in integrated schools is found here

Board-funded buildings

The board of a state-integrated school is a Crown entity. As legal entities, Boards have the status of body corporates as established and constituted under the Education Act 1989 [as affirmed in the Education and Training Act 2020]. This means that they can own land, enter contracts, and so on. As Crown entities [defined under Section 7 of the Crown Entities Act 2004] they are subject to rules about what they can and cannot do without obtaining approval from the Minister of Education, such as lend or borrow and enter certain investments.

Key points are:

Ownership and Funding Rules

- > Crown funds [including school board-raised funds] **cannot** be used for buildings that will legally belong to the Proprietor.
- > Any building on Proprietor-owned land belongs to the Proprietor unless vested in the school board by consent which requires an amendment to the Integration Agreement between the Minister of Education and the Proprietor. This will be required before the Board has exclusive use of the new building.
- > Buildings funded by Crown monies will **not** be integrated. School boards must cover ongoing maintenance and insurance.
- > Proprietors may refuse permission for unintegrated buildings on their land.
- > Jointly funded buildings are possible but rarely approved.
- > A **Memorandum of Understanding** is required for any building involving school board funds to clarify ownership and maintenance responsibilities.

Board-funded capital works

Boards may wish to undertake major capital improvements to the school buildings or grounds, using Crown funds.

If the school needs major capital work just to meet the required Ministry of Education building standards [the “code entitlement”], that work is the responsibility of the proprietor, not the board.

The board may only fund major capital projects when the project goes beyond what the Ministry requires as the minimum standard.

These are optional enhancements, not basic compliance work.

Key points are:

- > School board-funded capital works are allowed only for facilities beyond code entitlement. Upgrading to code is the Proprietor's responsibility.
- > School board are advised to engage the proprietor at an early stage and must obtain written approval from both the Proprietor and the Ministry of Education before planning or financing projects.
- > Local authority building consent and, if needed, resource management consent are also required.

Planning and approval for School Board-funded improvements

It would be most unwise to begin planning or financing major projects without the written permission of both the Proprietor and the Ministry of Education. All the relevant issues need to be clarified first – for example, estimated costs; who will be responsible for what aspect of the work; who will be responsible for insurance and maintenance; whether the Ministry of Education will supply furniture and equipment; whether the project will affect any covenant or mortgage on the land; whether it meets the Ministry of Education's health and safety requirements; whether the addition or alteration is permanent or temporary and, if so, how long it will be in place.

If a capital work is executed without fulfilling all the Ministry of Education's requirements, particularly those related to health and safety, the Ministry may prevent the school from using the new facility until the requirements have been completed at the school board's expense.

If a capital work is executed without the Proprietor's authority, the Proprietor may require a reversal of the work at the School Board's expense.

Maintenance of Board-owned property

School boards are required to use their own funding (which can include money from fundraising or the use of surplus operational funding) to pay for the maintenance of property that has been paid for with:

- > the school board's funding (from the Crown), or
- > funding provided by the community.

School Board-Funded Buildings and Capital Works – Summary Table

Topic	Key Points for School Boards
Legal Status	Boards are Crown entities and body corporates under the Education Act 1989. They can own land and enter contracts but must comply with Crown Entities Act restrictions [e.g., borrowing requires Ministerial approval].
Ownership Rules	– Crown funds cannot be used for buildings that will legally belong to the Proprietor. – Any building on Proprietor land belongs to the Proprietor unless vested by consent and Integration Agreement amendment. – Buildings funded by Crown monies will not be integrated; School Board covers maintenance and insurance.
Permissions Required	– Proprietor may refuse permission for unintegrated buildings. – Joint funding with Proprietor is possible but rarely approved. – Memorandum of Understanding required for any building involving School Board funds.
Capital Works Conditions	– Allowed only for facilities beyond code entitlement. – Must have written approval from Proprietor and Ministry of Education before planning or financing. – Local authority building consent and resource management consent may be required.
Planning Checklist	Clarify: estimated costs, insurance and maintenance responsibilities, furniture supply, impact on land covenants/mortgages, health and safety compliance, permanence of addition.
Risks	– If Ministry requirements unmet, facility may be unusable until corrected at School Board's expense. – If Proprietor approval not obtained, Proprietor may require reversal at School Board's expense.
Maintenance	School Boards must use their own funds (including fundraising or surplus operational funding) to maintain property paid for with Board or community funds.

Furniture and equipment

Ministry of Education funding of furniture and equipment

The Ministry provides school boards of state-integrated schools with an annual grant to replace and modernise existing furniture and equipment. This funding is paid to boards on 1 July each year. The annual furniture and equipment grant is calculated as a fixed percentage of up to 5% of the Proprietor's Policy One funding. The percentage amount depends on the type of school.

The Ministry also provides boards with a one off furniture and equipment grant for new teaching spaces at state-integrated schools, as appropriate for the room's intended use. The funding for new teaching spaces is based on net square metres [this does not include corridors, circulation space, toilets, etc.] up to its School Property Guide (SPG) entitlement. The proprietor makes the claim, and the Ministry pays the funding to the school board.

School board's responsibility for furniture and equipment

The school board purchases and becomes the owner of the furniture and equipment, and is responsible for insuring it. The purchase must be recorded in the school's accounting system and its property register. The school board is also responsible for the routine maintenance of furniture and equipment.

Insurance

Responsibility for insurance is split between the proprietor and the school board, and possibly others who use the school. It is wise for the board to consult with the proprietor to make sure that the cover is adequate and, if it appears advantageous, to have one cover for all risks. In most dioceses the Proprietors' Property Office can arrange a comprehensive cover that shares the costs.

Because insurance can be complex, school boards should seek information and advice on particular matters from the insurance brokers retained by Proprietors' offices [Diocesan Education Offices, Diocesan Property Offices or the Proprietor's agent] or from individual proprietors insurance officer.

Proprietor's responsibility for insurance

The Proprietor is obliged to insure the buildings against fire, earthquake, storm, flood, burglary, arson, vandalism and malicious acts. In this context 'buildings' includes any item fixed to the buildings or grounds [e.g., toilet pans, doors and fixed shelving]. It does not include tractors, computers, library books and so on, which are classified as contents.

Damage to buildings caused by reasonable wear and tear, and carelessness cannot be claimed on the Proprietor's insurance. It is covered by minor maintenance, which is a cost to the Board.

There may be items that are, in effect, contents but are lent to the school by the Proprietor [including items listed as such in a schedule to some Integration Agreements] or are stored in the school but not owned by it [such as equipment belonging to an associated sports club]. In these cases it is the responsibility of the Proprietor or other owner of these items to make sure that they are insured.

School Board responsibility for insurance

The school board is responsible for insuring school contents, any items that meet the definition of furniture and equipment and which are on the board's register of assets. Contents insurance is met from operational funding.

The school board is responsible for other insurance [such as public or third-party liability, loss of cash and fidelity guarantee] and for insuring any board-owned buildings, if any.

Access and use of school premises

Access by the proprietor

The Integration Agreement gives the Proprietor or the Proprietor's agents [including the parish priest, the Education Manager, and Religious Education Advisers] access to the school after giving reasonable notice, at any reasonable time to ensure that the special character is being maintained or to ensure that the asset has not deteriorated through lack of maintenance.

Normally the Proprietor's agents would first contact the principal to make sure that by exercising this right they do not disrupt the school. The relationship between agents of the Board and agents of the Proprietor should be one of cooperation and good faith.

If the Proprietor's appointees on the school board have cause for concern, the matter should be raised with the Proprietor's Property Office, the Proprietor's agent in the diocese, or the Proprietor's Trust Board, as appropriate. In any case, the Proprietor's appointees on the school board are required to report on the state of repair of the integrated and non-integrated buildings and grounds when they make their annual report to the Proprietor.

Areas of shared access between the school board and the proprietor need to be regularised by means of a written agreement between the parties. This normally is in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding.

Other users of school premises

The Proprietor grants the use of the school premises to the school board, subject to conditions set out in the Integration Agreement. These conditions include the following.

If the Proprietor asks the school board to make all or part of the school premises or equipment available to the Proprietor or other persons, the school board may not withhold consent without a good reason to do so. Examples may include using classrooms for parish meetings, using the school hall for church functions and parking in the school grounds during Sunday Mass. The user should pay the school board enough to recover any costs (such as heating and lighting) and make good any damage caused.

The school board may also lend or hire its facilities to other users but must have the consent of the Proprietor, who may not withhold that consent without good reason – for example, if there was danger of damage to the asset or if the proposed use was unsuitable for diocesan-owned schools.

Working Together and Effective Relationships

Property matters require a practical and cooperative relationship between the Board and the Proprietor, underpinned by a shared understanding of funding responsibilities and decision-making authority. Working effectively together involves early consultation, transparent planning, and realistic timeframes, particularly where property issues impact teaching and learning. Strong relationships help manage expectations, resolve pressure points constructively, and ensure property decisions support the long-term sustainability of the school.

