SPECIAL CHARACTER COMMUNITY REPORT

St Pius X School strongly proclaims the mission and Gospel of Jesus Christ and encourages its community to grown in knowledge of the values of Jesus Christ, and to have an understanding of Scripture and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The school is an authentically Catholic community where Christ is encountered in prayer, worship, Religious Education but most importantly in the relationships and outreach that is made to the wider community – this is the lived out love of Christ. Senior students are able to clearly articulate how their school is different to others.

The whole community's spirituality is significantly nourished by an awareness of God's presence within the school. This is promoted through a wide range of opportunities both within and outside the classroom. The school is encouraged to plan how they can invite those students who are not baptised or who have not made their First Communion to complete these important milestones on their sacramental journey.

Gospel values education is at the heart of the school. The four identified values are visually present within the school. These are linked to Scripture stories that show how the reign of God is established in daily life.

The Principal and Director of Religious Studies lead Catholic special character with a faith based vision. Their leadership is highlighted by the collegial way in which they support each other, the staff and families. They lead by example as witnesses to their faith through their commitment to parish life and to sharing their faith story with both staff and students.

The school continues to be a place where people are nurtured, supported and cared for. Respectful relationships are at the heart of the school. Staff stated that they are affirmed and students and parents confirmed that the school is a safe place to be. Students are happy and respectful of teachers and one another. There is a strong sense of pastoral care within the school which reaches out to include the wider community.

The school holds a well-developed and restorative justice based behaviour management plan which is linked to the values and virtues programme. The process is aimed towards problem solving around what needs to happen to reconcile the situation and people. There is a strong emphasis on forgiveness. Classroom procedures are well defined.

Effective teaching practices are evident in Religious Education, including teachers checking on prior knowledge and learning, discussion of learning intentions, as well as using a variety of teaching strategies to consolidate learning.

"At the heart of the Catholic character of a school are the Catholic hearts of those who work in the school, principal, teachers and other staff" (*The Catholic Education of School Age Children,* New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference, 2014). Staff at St Pius X live this statement as they are genuine, dedicated and collaborative in safeguarding and strengthening the Catholic special character of the school.