

COPY FOR YOUR
INFORMATION

**CONFIRMED
PRIVATE SCHOOL
REVIEW REPORT**

ST CUTHBERT'S COLLEGE

September 2006

Disclaimer

Individual ERO school and early childhood centre reports are public information and may be copied or sent electronically. However, the Education Review Office can only guarantee the authenticity of original documents which have been obtained in hard copy directly from either the local ERO office or ERO Corporate Office in Wellington. Please consult your telephone book, or see the ERO web page, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>, for ERO office addresses.

1	BACKGROUND	1
	Introduction	1
	About the School	2
2	EFFICIENT	2
3	STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS	3
4	OTHER MATTERS	6
	Provision for International Students	6
	Provision for students in the boarding houses.....	7
5	CONCLUSION	8

**CONFIRMED PRIVATE SCHOOL REVIEW REPORT:
ST CUTHBERT'S COLLEGE**

1 Background

Introduction

The Chief Review Officer has a statutory duty to report on the performance of private schools throughout New Zealand.

Under section 35A of the Education Act 1989, private schools are required to be "efficient". The Act defines "efficient", in relation to a private school as -

- (a) having suitable premises, staffing, equipment, and curriculum; and
- (b) usually providing tuition for 9 or more students who have turned 5 but are under 16; and
- (c) providing suitably for the inculcation in the minds of students of sentiments of patriotism and loyalty; and
- (d) giving students tuition of a standard no lower than that of the tuition given to students enrolled at schools of the same class.

This report focuses on the extent to which the school meets this requirement and other statutory obligations.

This review report was prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

About the School

Location	Epsom, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	68
School type	Composite (Year 1-15) School with Boarding Facilities
Decile rating	10
Numbers of teachers	118
School roll	1440
Number of international students	14
Ethnic composition	NZ European/Pākehā 79%, Māori 3%, Chinese 7%, Pacifica 2%, Indian 2%, Korean 2%, Other 5%
Gender composition	Girls 100%
Review team on site	July 2006
Date of this report	14 September 2006
Previous ERO reports	Statutory Review, September 2003 Accountability Review, August 2000 Statutory Report, August 1997 Assurance Audit, September 1993 Audit, September 1991

2 Efficient

St Cuthbert's College is a high-performing school that successfully combines traditional values in education with a culture of continuous improvement. Senior students achieve outstanding results in national examinations, attaining qualifications that consistently rank at the highest level. Teachers deliver effective and forward-thinking programmes informed by national and international research.

The high quality leadership of the principal and senior management team supports the work of teachers. Target setting, ongoing professional development and reflective practices underpin performance management systems that are resulting in a very high standard of teaching. Staff participate in school-wide self review through their involvement in quality management teams. Systematic reporting and policy review are features of management accountability to the board.

The school ethos promotes educational excellence in a stimulating learning environment. Opportunities are available for staff to engage in leading educational research projects. Regular assessment and close monitoring of student progress contribute to high levels of individual achievement and value-added learning. Teachers' high expectations, together with modern technologies and consistent teaching and learning strategies, help students to reach their potential.

Students' learning needs are identified and catered for through a wide range of academic, cultural and physical education learning opportunities. Success is celebrated and social responsibility is encouraged. The special character of the College, reflected in the motto, "*By Love Serve*", is very evident in the shared values and attitudes of staff and students and in the policies and priorities of the trust board.

3 Statutory Obligations

Suitable curriculum

Senior managers have developed a comprehensive curriculum that is sequential and developmental and is designed to encourage enjoyment of learning. Positive attitudes to learning are developed in junior classes and are sustained through the senior school. The curriculum includes broadly based academic, art, music and sporting programmes that enable students to pursue a diverse range of interests and skills. Teachers are adding further relevance and interest to programmes with the development of 'rich-task' integrated learning approaches.

A Reggio Emilia programme has recently been introduced into Years 1 and 2 to support the provision of a child-centred learning environment, in which children are nurtured and challenged through an interest-based, inquiry methodology. Careful preparation and consultation has ensured that this student-centred learning approach has been thoughtfully implemented. The extensive professional development that teachers have undertaken in preparation for the implementation of the Reggio Emilia programme is benefiting the younger children.

Social and personal development is encouraged and supported through the school-wide values and thinking skills programme. School counsellors support the deans and form teachers in offering comprehensive pastoral care and guidance services. Students participate in community service programmes, enterprise and business studies and school exchange programmes that support the development of leadership skills and community awareness.