Resources and Appendices

Policy One funding for capital work at integrated schools

The Ministry provides proprietors of state-integrated schools with funding to modernise and upgrade their integrated school property. Known as Policy One funding, it fulfils a similar purpose to the 5 Year Agreement [5YA] funding the Ministry provides to state schools.

View more information about using policy one funding for capital works [here](#).

Policy One Guidelines

These guidelines set out how Policy One funding should be spent by Proprietors of integrated schools and the processes for managing this expenditure and can be found [here](#).

Furniture and Equipment Funding Guidelines

State integrated schools are eligible for furniture and equipment funding for modernisation projects, and new square metres projects [which are planned projects to create additional accommodation].

These guidelines explain the entitlement for furniture and equipment funding calculation, and the process for claiming funding. [Click here to download PDF](#).

Property Maintenance

This guidance provides tips for property maintenance, working with a caretaker, and hiring contractors for technical maintenance. [Click here to view the MOE Property Maintenance Guide](#).

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/property/#resources



> Enrolment

Enrolment

Context and Overview

Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020 sets out key requirements for state-integrated schools [including property, staffing and appointments, special character and enrolment].

This section focuses on the **enrolment aspects**, especially:

- > **Preference of enrolment**, and
- > **The enrolment process in Catholic schools.**

In a Catholic state-integrated school there are two distinct but connected responsibilities:

- > **Preference of enrolment** – decided by the **Proprietor** [or their delegate].
- > **Enrolment** – decided by the **Board**, usually through the principal, in line with Board policy and the school's Integration Agreement.

Enrolment is the responsibility of the Board [normally carried out by the principal].
The granting of preference is the right of the Proprietor.

Legal and Integration Requirements

Most Catholic Integration Agreements include a standard Clause based on Schedule 6, Clause 26 of the *Education and Training Act 2020*:

Preference of enrolment at the school shall be given only to those children whose parents have established a particular or general religious connection with the special character of the school, and the Board must not give preference unless the Proprietor has stated that those parents have established such a connection.

Key points:

- > This is a binding agreement between the Crown and the Proprietor and must be observed in letter and in spirit.
- > It must be interpreted in light of:
 - > The missionary nature of the Church, with concern for those deprived of faith or material resources
 - > The significance of Religious Education and the Catholic school's evangelising role
 - > Parents' primary responsibility for educating their children in the faith
 - > The special character purpose of a Catholic school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Proprietor

- > Sets and oversees the criteria for preference of enrolment.
- > Delegates authority (usually to parish priests and other approved signatories) to sign **Preference of Enrolment Certificates**.
- > May review and decide preference appeals.

Board (and principal)

- > Is responsible for **enrolling students**, managing the roll and complying with the Integration Agreement.
- > Must always **enrol preference students ahead of non-preference students**.
- > Sets transparent enrolment policies and any selection criteria for non-preference places.
- > Works with the Proprietor and Ministry on maximum roll changes and enrolment schemes.

Preference of Enrolment

Determining Preference

Preference is established when:

- > Parents/caregivers obtain a **signed Preference of Enrolment Certificate** from a person delegated by the bishop (usually the parish priest; or Diocesan staff, sometimes chaplains or designated parish committees).
- > The delegated person is satisfied that the parents/guardians have a “**particular or general religious connection**” with the special character of the school, as required by the Integration Agreement.

The Preference Certificate:

- > Uses nationally agreed wording approved by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference.
- > Must **not** be altered by individual schools.
- > Is supplied by parishes, diocesan education offices. It may be incorporated into school enrolment forms, but must be **signed by an authorised signatory**, not by school staff.

Parents must obtain a **new certificate** when:

- > Enrolling another child at the same school, or
- > Enrolling the same child at a different Catholic school.

Preference Decisions and Enrolment Order

The **Proprietor** [through authorised signatories] decides who is granted preference. The principal and Board **must not** override this decision.

Subject to the Proprietor's decision, the Board [through the principal] enrolls in this order:

- > **Preference students** [those with a valid Preference Certificate] – up to the maximum roll.
- > **Non-preference students**, up to the **non-preference limit** in the Integration Agreement and provided the maximum roll is not exceeded.

If there are more non-preference applicants than places, it is the **Board's prerogative** to decide the selection policy for non-preference students, in line with legislation and good practice.

Appeals

- > Each diocese will have a formal appeals process for families who are declined preference.
- > The Preference of Enrolment Certificate [and diocesan information] must clearly advise parents of their right to appeal.
- > A national appeals form is used in all dioceses, with diocesan-specific information added.
- > Appeals are usually considered by a person or committee appointed by the bishop [e.g. Diocesan Education Office]. Where a certificate is subsequently granted on appeal, the original signatory is normally advised.

Enrolment Process

Initial Contact with the School

When parents contact the school:

- > The **principal** explains:
 - > The nature and special Catholic character of the school and its religious curriculum.
 - > The **preference of enrolment policy** and how to obtain a Preference Certificate.
 - > The legal obligation to pay **attendance dues**, and any diocesan arrangements for assistance in cases of hardship.
- > These explanations support the commitments that parents will later sign on the school enrolment form.

Claiming Preference

When parents apply to enrol:

- > The principal must check whether they **already hold** a valid Preference Certificate.
- > If not, and the parents wish to Claim preference, the principal directs them to:
 - > Their **parish priest**, or
 - > Another person approved by the bishop [diocesan offices advise schools who can sign].
- > In secondary schools, arrangements about attendance dues are often made by the principal on behalf of the Proprietor.

If a certificate is **refused** and the parents wish to appeal, the principal may refer them to the **Proprietor's or Diocesan Education Office** for the formal appeals process described above.

No student can be enrolled **as a preference student** unless the principal has received a Preference Certificate signed by an authorised signatory.

Non-Preference Students

At enrolment, the principal must ensure that parents of non-preference students:

- > Understand the school's **Religious Education programme** and religious observances.
- > Know that:
 - > Their child is expected to attend ordinary Religious Education Classes.
 - > They may withdraw their child from specific **religious observances** and teaching related to particular observances, in line with Schedule 6, Clause 29[2] of the *Education and Training Act 2020*.

Parents/caregivers must sign a **special character and attendance dues consent**.

This may be a section of the enrolment form or a separate form. Typical wording will include a commitment such as:

"I/We accept that she/he will participate in the general school programme that gives the school its Special Catholic Character."

This both:

- > Meets the requirement to be responsive to different philosophical and religious affiliations, and
- > Confirms that parents are making an **informed decision** to enrol a non-preference student in a Catholic school community.

School–Parish Links

The enrolment process should also strengthen connections with the parish:

- > Principals normally encourage all families [Catholic or not] to make contact with the parish priest of the parish where they reside.
- > Early each year, the principal typically sends each parish priest a list of students from that parish who are enrolled at the school, to support pastoral care and parish-school links.

Enrolment Obligations of Parents

In light of **Schedule 6, Clauses 27 and 30** of the *Education and Training Act 2020*, Catholic school enrolment forms should clearly state that:

- > Parents accept, as a condition of enrolment, that their child will **participate in the general programme** that gives the school its special Catholic character [Sch 6 Cl 27].
- > Parents agree to pay **attendance dues** as determined by the Proprietor and approved by the Minister and acknowledge the school's right to **discontinue attendance** if they default on payment without making suitable arrangements [Sch 6 Cl 30].

Parents must **sign** to confirm they understand and consent to these conditions.

Enrolment forms should also include an appropriate **Privacy Act statement**. Sample wording is available in the Resources section.

School Administrative Requirements

The principal must ensure that:

- > The **master roll** shows whether each student is preference or non-preference.
- > A copy of each student's **Preference Certificate** [or a scanned record] is kept with enrolment documentation.
- > New certificates are obtained, and records updated, when students transfer between Catholic schools.

Both ERO and **Catholic Character Reviewers** may check preference records and roll information during reviews, including at the request of the Proprietor.

Managing the Maximum Roll

Each school's Integration Agreement specifies:

- > The **maximum roll**, and
- > The **maximum number or proportion of non-preference students**.

The Board is legally responsible for managing enrolments **within these limits**.

When the Roll is Under Pressure

Key principles:

- > Preference students must **always** be accepted ahead of non-preference students.
- > Where all preference applications cannot be accepted, the school must have a **Clear, transparent enrolment policy** [or a Ministry-approved enrolment scheme] that sets out priorities for acceptance.

Diocesan Vicars/Managers of Education can support schools to develop enrolment policies that:

- > Are acceptable to the Ministry, and
- > Reflect the school's local parish links and special character.

Common priority categories for **preference students** include:

- > Students from within the local parish or contributing parishes
- > Siblings of current students
- > Students with some established connection to the local parish or contributing parishes.

Steps if the Maximum Roll May be Exceeded

If the roll is likely to exceed the maximum, the Board should:

- > Decline further non-preference enrolments, even if the non-preference number is still below the limit in the Agreement.
- > Inform the Diocesan Education Office/Proprietor promptly so that options can be considered.
- > Explore options with the Proprietor and Ministry, which may include:
 - > Non-binding arrangements with neighbouring Catholic schools that have capacity.
 - > A Ministry-approved enrolment scheme [Schedule 20, Clause 16].
 - > A request to increase the maximum roll via a Supplementary Integration Agreement.

Increasing the Maximum Roll

The application for a maximum roll increase is made by the Proprietor to the Ministry through NZCEO.

The maximum roll can be altered **only** when:

- > Both the Proprietor and the Minister of Education agree, and
- > A **Supplementary Integration Agreement** is signed and gazetted.

In considering an increase:

- > The Ministry will look to whether Catholic children **would otherwise be deprived** of Catholic schooling.
- > Maximum rolls are **not normally increased** to make places for non-preference students.
- > If nearby Catholic schools have capacity and are reasonably accessible, the Ministry will expect roll pressure to be addressed through **enrolment schemes** rather than roll increases.

The Proprietor:

- > Must be prepared and have the financial capacity to provide any **additional accommodation** required by the increased roll as it becomes necessary.
- > Note that appointments to additional teacher positions generated by the increased roll, and payment for these positions, may only occur **after** the Supplementary Integration Agreement is signed and published in the New Zealand Gazette.

Process [summary]

If the Board believes a maximum roll increase is needed, it should:

- > **Consult the Proprietor** in the first instance. The proprietor makes the decision to apply for an increase to the maximum roll or not.
- > The proprietor meets with the MOE Regional Office to discuss the application and gain guidance on the process.
- > Complete the Board sections of the **Request for Maximum Roll Increase** form [see Resources] and send it to the Proprietor.
- > Consult **neighbouring state schools** and **neighbouring Catholic schools** early, explaining reasons and proposed arrangements.
- > Work with the Proprietor as they finalise the application to the Ministry [via NZCEO]. See process steps in more detail here.
- > Plan at least **three terms ahead**, recognising the time required for consultation, negotiation and approval, and allow longer for Policy 2 funding applications.

Enrolment Schemes

When schools approach their maximum roll on a frequent basis, the Ministry may establish an **enrolment scheme**. In these cases:

- > The **Proprietor must be consulted**, and
- > Diocesan offices can work with Boards to develop a scheme that:
 - > Is acceptable to the Ministry, and
 - > Reflects the school's parish links and special character.

While there can be **no ranking of the preference criteria themselves**, diocesan offices may help Boards develop priority categories for preference students under the scheme, such as:

- > Preference students from within the local parish or contributing parishes
- > Preference students who have a sibling attending the school
- > Preference students with some other established connection to the local parish or contributing parishes.

In some situations, the Board may ask the Proprietor to **seek a maximum roll increase instead** of [or as well as] an enrolment scheme. The Ministry is likely to require that an enrolment scheme also be put in place.

An example primary-school **enrolment scheme** is available in the Resources section.

International Students

Boards must follow general government requirements for enrolling international students and also respect integrated-school and Catholic special character obligations.

Reasons for Enrolling International Students

In discerning whether to enrol international fee-paying students, Boards may consider:

- > **Pastoral reasons** – welcoming students from other cultures is consistent with the Church's mission and contributes to peace and understanding.
- > **Equity and educational benefits** – international students broaden New Zealand students' awareness of global issues and cultural diversity.
- > **International relationships** – Catholic schools can contribute to New Zealand's positive international profile.
- > **School viability** – where rolls are below maximum, international fees may support school sustainability and enhancement of programmes.

Constraints and Legal Requirements

Before enrolling international students, Boards must consider three constraints:

- > **Domestic students first** – New Zealand domestic students who are entitled to enrol must not be displaced by international fee-paying students [see, for example, Education and Training Act 2020, ss 519 and 521]. [Education.govt.nz]
- > **Physical capacity** – the school must have sufficient physical space; if international enrolments require additional capacity above the maximum roll, this must be negotiated with the Proprietor.
- > **Preference/non-preference balance** – the ratio of preference to non-preference **among international students** should broadly match the school's Integration Agreement, so that special character is maintained.

International fee-paying students:

- > May, in some circumstances, be enrolled above the maximum roll if there is physical capacity, but the Proprietor is **not obliged** to provide additional capital assets for them.
- > Are not eligible for Ministry of Education funding and must pay fees covering tuition, use of facilities and related costs under s521 of the Education and Training Act 2020. [Education.govt.nz]

Code of Pastoral Care

Schools enrolling international students must be signatories to the **Education [Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners] Code of Practice 2021**, issued under s534 of the *Education and Training Act 2020* and administered by NZQA. [Education.govt.nz]

- > This Code replaces earlier versions such as the 2016 Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.
- > It sets out required outcomes and key processes for the pastoral care and wellbeing of international learners.

Schools must:

- > Formally sign up to the Code before enrolling any international students.
- > Ensure all policies, procedures and marketing materials comply with Code requirements and Ministry guidance.

Quick Summary for Boards

- > Proprietor controls preference; the Board controls enrolment and roll management within the Integration Agreement.
- > Preference students come first. Non-preference places are strictly capped and selection must be transparent.
- > Enrolment forms must Clearly state special character expectations and attendance dues obligations, with parents' signed consent.
- > Maintain accurate, auditable records of preference status and Preference Certificates.
- > If the roll is under pressure:
 - > Stop non-preference enrolments,
 - > Alert the Proprietor early, and
- > Work together on an enrolment scheme and/or roll-increase application.
- > International students may be enrolled only when:
 - > Domestic entitlement is protected,
 - > Special character is not compromised, and
 - > The school is a Code signatory and meets all pastoral-care obligations.

Working Together and Effective Relationships

Effective enrolment processes depend on Close cooperation between the Board and the Proprietor, particularly in relation to preference certificates and roll management. Working together ensures enrolment decisions are fair, transparent, and aligned with legislative requirements and the school's Catholic character. Clear communication, agreed processes, and mutual respect help manage community expectations and avoid tension, supporting enrolment decisions that are lawful, consistent, and pastorally sensitive.

Resources and Appendices

Schools should ensure they hold and regularly update the following, usually from diocesan offices or NZCEO:

Preference

- > Guidelines for determining preference – ask your diocese Education Office
- > Information on claiming preference and the process
- > National Preference Appeal Form

Enrolment

- > Enrolment process flowchart
- > Sample enrolment form including:
 - > Special character consent
 - > Attendance dues Clause
 - > Privacy statement
- > Example of non-preference enrolment wording

Maximum Roll and Enrolment Schemes

- > Guidelines for managing the maximum roll
- > Requests for Maximum Roll Increase form must be made through MOE
- > Enrolment scheme information
- > Process for applying for a MRI

International Students

- > Links to Ministry of Education and NZQA guidance on:
 - > International enrolments
 - > The Education [Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners] Code of Practice 2021

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/enrolment/#resources



> Employment

Employment

Employment is one of the Board's most significant responsibilities. In a state integrated Catholic school, the Board must balance its obligations as the employer with its duty to uphold the school's Catholic special character and comply with the Integration Agreement and Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020. This chapter outlines how those responsibilities are exercised in practice.

Before the board makes an appointment to any special character position in a primary school:

- > it is required by the legislation to consult the Proprietor and
- > may consider for appointment only those applicants who have been declared acceptable by the Proprietor.

See the section on Acceptability later in this section.

The requirement for staff positions specific to state integrated schools apply to appointments as well as the requirements that state schools are obliged to observe [such as the State Sector Act 1988, Education and Training Act 2020, Employment Relations Act 2000, Human Rights Act 1993 etc.]. This section should be read in conjunction with the Education and Training Act 2020, Sch 6 Cl 47 to 52.

Board Responsibilities for Staff Appointments

The Board is the legal employer of all staff at the school, whether teaching or non-teaching, and it cannot delegate its overall accountability for employment decisions. It must also be satisfied that staffing decisions support the Catholic special character and the educational needs of students.

This section describes the Board's core responsibilities for staff appointments and the policies and delegations that support them. The board may delegate responsibility for selection to the principal or an appointment committee. These delegations must be in the board's employment policy.

Board employment policy

A clear employment policy guides how the Board and principal carry out their employer responsibilities. It should outline expectations for compliance, fairness, and the promotion of the school's Catholic identity. Like any state school, the policy must address appointment processes, procedures, delegations, and selection criteria. State-integrated Catholic schools also have additional requirements that protect their Catholic special character. These obligations are set out in the Education and Training Act 2020, Schedule 6, and in the school's Integration Agreement with the Crown, which may include school-specific provisions. The special character staffing requirements in both documents are essential to maintaining the school's Catholic identity.