Physical education and sport have a high profile; together with arts and cultural programmes, they are strengths of the school curriculum. Students achieve highly in music, drama, design and the visual arts and have high levels of participation and success in individual sport and team competitions. Many students are involved in school productions and performance music, as well as in annual events such as the Shakespeare festival, theatre sports and stage challenge.

Additional tuition is available to further extend very able students and to support those who elect to study for Scholarship examinations. Students achieve a high number of

Scholarship passes each year. In 2005, sixty-five individual scholarship passes were achieved across a wide range of curriculum areas, including sciences, languages, commerce and the arts.

Standard of tuition

The college provides a high standard of tuition. Teachers have very high learning and behavioural expectations of students. Relationships between students and teachers are consistently positive and encouraging and interactions between students are respectful. Classroom management is focused on engaging students in learning. As a result, high levels of interest and motivation are evident across all groups of students.

Teachers monitor students' progress closely. They respond to students' needs and provide regular, specific and constructive feedback that contributes to continuous learning. They challenge students to be active participants in the learning process and enable students to have ownership of their learning. Teachers are reflective practitioners and use analysed information about student achievement to inform their approaches to teaching.

Teachers use a wide variety of learning resources in the classroom. The majority use data projectors, interactive white boards, and computer-based learning activities to enhance their teaching and learning programmes. They are well advanced in implementing new digital learning approaches and have developed the necessary skills to integrate cross-curricular information and communication technologies.

Teachers use well researched strategies to assist students to make connections in their learning. The school-wide thinking skills programme and the Advanced Learning Centre teach students explicit and sequential cognitive strategies that assist them to understand new concepts and processes. Educational research demonstrates clearly that such meta-cognitive learning approaches have a high impact on raising student achievement.

Consistently high quality teaching and learning enables students to attain high levels of achievement. In the junior school, the majority of students achieve well above national norms in literacy and mathematics. Senior students achieve NCEA results that are amongst the highest in New Zealand. In 2005, 98% of students attained NCEA levels 1,2 and 3 with increased numbers gaining merit and excellence.

Suitable staffing

The professional leadership of the principal is aligned with the board's strategic vision and is empowering of staff. The cohesion of the expanded senior management team has been a significant factor in recent school developments. The seamless approach to teaching and learning from junior to senior school has been achieved through well-managed, whole-school professional development and school-wide initiatives.

The college has effective personnel management systems. Appointment processes are well documented and performance management is designed to support school goals and individual staff development. The board values the work of staff and offers a range of incentives to encourage innovation and ongoing educational research. The

professional tone of the school is supported by high-performing academic and administrative staff.

Teachers at all levels demonstrate professional expertise and skilful pedagogical practice. They use questions to promote the development of critical thinking and ensure that the pace of learning is challenging and appropriate to students' needs. Teachers' knowledge in their subject areas enables them to teach an extended curriculum that is valued by students and their parents.

The process for the renewal of teacher registration should be reviewed to ensure that all teachers hold current practising certificates.

Suitable premises and equipment

The board continues to provide teaching premises and equipment that benefit student learning and enable teachers to deliver programmes using modern technologies. Comprehensive library services complement the school's extensive information and communication technologies (ICT) network. Technical expertise ensures that the school's ICT infrastructure operates effectively and enables all students from Year 5 to maximise the use of individual laptops.

New property developments are well managed and strategically planned. The board's recent acquisition of a residential rural property and the appointment of an off-site manager are strategic developments designed to extend learning opportunities outside the classroom. These strategies should greatly enhance environmental education and independent-living skills and provide further challenges for students' learning.

The board and principal have reviewed safety measures. New fencing around the school, cyber-safety procedures and additional security in the boarding facilities contribute to increased student safety and welfare. A full-time nurse ensures that students who are unwell are supervised and appropriately cared for. The appointment of additional guidance personnel has extended the resourcing available for counselling services.

The provision of health and safety services is contracted to an external agency. As part of hazard management requirements the board should maintain a hazard register and ensure that all staff have formal training in hazard identification.

Patriotism and Loyalty

Patriotism and loyalty are inculcated through the inclusion of the skills, attitudes and values of the New Zealand curriculum in learning programmes. Students are also involved in programmes of community service. This involvement reflects the school's commitment to its stated intentions to give service to others and build connections through links with the wider New Zealand and global community.