The key responsibilities of the school board in relation to staff appointments are highlighted below:

- > The board's appointments policy must ensure that the advertising of special character positions [both CI 47 and CI 50], the selection criteria for special character positions, and the resulting letters offering employment conform strictly to the requirements of the Integration Agreement, of the Education and Training Act 2020 Schedule 6, and the requirements of the Proprietor.
- > The board must ensure that the correct number and type of special character positions are designated and filled as given in the school's Integration Agreement, and for primary schools according to the staffing table. For secondary schools the individual formula is given to each school at the time of integration. Appointments to special character positions must be recorded in a formal register.
- > The Board must ensure that the job descriptions of the Principal and the Director of Religious Studies [DRS] include leadership in the Catholic special character of the school and engagement with the wider Catholic faith community. Diocesan Offices can assist with these key job descriptions.
- > The board must ensure that job descriptions of CI 47 [c] and CI 50 special character positions include Catholic special character expectations. Diocesan Offices can assist with these key job descriptions.
- > The board will maintain confidence in its appointments by ensuring that its delegations for the appointment of staff are appropriate to the circumstances of the particular school. The delegations must be set out in board policy.

- > **The board's appointments policy must include the following requirements:**
 - > The appointment committee must include at least one Proprietor's Appointee [Sch 6 Cl 46]
 - > Acceptability is the first step in the appointment process for all special character positions [in primary schools, acceptability is determined by the Proprietor]. Secondary School Boards are advised to consult the Diocesan Office for advice and support to determine acceptability on behalf of Proprietors for Colleges.
 - > **Acceptability** must be assessed first, before considering the applicant's overall **suitability** for the position. All staff are required to recognise and respect the school's Catholic special character as pertaining to their position.
 - > Boards cannot short list applicants ahead of the acceptability process. Suitability is determined by the board and is the second step in the appointment process.
 - > Not all employees of a Catholic school must be Catholic. Staff who do not profess Catholicism are expected to recognise and respect the Catholic special character of the school, and to refrain from doing or saying anything in connection with performing their role within the school that would undermine or inhibit the school's ability to provide education with a Catholic special character.

It is recommended that as part of their regular governance review cycle boards review how they carry out these key responsibilities.

Some appointment requirements are complex, and the consequences of non-compliance can be severe. Boards are advised to consult the Diocesan Office or NZSBA for further clarification, or for general guidance and assistance.

For guidance on setting a board appointment policy reflective of Catholic special character and in line with the Education and Training Act 2020 Schedule 6 see NZCEO's suite of Catholic state-integrated school's governance policies.

It is an expectation that the boards employment policy ensures 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. The Expectations of Staff for a Catholic School document has detailed information.

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

Delegations to Appoint Staff

While the Board retains overall accountability, it may delegate specific appointment tasks to the principal and appointment committees. These delegations must be in writing and reviewed regularly so that they remain appropriate to the size and complexity of the school.

The appointments policy for each school should specify whether the authority to appoint staff has been delegated and if so the person/s to whom that authority is given, i.e. the principal or an appointment committee. The Education and Training Act, Schedule 6, Cl 46 [2] requires that any committee set up by a board which has the power to appoint teachers or recommend the appointment of teachers must contain at least one of the proprietor appointees on the board – even if the only other member is the principal. **This is a legal requirement.** Where appointment authority has been delegated under board policy, appointments are reported to the board for noting. Where the committee has authority only to **recommend** an appointment, the appointment must be approved by the board before being confirmed.

Much can be delegated if the appointment policy sets out clearly how appointments are to be managed, what the requirements are, and the precise nature of the delegations for decision making.

Good practice guidelines are available here from the Te Whakarōpūtanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa New Zealand School Boards Association [NZSBA].

Schedule 6 Clause 46 recommendation:

Clause 46 [2] requires that any committee set up by a board which has the power to appoint teachers or recommend the appointment of teachers must contain at least one of the proprietor appointees on the board – even if the only other member is the principal. It is recommended either to involve the full board in such decision making or create an appointments committee including the principal and at least one proprietor appointee.

Delegations to appoint senior teaching positions

Senior teaching appointments are critical to the leadership, culture and Catholic special character of the school. This section explains how the Board may delegate aspects of the appointment process while retaining its decision-making role.

The board's policy determines which positions are senior such as principal, DRS, DP, AP, HoDs, syndicate or team leaders. The appointments committee shortlists, interviews and appoints directly, or recommends an appointment to the board for approval. Normally the board will accept the recommendation. It may, however, refuse the recommendation and either refer the appointment back to the committee for another recommendation, resolve to re-advertise the position, or appoint some other applicant it considers more suitable.

Proprietor Appointee on committee

The Education and Training Act, Schedule 6, Cl 46 [2] requires that any committee set up by a board which has the power to appoint teachers or recommend the appointment of teachers must contain at least one of the proprietor appointees on the board – even if the only other member is the principal.

Delegation to appoint permanent Scale A and long-term relieving teaching positions

For other permanent and long-term relieving teaching positions, it is usual for an appointments committee to conduct inquiries and interviews, make a recommendation for endorsement by the school board.

Example policy wording

The board delegates to the principal authority to appoint short-term relieving teachers and non-teaching staff, provided that appointments are made in accordance with legislation, collective or individual employment agreement requirements, the school's appointments procedures, and the school's Catholic special character expectations. The principal must report appointments to the board. The board retains responsibility for principal appointments, senior leadership appointments, special character positions, and any appointment where a conflict of interest or Close personal relationship may affect, or be perceived to affect, the process.

Where an appointments committee is established, it acts within terms of reference approved by the board and makes recommendations to the board unless the board has expressly delegated final appointment authority.

Delegation to appoint short-term relieving and day relief teachers

The principal is empowered to appoint short-term relieving staff and report the appointment to the board.

Delegation to appoint non-teaching staff

The principal is empowered to appoint non-teaching staff and reports the appointments to the board.

Delegation of authority and conflicts of interest: The board may delegate parts of an appointment process to the principal or an appointments committee, but the scope of that delegation should be clearly recorded in the board's employment or delegations policy. The policy should state who may make decisions, which appointments must be recommended to the full board, when the board must ratify an appointment, and how actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest, Close personal relationships, or concerns about nepotism will be managed. Any person involved in shortlisting, interviewing, reference checking, or recommending an appointment must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest and withdraw from the process where appropriate.

Special Character staffing framework

State integrated Catholic schools operate under a specific staffing framework that includes **special character positions under Clause 47 and Clause 50 of Schedule 6**. This section explains those provisions and how they apply to principals, Directors of Religious Studies and other special character positions.

*The word **tagged** should no longer be in use for special character or non-special character positions. The wording special character positions replaces tagged.*

Special Character Positions

Special character positions are reserved for teaching staff who will actively uphold and model the Catholic character of the school. The Integration Agreement sets out the nature and number of these positions, and the Board must ensure that they are filled only by **acceptable** and **suitable** appointees.

When a vacancy occurs, the board must establish whether the position is a special character position or a general position [not a special character position].

There are two categories of special character positions:

- > Clause 47 [a, b and c]
- > Clause 50

Clause 47 positions [a, b, c]

Clause 47 of Schedule 6 identifies three categories of special character positions in a Catholic school: the principal [47[a]], the Director of Religious Studies [47[b]], and additional positions that support the school's special character [47[c]]. The following sections outline the specific requirements for each.

Clause 47 positions legally require the applicant to be **willing** and **able** to take part in **religious instruction**¹ appropriate to the special character of the school. The three CI 47 positions are:

- > Principal [CI 47[a]]
- > Director of Religious Studies [CI 47[b]]
- > Other teachers in special character [CI 47[c]] positions

A teacher in a CI 47 [a, b or c] special character position represents the Catholic community and is expected to be actively involved in building the Catholic special character of the school.

It is the policy of the NZCBC [October 2013] that the person holding a Sch 6, CI 47 position "must be a baptised Catholic, active in a Catholic parish or Catholic Eucharistic community, and who is an authentic witness and role model for Catholic students".

Conditions of appointment for CI 47 special character positions

Applicants for Clause 47 positions must meet the special character requirements of the position, as assessed through the acceptability process. See the Fact Sheet: What is Acceptability? for guidance on the criteria and process. Any exception to the requirements must have the prior approval of the bishop. Clause 50 appointees do not have to be Catholic and are not obliged to take part in religious instruction.

For the positions, of principal and DRS it is expected they are involved in their parish and have carried out some role within the Church community. [For the qualities sought, refer to the Fact Sheet: What is acceptability?]

Principal [CI 47[a] position]

The principal of a Catholic state integrated school has a central role in safeguarding and promoting Catholic special character. In addition to their educational leadership responsibilities, they must accept and recognise a responsibility to maintain and preserve the special character of the school.

The appointment of a principal is arguably the most important decision a board has to make. The whole Board or alternatively the appointments committee (excluding the incumbent principal) shortlists the applicants, conducts interviews and inquiries, and recommends an appointment to the board. It is helpful to have a person from the Diocesan Education Office and a current principal (a Catholic principal, if available) as advisers and to seek advice from NZSBA. It is important that anyone involved declares any potential conflict of interest.

The Integration Agreement and legislation require the appointee:

- > be willing to take part in religious instruction
- > be able to do so
- > accept these requirements as a condition of appointment.

The Integration Agreement also requires the appointee to “accept and recognise a responsibility to maintain and preserve the special character of the school”. This must be stated in the principal’s **job description**. This implies that the Board must also be satisfied that the person selected accepts the responsibility to uphold the special character and recognises what that responsibility entails.

If in the board’s view an applicant fails to meet any of these requirements and/or is unwilling to fulfil them, then the board cannot appoint that applicant. The board must consult the referees which can include those on the CI 47[c] form, to test that all the requirements are met and must record the evidence obtained.

The principal takes up an important religious and pastoral responsibility in the Catholic community. The person appointed must therefore be a fully committed Catholic, active in their parish and the wider life of the Church, committed to Catholic religious practices and to leadership of Catholic education.

In this context, the phrase “take part in religious instruction” means taking part at the level of principal. This implies being willing and having the necessary professional Catholic education qualifications (or be committed to attaining such qualifications) and personal qualities to:

- > assume leadership of the religious aspects of the school
- > provide leadership in specific dimensions of Catholic special character development
- > be ultimately responsible to the Board for the religious programme of the school and for its religious observances
- > take Religious Education Classes whenever the organisation of the school requires
- > be a suitable role model and Gospel witness for staff, students and parents
- > assume an appropriate leadership role in school and parish liturgies or prayer services.²

The “religious instruction” referred to is that which is “appropriate to the special character of the school”. The Integration Agreement notes that the religious instruction and observances are laid down by the bishop of the diocese. [Refer to the NZCBC [2013] letter sent to each secondary school outlining requirements.]

It is recommended that the principal possesses the minimum of Leadership Level Certification³. If an appointee does not have this level of certification, the board can include conditions of appointment in employment letters so the appointee studies to gain this level of certification or higher, within an agreed timeframe and should offer to assist.

Determining Acceptability in a Primary School

The Education and Training Act 2020 Schedule 6, Cl 52 requires the **principal of a primary school** [being a Cl 47 position] to be “acceptable” to the Proprietor in terms of the special character of the school.

Acceptability is the initial prerequisite that all candidates must meet [see section on establishing acceptability]. The board’s decision may be subject to judicial review if acceptability is not properly established.

Determining Acceptability in a Secondary School

In secondary schools, acceptability is ultimately the school board’s responsibility. However, the New Zealand Bishops Conference [NZCBC, 2013], has given some guidance for those boards determining acceptability for CL 47 positions. These guidelines advise the board seeks the assistance of the school’s Diocesan Education Office personnel when determining acceptability of applicants. The board can ask the Diocesan Education Office to carry out the process on their behalf. The Diocesan Education Office can also provide professional learning and formation to the board in relation to principal appointments.

Director of Religious Studies – primary [Cl 47(b) position]

In primary schools, the Director of Religious Studies [DRS] provides leadership in religious education and the faith life of the school. The Integration Agreement specifies when a DRS must be appointed and what special character expectations apply to the role.

In each primary school that has five or more teachers, there must be a position designated as Director of Religious Studies [DRS]. In primary schools with fewer than five teachers, the board may designate a position as DRS.

The staffing schedules of Integration Agreements for primary schools [usually the fourth schedule] include the following provisions:

- > If the staffing entitlement of the school is **fewer than five teachers**, the board may appoint a DRS and may allocate one or more management units to the position.
- > If the staffing entitlement is **five or more teachers** but fewer than eight, the Board must appoint a DRS and may allocate one or more management units to the position.
- > If the staffing entitlement is **eight or more teachers**, the board must appoint a DRS and must allocate one or more management units to the position.

The DRS position in secondary schools [CI 47 (b) Position]

In **secondary schools**, the DRS role is more complex, often involving oversight of a faculty and broader leadership in faith formation. This section summarises the expectations for DRS appointments in the secondary context.

The Integration Agreement of every Catholic secondary school requires the school to have a DRS position as a position of responsibility. The DRS is the leader of a key department or faculty in the school and has school-wide responsibilities. The bishops expect this position to be suitably recognised with management units and for the DRS to be included in the senior management team if possible.

Some schools have a Head of Department/Faculty/Learning Area Religious Studies, as well as a DRS; in this case both would be CI 47 positions.

Requirements of the DRS position in both primary and secondary schools

The school's integration agreement requires that the appointee:

- > be willing to take part in religious instruction appropriate to the special character of the school
- > be able to do so
- > accept these requirements as conditions of appointment
- > give guidance and provide effective leadership in religious instruction and observances throughout the school
- > undertake such teaching duties as may be required by the principal.

The Board cannot appoint any applicant who in the board's view fails to meet any of these requirements or is unwilling to fulfil them. The board should have evidence of the applicant's training and level of RE qualification and certification. **This would be evidenced as part of the requirements of the CV.**

The DRS is responsible to the principal for the Religious Education [RE] curriculum. The DRS is obliged to abide by the policies set out by the board in accordance with the goals of the religious curriculum and the objectives of the school plan.

Only a committed and active Catholic in good standing who has a sound knowledge of the curriculum prescribed by the bishop of the diocese, and who has demonstrated teaching skills in RE and the ability to lead a teaching team, should be appointed to this position. For further information on the role of a DRS in a primary school see The DRS Handbook for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand and in a secondary school The DRS Handbook for Catholic secondary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The advertisement for the position must include [in addition to the CI 47 wording] that the appointee has to “give guidance and provide effective leadership in Religious Education and observances throughout the school”, as stated in the school’s Integration Agreement. Teacher in a special character position [CI 47 [c]]

Other teachers in special character positions [CI 47(c) positions]

The school’s integration agreement allows for additional Clause 47(c) teaching positions to maintain the Catholic special character of the school.

Teachers in special character CI 47 positions are not appointed simply to teach Religious Education, although this is the specialist task of some teachers holding these positions. They are appointed to contribute to the religious instruction of the students. The term ‘religious instruction’ in the Education and Training Act was chosen with care. It continues to be useful because it implies far more than Religious Education – it includes the school’s Catholic special character, all of which is designed to contribute to the religious instruction of the students.

CI 47(c) special character positions provide the legal safeguard, ensuring that the school can employ a sufficient number of Catholic teachers who understand and live by the special character so that the school is truly a Catholic community. Teachers create this community by everything they say and do. The Principal and Director of Religious Studies need the support of other Catholic teachers in order to sustain the Catholic community of the school.

In a primary school [but not always in a secondary school] holding a CI 47 position probably includes teaching Religious Education and will include supporting Catholic special character activities, helping in the preparation of liturgies or similar activities, assisting with staff development in Catholic special character and being part of the school’s team of teachers holding special character positions.

In a secondary school teachers holding a CI 47 position may or may not be teaching Religious Education however they are expected to be involved in the Catholic special character of the school to the same level as a primary teacher in a CI 47 special character position.

Requirement to teach Religious Education

The Education and Training Act 2020, Schedule 6, CI 49 states that no teacher can be required to teach Religious Education unless the advertisement under which the teacher was appointed states that “a willingness and ability to take part in religious instruction appropriate to the special character of the school is a condition of appointment”.

Some Proprietors expect principals to seek written approval from the Diocesan Education Office before assigning a teacher who does not hold a special character position to teach a Religious Education class. In such cases, the principal should provide adequate information about the teacher’s ability and suitability to teach Religious Education. **However, a teacher who does not hold a CI 47 position cannot be required to teach Religious Education unless they choose to do so.**

Importance of qualifications and certification

Certification is important for all teachers and school leaders especially those in special character positions and who are Religious Education teachers. Certification recognises appropriate study and experience of teaching the nationally mandated programme of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference Tō Tātou Whakapono Our Faith, and expertise in Catholic special character.

For more information about Certification please refer to the Certification Handbook 2025. Certification Handbook Booklet

Appointing to CI 47 [b] and [c] special character positions internally and retrospectively

Clause 47[b] and [c] special character positions may be filled internally where appropriate.

Schools sometimes appoint a person to a general position and later decide that the person could hold a CI 47[c] special character position. These positions may be filled internally if the availability of the CI 47 special character position is advertised to all staff, so that anyone who is acceptable may apply. Boards should refer to Filling Special Character CI 47[c] Positions Retrospectively and Internally: Employment Factsheet. The principal must contact the Diocesan Education Office to seek advice.

If a DRS wishes to step aside from holding the CI 47(b) position but remain on staff, resulting in no actual vacancy, the principal must contact the Diocesan Education Office to seek advice.

The position may be advertised nationally in the Education Gazette or within the school. All teaching staff must be alerted to the availability of the special character position, and the normal process for assessing acceptability must be followed.

Clause 50 positions

Clause 50 enables certain non-teaching or mixed teaching/non-teaching positions to be designated as special character positions.