The school is responsive to identified community and national priorities. The acknowledgement of biculturalism is evident in the board's willingness to provide learning programmes in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori. These programmes have

been effectively implemented and student achievement in NCEA is a credit to teacher expertise in these curriculum areas.

The Christian values of the college are reflected in decisions about staff development and scholarship funding. The development of Endeavour Scholarships over the past six years resulted from a commitment to serve the community and to diversify enrolment opportunities. Students who receive these scholarships contribute fully to school life and benefit from the opportunities provided.

4 Other Matters

Provision for International Students

Compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* and the Provision of English Language Support

St Cuthbert's College is a signatory to the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* (the Code) established under section 238F of the Education Act 1989. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for international students.

Signatories that enrol international students are expected to comply with all sections of the revised Code that took effect in August 2003. Since this time all signatories are required to have reviewed their existing policies and processes to ensure compliance with the Code. As part of this education review ERO evaluated the extent to which St Cuthbert's College has implemented the Code and in particular the school's compliance with the sections relating to student welfare.

St Cuthbert's College currently has fourteen international students enrolled. Two students in the junior school live with their parents and twelve senior-school students live in the college boarding houses. International students are well integrated into the school. The school complies with all aspects of the Code concerning accommodation, pastoral care and provision of English language support.

The school has well documented systems for managing international students. The roles and responsibilities of all staff dealing with international students are clearly defined, with close liaison between staff evident. An international student committee plans cultural activities, and cross-cultural training is provided for all staff to assist them in meeting the needs of international students.

International students are valued and cared for in the college environment. They are included in all school activities and benefit from the wide variety of educational opportunities available to them. The college has effective processes for communicating with parents when students enrol. All students have pastoral care interviews and a close liaison is maintained between home and college. The college calls on interpreters when necessary and is considering increasing access to speakers of the students' first languages to support their wider needs for pastoral care.

International students are very positive about the school and report that they feel comfortable in the college environment. They receive good English language support to assist them with their learning. They are closely monitored and assessed, and programmes are tailored to meet their individual needs. A specialist teacher provides additional English lessons and support for the students' mainstream class teachers. The students are making good progress in their acquisition of English language and are enthusiastic participants in college and classroom activities.

The director of international students regularly reviews the school's compliance with the Code and provides progress and achievement reports based on an analysis of student assessment data.

Provision for students in the boarding houses

In this review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school provides a safe physical and emotional environment that supports learning for students who are accommodated in the school's boarding houses.

The four boarding houses are set within the school grounds and their operation is part of the college's established traditions. The houses provide a safe and homely environment that is appreciated and enjoyed by the 123 students who can be accommodated. Students report that they make long-term friendships with others in the hostel and feel well cared for. They are confident to report any concerns to the director and the boarding house staff. The house leaders' roles are respected and there is a positive rapport between senior and junior students.

Boarding house staff are supportive and caring of students and keep in regular contact with parents. Supervised preparatory work is an evening routine that ensures students are up-to-date with their studies and homework. Any student who is unwell during the day is supervised by the school nurse in special facilities that are separate from the hostel accommodation. The close proximity of the hostel to the school enables students to take part in the many sporting and cultural activities that are held after school and in the weekends.

The hostel is well used by families throughout New Zealand and overseas. Parents and students are regularly surveyed and their recommendations are followed up. A waiting list for placements is evidence of parent satisfaction with boarding house services. Parents receive informative newsletters about hostel events, and all matters of concern about individual students are reported promptly. Food is varied and nutritious and the facilities are comfortable and hygienic.

The school principal makes regular visits to the hostel and liaises effectively with the staff and students. The director attends school-based professional development meetings and local and international boarding-establishment conferences. The school principal and director meet regularly to discuss matters of common interest. A review of procedures relating to the boarding house is conducted regularly to ensure alignment with current school policies.

5 Conclusion

High quality self review, innovative development and strategic planning continue to support the college's ongoing pursuit of excellence. Consequently, under section 35A of the Education Act 1989, St Cuthbert's College is deemed to be "efficient".

St Cuthbert's College will be reviewed again as part of the regular schedule of Education Review Office reviews.



Charlene Scotti
Area Manager Reporting Services
for Chief Review Officer

14 September 2006