General CI 50 wording

A CI 50 position, usually a deputy principal position, requires particular capabilities on the part of the teacher holding it, as prescribed by the school's Integration Agreement. The requirements of each school's Integration Agreement must therefore be read alongside Clause 50 of Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act. CI 50 positions are worded differently in primary and secondary school Integration Agreements. It is not a condition of appointment that the applicant be a baptised Catholic.

Deputy Principal Clause 50 position:

A CI 50 position (normally that of deputy principal) requires "particular capabilities on the part of the teacher holding it", as prescribed by the school's Integration Agreement. Therefore, the requirements of the Integration Agreement of each school must be read alongside the requirements of CI 50 Sch 6 Education and Training Act.

Note that the CI 50 position is worded differently in primary and in secondary school Integration Agreements. It is not a condition of appointment that the applicant be a baptised Catholic.

Requirements of the CI 50 position in primary schools

In a primary school, if the Integration Agreement requires an assistant principal or deputy principal position to hold a CI 50 special character position, the position must be advertised using the wording required by the Integration Agreement. Applicants must submit the Schedule 6 CI 50 Deputy Principal Form, and the Board must ensure that the Diocesan Education Office completes the acceptability process before shortlisting occurs.

A primary school Integration Agreement normally specifies for the deputy principal that “capabilities to maintain programmes and activities that reflect the special character of the school shall be a condition of appointment”. This means the successful applicant needs to have a good understanding of the school’s special character, but does not necessarily have to be Catholic. The Board cannot appoint an applicant who, in the Board’s view, does not meet this requirement or is unwilling to fulfil it. The appointee must meet the requirement at appointment, not merely have the potential to do so.

Requirements of the CI 50 position in secondary schools

A secondary school Integration Agreement normally specifies for the deputy principal position that “capabilities to assist in planning and organising the courses and programmes at the school to ensure they reflect the special character of the school shall be a condition of appointment”.

This implies that the successful applicant needs to have a good understanding of the special character of the school and how it is integrated into all aspects of school life including the school curriculum. The board cannot appoint any applicant who in the board’s view fails to meet these requirements or is unwilling to fulfil them.

This position must be advertised with the appropriate Clause 50 wording as above. The Deputy Principal cannot legally hold both a Clause 50 and Clause 47 position. If the school has two or more deputy principals, the Integration Agreement requires one Deputy Principal to hold the Clause 50 position. This person would usually have an oversight of school curriculum as their main task.

Assistant principal [primary]

In some cases, this may be a Clause 50 position.

A primary school Integration Agreement may require the position of assistant principal of a primary school to be designated as a special character position so that it requires “Capabilities to maintain programmes and activities that reflect the special character of the school shall be a condition of appointment” if the position has responsibility for supervising senior classes at that school [Education and Training Act, Schedule 6, CI 50 (2)]. It must in that case be advertised as a CI 50 position.

Before the board makes an appointment to any special character position in a primary school,

- > it is required by the legislation to consult the Proprietor and,
- > may consider for appointment only those applicants who have been declared acceptable by the Proprietor. See the section on Acceptability later in this section.

Guidance Counsellor (may or may not be a CI 47 position)

A guidance counsellor does not automatically hold a special character position. However, because of the nature of the role, the Board should ensure that the person appointed has a clear understanding and appreciation of the Catholic special character of the school, the moral teaching of the Catholic Church, the pastoral support available through the Church, and any sensitivities that may arise for parents and whānau.

If the position is not designated as a CI 47 special character position, the Board must ensure not only that the person appointed is a competent counsellor but also that he or she is suitable for a Catholic school. The guidance counsellor must give advice and guidance in accordance with the principles of Catholic morality and follow the guidelines published by the Bishops of New Zealand.

The guidance counsellor is required to have a clear understanding and appreciation of:

- > the Catholic Character of the school
- > the moral teaching of the Catholic Church
- > the support that the Church can give to those coping with such problems as guilt, pregnancy, bereavement, etc.
- > the support available from various Church agencies
- > the possible sensitivity of parents with strict religious ideals.

A Proprietor's appointee should be on the appointment committee for this position.

The guidance counsellor cannot leave any student client with the impression that actions contrary to the Church's moral teaching are approved by the school. The counsellor must work to the Board's guidelines for the health services that a counsellor may deliver. If the Board does not have such guidelines, it can contact the Diocesan Catholic Education Office for assistance in establishing them.

Number and register of special character positions

The Integration Agreement specifies how many special character positions may be created at the school. The Board must be able to show how it has calculated this number, and it must maintain an up-to-date register of special character positions and the staff who hold them.

For primary schools the Diocesan Education Offices Special Character Staffing Provisions Table should be referred to.

The Integration Agreement requires that the positions of the principal and the DRS, plus a certain number of other positions must be advertised with the Sch 6, Cl 47 wording, “a willingness and ability to take part in religious instruction appropriate to the special character of the school shall be a condition of appointment.” The board has a legal obligation to appoint to the correct number of special character Cl 47 positions and must ensure that a list is kept of all teachers holding these positions. This is one of the items to be attested annually to the Proprietor.

In primary schools

In Catholic primary schools the number of Cl 47 positions (other than the principal and the DRS) is set by the Fourth Schedule of the school’s Supplementary Integration Agreement of November 2000 [Clause 2a and 2b]. The wording is the same for all primary schools – it gives the Proprietor some flexibility in determining the exact number, which should normally be 60% of the total staffing entitlement minus 2, rounded down to the nearest whole number. [The minus 2 is to deduct the principal and the DRS from the total staffing entitlement.] It is the Proprietor’s right to determine or to vary the number of ‘other’ Cl 47 positions from this general formula.

The board can also ask the Proprietor to vary the number of ‘other’ Cl 47 positions, based on the roll based total staffing of the school, should this be lower than the total staffing entitlement.

In secondary schools

Secondary school examples are as follows:

Staffing entitlement at integration (excluding principal and DRS	28.5
The number of other CI 47 special character positions at integration	12

So, the ratio at integration equals the number of special character positions divided by number of staff entitlement (excluding principal and DRS).

So, the ratio is:	12 ÷ 28.5
	or 42%

Formula for calculating current entitlement for other CI 47 special character positions:

Number of other special character positions equals the ratio at integration times the current core staffing (excluding principal and DRS) as follows:

Current core staffing (excluding principal and DRS)	32.36
Ratio of other CI 47 positions	x 42%
Total special character positions	= 13.7

The convention for calculation is to round down, giving 13 CI 47 positions in the school. (Note: The deputy principal’s position is part of the remaining 18.36 staff)

¹Religious instruction includes teaching or explaining the doctrines and practices of the faith, not only in Religious Education Classes but also through the indirect teaching which occurs through role modelling and witness to Catholic values, behaviour, and general Catholic life [Congregation for Catholic Education. (1998). The Religious Dimension of Education in Catholic Schools, pgs. 66- 70]

²See section on job descriptions for a more detail explanation of the role of the principal

³See Te Kupenga-Catholic Leadership College (2025). Certification Handbook for Staff and School Boards in Catholic State-Integrated Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Updating Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are a key tool for safeguarding Catholic special character. They must accurately describe the expectations of working in a Catholic school and be kept up to date as legislation, diocesan guidance and local needs evolve.

Job descriptions should be reviewed on a regular cycle (for example every three years, or when a position becomes vacant) to ensure they:

- > reflect the current Integration Agreement and Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020
- > clearly describe the expectations of working in a Catholic school
- > align with the Board's employment and special character policies.

At a minimum, job descriptions for the **principal** and **Director of Religious Studies [DRS] DP and teachers holding special character positions** must include the wording required by the school's integration agreement:

- > **Principal:** "The principal shall accept and recognise a responsibility to maintain and preserve the special character of the school."
- > **Director of Religious Studies:** "The Director of Religious Studies shall give guidance and provide effective leadership in religious education and observances throughout the school."

In addition, job descriptions for all **CI 47 [a, b, c]** and **CI 50** positions, and for roles such as the **guidance counsellor**, should:

- > state the Catholic special character expectations of the role
- > outline required religious education qualifications and/or certification (where applicable)
- > describe the level of participation expected in the Catholic life of the school (for example, leadership or support of prayer, liturgies, service and social justice activities)
- > include any specific conditions of appointment set by the Proprietor (for example, a requirement to obtain a particular level of certification within an agreed timeframe).

When updating job descriptions, Boards are encouraged to seek model wording and current guidance from the Diocesan Catholic Education Office or NZCEO, especially for the principal, DRS, CI 47 and CI 50 positions (see Fact Sheet-Updating Job Descriptions), and the guidance counsellor role. This helps ensure that local documents remain consistent with diocesan and national expectations for Catholic special character.

Advertising for Positions

Advertising must comply with legal requirements and clearly state any special character expectations. This section summarises the statutory requirements and recommended practice when advertising positions in Catholic state integrated schools.

General advertising requirements

All permanent and long-term positions must be advertised in accordance with relevant employment and education legislation, and in the Education Gazette. Advertisements should set out the key aspects of the role and highlight the school's Catholic special character.

Advertising for CI 47 special character positions

For special character positions, advertisements must make Clear that the appointee will be expected to support and uphold the Catholic special character of the school. Specific statutory wording is required for Clause 47 and Clause 50 positions.

The State Sector Act 1988 requires that all permanent and long-term relieving vacancies must be advertised in such a way that all suitably qualified people can apply. Because of this requirement, teaching vacancies are advertised nationally in the Education Gazette. This does not exclude additional advertising in other publications or on social media.

NZCEO recommends that the advertisement for positions in a Catholic school should state the school is a Catholic school if the word Catholic is not in the title of the school. This advises intended applicants the nature of the school, including its special character. Statutory requirements call for advertisements to state:

- > organisation of the school – for example, a girls' school for Year 7-13 students
- > school's name preceded by [I] for Integrated

For general free advertisements in the Education Gazette these statutory requirements automatically occur when the name of the school and its number are entered on the website. For paid Education Gazette advertisements and ones in other media outlets the wording must be included.

The Education and Training Act 2020, Schedule 6 and the Integration Agreement for each school require certain wording related to conditions of appointment in advertisements for CI 47 special character positions.

To meet statutory requirements, the minimum wording that can satisfy the “willingness and ability” requirement for all CL 47 [a, b, and c] positions in Schedule 6, Cl 47 of the Act an advertisement must state that a:

“Willingness and ability to participate in religious instruction appropriate to the special character of the school is a condition of appointment”.

This exact wording of the Act must be used.

Advertising for deputy principals

For a **secondary school deputy principal**, the minimum that is usually required by the Integration Agreement is:

- > Capabilities to assist in planning and organising the courses and programmes at the school to ensure they reflect the special character of the school shall be a condition of appointment.

For a **primary school deputy principal**, the minimum usually is:

- > Capabilities to maintain programmes and activities that reflect the special character of the school shall be a condition of appointment.
[Note that an Integration Agreement may require a Sch 6, Cl 47 rather than a Cl 50.]

When the appointment is for a primary school assistant principal with responsibility for supervising senior classes, the Integration Agreement may require the position to be a Cl 47 position.

Failure to observe advertising requirements for special character positions

If the advertisement of any Sch 6, Cl 47 or Cl 50 position is not worded correctly, any appointment that is made could result in a legal challenge. If these guidelines are not followed, the Proprietor of the school could also seek a declaratory judgement in the High Court. On a few occasions in recent years an appointment has been declared null and void because boards have not followed the legal process in appointing staff to special character positions.

The Diocesan Education Office can help word advertisements and prepare job descriptions and other documents relating to appointments. Its staff are also willing to assist a board or its appointments committee as advisers while senior appointments are being made.

The Education and Training Act 2020 and the Integration Agreement for each school require certain wording related to conditions of appointment in advertisements for special character positions.

Advertising general (non-special character) positions.

NZCEO recommends boards include in advertisements that the successful applicant for a general position¹ will be “expected to recognise and respect the school’s Catholic special character and be actively involved in the total life of the school, in a manner which respects the religious instruction given and religious observances practiced within the school”.

Application packs

Application packs should include:

- > material that will assist applicants in understanding the Catholic special character of the school including its charism and Gospel values.
- > the Factsheet: Expectations for staff in Catholic schools
- > S Form for CI 47 positions and the Fact Sheet: What is acceptability?
- > Fact Sheet: Information and notes related to special character forms (S forms)
- > S Form for CI 50 positions and the Fact Sheet: Schedule 6 CI 50 position requirements

¹A position that is not a CI 47 special character position.

Determining Acceptability (Special Character)

Acceptability is a Proprietor function. Before the Board can consider an applicant’s overall suitability for a special character position, the Proprietor must first determine whether the applicant is acceptable in terms of Catholic faith commitment and support for the school’s Catholic special character.

Primary schools

In primary schools, the Proprietor’s process for determining acceptability is managed through the Diocesan Catholic Education Office. Boards must ensure that applicants for special character positions are sent to the Catholic Education Office for determining acceptability before short listing. The Boards appointment timeline should allow time for this process, 3 – 7 working days.

By law, the school board of a primary school is legally bound to appoint only from a list of candidates acceptable to the Proprietor for appointments to special character positions [CI 47 or CI 50].

Special character position forms for all applicants are to be sent to the Catholic Schools' Diocesan Office for shortlisting. The school board may only consider those applicants who have been declared acceptable by the Proprietor for the position.

The Board then decides which of the acceptable applicants is the most suitable for the position, giving strong consideration to religious qualifications and experience.

When applications Close, the principal sends the completed CI47 or CI 50 forms together with any other information provided by applicants that is relevant to the special character requirements of the advertisement to the Diocesan Education Office, which has guidelines on what constitutes acceptability under the special character provisions that outline the legal responsibility for the special character of the school.

The Diocesan Education Office consults the referees nominated by the applicants and asks for a confidential report [preferably written for the positions of DRS, deputy principal and principal]. The manager of the Diocesan Office, acting as the proprietor's agent, then reports back to the board giving the names of the applicants who the proprietor considers are acceptable for appointment.

The proprietor does not have a right to determine the suitability of the applicants – that is the responsibility of the board. However, any of the proprietor's appointees on the board [including at a secondary school] may seek the proprietor's opinion of the suitability of any of the applicants. The board may take this opinion into account when deciding the appointment.

Secondary schools

In secondary schools, establishing acceptability is the responsibility of the Board or those delegated by the board to make appointments.

This must include at least one proprietor's appointee. It is NZCBC's strong recommendation that secondary school boards use the expertise provided by the Diocesan Education Office to determine acceptability and that role can be delegated to the office if the board agrees. [For details of what constitutes acceptability, see Fact Sheet: What is Acceptability?]

Failure to Observe Prerequisites

If the Board or its appointments committee disregards the prerequisites for acceptability for a special character position, it is in breach of the school's Integration Agreement. It would then be possible for the Proprietor, any disaffected Board member, another applicant for the position, or the Minister of Education [as party to the Integration Agreement] to apply to the courts for a review of the appointment.

Establishing Suitability for Appointment

Once acceptability has been confirmed for special character positions, the Board must then consider each applicant's overall suitability for the role. Suitability includes professional competence, alignment with the school's values and ability to contribute to its Catholic character.

Board's role in establishing suitability for appointment

The board shortlists the acceptable applicants, conducts interviews, consults educational referees and appoints the most suitable applicant. The appointment must conform to the board's appointment policy, to section 77J (4) of the State Sector Act, and to the relevant employment contract. If no applicant comes up to the standards required by the board, the position should be re-advertised.

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 special 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 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.

Appointment process

The appointment process brings together all of the elements described earlier in this chapter: job descriptions, delegations, special character requirements, acceptability and suitability. This section outlines a recommended sequence for making appointments in a Catholic integrated school.

Short-listing and interviews

Once the Board has confirmed the position description, completed the advertising and (where required) determined **acceptability** for special character positions, the appointment committee develops Clear criteria for short-listing candidates. For CI 47 and CI 50 positions, these criteria must include appropriate levels of **Certification** and religious education qualifications, as well as evidence of commitment to Catholic special character.

The committee then short-lists candidates against the agreed criteria and conducts interviews. For special character positions, only applicants who have been found **acceptable** by the Proprietor (or by the process agreed for secondary schools) may be considered. The committee documents how each candidate meets the selection criteria, including special character requirements, and makes the necessary professional and special character referee checks.

Recommendation and Board decision

The appointment committee identifies the preferred candidate and, where appropriate, one or more applicant as reserves. It recommends its preferred candidate to the Board for decision and ratification, confirming that all statutory and special character requirements have been met.

The Board then considers the recommendation and either:

- > resolves to appoint the recommended candidate, or
- > declines and asks the committee to reconsider or re-advertise.

Where the Proprietor has set conditions of appointment (for example, completion of religious education or leadership qualifications within a set timeframe), these must be included in the offer of employment and employment agreement.

Offer of appointment and notifications

Once the Board has made its decision, the successful applicant is advised and a formal **offer of employment** and letter of appointment/ contract letter.

Unsuccessful interviewed applicants are notified respectfully once the appointment has been accepted.

Induction and ongoing formation

The Board ensures that the principal (or delegated senior leader) develops and implements an induction plan for the appointee. Induction must include specific attention to the Catholic special character of the school and expectations for ongoing faith formation and certification appropriate to the role.

See the Handbook for Certification, published by the NZ Catholic Bishops Conference and available from diocesan Religious Education offices or from NCRS.

Appointment contracts

The letter of appointment and individual employment agreement must accurately reflect any special character requirements and conditions set by the Proprietor. This includes explicit reference to Catholic character expectations and any agreed conditions relating to certification or study.

Induction and ongoing responsibility of the Board

The Board's responsibility does not end once an appointment is made. It must ensure that new staff are well inducted into the Catholic character of the school and that special character obligations are supported and monitored over time.

Induction

Induction should introduce new staff to the school's mission, values and Catholic character, as well as its policies and expectations. For those in special character positions, induction must also outline the specific faith and formation requirements of the role. Also ensure all staff have read the proprietors special character guidelines.

Ongoing responsibility of the Board

The Board remains responsible for ensuring that staff in special character positions maintain the level of faith commitment, certification and professional practice required by the Integration Agreement and diocesan guidelines. Regular reporting and dialogue with the principal and Proprietor's representatives help support this ongoing responsibility.

Resources and Appendices

The following resources provide further guidance for Boards and principals on employment and special character in Catholic integrated schools:

- > The school's Integration Agreement and Schedule 6 of the Education and Training Act 2020
- > Ask your Diocesan Catholic Education Office for their employment and appointment guidelines
- > NZCEO guidance on special character appointments
 - > Purpose of and Determining Acceptability of CL47 SpCh Positions
 - > NZCBC 2013 Guidelines for Determining Acceptability
 - > Key steps in the Primary School Employment Process
 - > Key steps in the Secondary School Employment Process
 - > Information and Notes for CI 47 Form
 - > Advertising CI 47 and CI 50 Positions
 - > Employment Advertising
 - > Filling Special Character Positions Retrospectively Guidelines
- > Te Whakarōpūtanga Kaitiaki Kura o Aotearoa | New Zealand School Boards Association (NZSBA) employment resources
- > The Handbook for Certification [New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference]
- > Employment Certification
- > Updating job descriptions
- > See also NZCEO website resources page

Downloadable resources are available from www.nzceohandbook.org.nz/employment/#resources



> Index

A

Acceptability	11,51, 96, 100, 102, 106, 108, 114-117
- Clause 47 positions.....	100-106, 114-117
- Clause 50 positions.....	106-108, 114-117
- determining acceptability.....	114-115
- failure to observe prerequisites	115
- primary schools	86, 102, 108, 114-115
- secondary schools.....	96, 102, 115
Access and use of school premises	78-79
Advertising positions	112-114
- Clause 47 positions.....	112-114
- Clause 50 positions.....	106-108, 112-114
- failure to observe requirements.....	113
- general positions	114
Annual Compliance Attestation.....	33-34, 59, 79, 108
Annual report to Proprietor	49, 58-59
Appointment committees.....	96-101, 115-117
Appointment contracts	118
Appointment process	94-99, 114-118
Appointments policy	95-100
Assistant principal.....	106-107, 113
Attendance dues	21, 34, 51, 56, 58, 72-73, 84, 86, 91
- enrolment obligations	84, 86
- use for property.....	56, 71-72

B

Bishop, role of.....	9-15, 20, 26-39, 50, 54, 83-84, 100-105, 117, 119
Board composition	46-49
Board culture	59-60
Board induction and training.....	59, 62-63
Board-funded buildings and capital works	68, 74-76
Board responsibilities.....	8, 10-18, 42-64, 82-94, 94-118
Building Warrant of Fitness.....	67
Buildings	66-80
- access and use.....	78-79
- board-funded	74-76
- insurance.....	77-78
- maintenance.....	17, 52, 56, 57, 66, 68-73, 76-80

C

Canon law	10, 12-13
Capital works	17-18, 56, 68, 70-76, 80
Catholic school, nature and mission.....	7-8, 20, 26-32, 48
Catholic social teaching.....	8, 42-43, 60, 62
Certification	35, 102, 105, 111, 116-118
Chaplain	37
Children's Act 2014	13-15
Christian witness	28, 30
Clause 47 special character positions	99-106, 108-117
Clause 50 special character positions	106-108, 112-117
Code of Conduct.....	52-53
Code of Pastoral Care, international students	90
Community engagement	60
Compliance and reporting	58-59
Conflicts of interest, appointments	97, 99-101

Consultation with Proprietor.....	50, 56-59, 62, 73-75, 94-96
Crisis management.....	61-62
Cultural responsiveness.....	61
D	
Day relief teachers.....	14, 99-100
Decision making.....	8, 10, 15, 42-45, 52, 97
Delegations to appoint staff	63, 94, 97-100, 116
Deputy principal.....	98, 106-108, 110
- advertising requirements	113
Digital governance.....	61
Diocesan education office.....	33, 35, 38, 49, 50, 58, 83-89, 96, 101-117
Director of Religious Studies	28-30, 35-39, 50, 95, 100, 102-106, 111
E	
Education and Training Act 2020.....	10-18, 20-23, 26, 32, 37, 42-47, 52-58, 66-76, 82-118
Employment.....	94-102
- board responsibilities.....	94-100
- induction and ongoing formation.....	117-118
Employment policy.....	95-100
Enrolment.....	81-92
- Board and Proprietor roles.....	82-84
- forms and records.....	84-86
- maximum roll.....	87-89
- non-preference students	84-87, 89-92
- preference.....	82-89
- quick summary for boards	91
Enrolment schemes.....	87-89
Evaluation of Catholic special character	33-34
F	
Financial governance.....	54-56
Furniture and equipment.....	66, 69, 70, 75, 77-78
Fundraising	54-57
G	
Gazette, Education	72, 88, 106, 112-113
Governance.....	41-64
- Catholic state-integrated school context	42-45
- governance and management roles	44-46
- policy framework	52-53
Governance puzzle	53
Guidance counsellor.....	107-108, 110
H	
Health and safety.....	10, 14-18, 20, 52, 54, 62, 66-76
Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.....	14, 16-19, 67
Health and sexuality education.....	28-30
Honorifics and naming practices.....	62
Human Rights Act 1993.....	10, 15-16, 94

I	
Induction, board members.....	62-63
Induction, staff.....	117-118
Insurance.....	20, 66-68, 72, 74-80
Integration.....	19-24
Integration Agreement.....	10-14, 20-23, 26, 32, 42-52, 66-69, 74-79, 82-89, 94-117
- amendment or supplementary agreement.....	23, 68, 74, 76, 88
- cancellation.....	23
International students.....	89-92
J	
Job descriptions	95, 101-106, 110-119
L	
Legal and regulatory responsibilities.....	9-18
Links with wider Church networks	36-39
M	
Maintenance of buildings and grounds.....	66-73, 77-80
- Board responsibilities.....	68-72, 77-78
- Proprietor responsibilities.....	69-73, 77-78
Maximum roll.....	21, 51, 82-92
- increasing.....	88
- managing.....	87
Minister of Education.....	12, 15, 21, 23, 52, 56, 68, 74, 86-88
Ministry of Education.....	6, 11, 16-18, 23-24, 63, 64, 66-80, 83, 87-92
N	
New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference.....	8, 27-30, 35, 38, 54, 83, 100-105, 114-118
Non-preference students.....	11, 34, 51, 83-88, 89-92
O	
Ongoing professional development, boards	63
P	
Parents and caregivers	6-8, 26, 29-31, 36, 55-58, 71, 82-92
Parish and school relationships.....	36-38, 58, 86-89
Philosophy of Catholic schools.....	31
Policy development and review.....	52-53
Policy One funding.....	17, 70-73, 80
Preference of enrolment.....	82-89
- appeals.....	84-85
- certificate.....	83-86
- determining preference	83-84
Presiding Member.....	46, 48-50, 56, 60
Principal.....	38-50, 59, 60, 78, 82, 84, 94-118
- appointment.....	97-104, 114-118
- Clause 47 position.....	100-104
Privacy Act 2020.....	15, 61-62, 86
Professional development and formation	35, 50-51, 62-63, 117-118
Property	65-80
Property obligations.....	66-68
Proprietor.....	10-24, 32-39, 46-80, 82-118

R	
Religious Education.....	28-41, 48, 50-51, 78, 82, 85, 100-106, 110, 116, 117
- curriculum and time allocation.....	29, 39
- teachers taking part	100-106
Reporting to Proprietor	33-34, 49, 57-59
Risk management	14, 17, 42, 61-62

S	
Safeguarding Catholic special character.....	32-35, 50-52, 111
Safeguarding practices.....	34, 54
School board, purpose and objectives	45-47
School premises, access and use.....	78-79
Site plan	67-69, 73
Special character.....	25-39
- definition.....	26-27
- evaluation.....	33-34
- nature	28-30
- professional development.....	35
Special character positions	51, 94-118
- Clause 47	98-106, 108-117
- Clause 50	106-108, 112-117
- register and number	108-110
Staff appointments.....	94-101, 114-118
Strategic relationships.....	56-59
Suitability for appointment	96, 115-117

T	
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	8, 28, 30-31, 47, 60, 62-63
Training and formation, board members.....	35, 62-63

U	
Use of school premises.....	78-79

W	
Working together and effective relationships	22-23, 57-59, 79, 81, 91
Workplace health and safety	10, 13-19, 54, 61, 66-77

