



St Michael's Church School

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2019 - 2020

Nevermore in our school community have our essential values, *Faith, Hope, Love, Respect, Integrity and Community* – our 'Big 6' as ERO called them – been so present and necessary. This was a year which began with a loss of innocence, as the mosque gunman visited his terror on the Muslim community and our city, and which finished with the fear and contagion of COVID-19, a national lockdown and much ongoing uncertainty.

It has been another period in the 169-year history of St Michael's in which the school's staff have gone over and above the reasonable expectations of their jobs in supporting our children and families, often at the expense of time with their own families. It is not an overstatement that their every action has been essential, as the school is again in survival mode. We are blessed to have our tremendous staff team, and I formally record my sincere thanks to them for their faith, hope and love, and their unstinting generosity to our School Family.

It has also been a period which has tested the resilience of a school community which has been through so much in recent years. It's tempting to stamp one's foot and shout, we have enough resilience now, thank you! Thankfully, our School Family is a true family, and our community keenly supportive of the school and one other, in good times and bad. We are hugely grateful for their enthusiasm and commitment.

School Roll

In January 2018, the school roll stood at 42 pupils, and in the crowded and competitive business of independent schooling in Christchurch, you cannot run a school successfully with 42 pupils.

The 2019 year began with 77 pupils, and during the year, we enrolled a further 25 children, some new entrants, some, in Terms 2-3 in particular, refugees from the state sector modern learning environments.

At the end of the 2019 academic year, we farewelled sixteen pupils: ten Y8 Leavers who finished their time at St Michael's; and six pupils from lower years, leaving for family reasons. This is again an essential improvement in the rates of roll attrition experienced in the post-quake years.

Unlike the Y8s of 2018, who moved on to the state sector (Burnside, Cashmere, Girls' High and St Bede's College), the 2019 Y8 Leavers opted for the independent sector – Christ's College, St Andrew's College and St Margaret's College – with only one choosing state and Burnside.

The opening school roll in January 2020 was 100 pupils, which was a significant milestone. We had finished 2019 with 100 pupils, and so covered the net loss of the sixteen end-of-year leavers.

The daunting effect of COVID-19 on the economy was not yet a reality at the end of March 2020, the full stop of this report. However, with the delay to the AGM, we can sadly report the loss of four school families – seven pupils – at the end of Term 2 (3 July); and, having identified 20 of our 76 families in March as being employed in vulnerable businesses, we are aware that they may be others.

Staffing

With the increase in roll, we were delighted to open the 2020 year with single classes in Years 1-6, and only one remaining combined class, at Y7&8.

Principal	Miss Penny Tattershaw
Y7&8 Class Teacher	Mrs Julie Lee
Y6 Class Teacher	Mr Ben Smith
Y5 Class Teacher	Mrs Joanne Eason
Y4 Class Teacher	Miss Stefanie Innes
Y3 Class Teacher	Mrs Anne Tucker
Y2 Class Teacher	Mrs Brigid Ladley
Y1 Class Teacher	Ms Emma Mahoney
Y7&8 Extension English	Mrs Gill Perkins
Y5-8 Music	Miss Jillian Kerr
Learning Support / Music	Ms Sarah Mahoney
Bursar	Mrs Jocelyn Richards
Office Administrator	Mrs Anthea Kitson
Registrar	Mrs Bec Hitchcock
Teacher Aide & After School Care	Miss Maddie Lindsay
Teacher Aide	Mrs Angela Rattray-Searell
Teacher Aide	Mrs Penny Caldwell
Fr Chris Orczy	Chaplain

In Term 3, 2019, Miss Jillian Kerr accepted a request to help with our senior music programme. Miss Kerr is an Old Pupil of St Michael's, a long-serving choir member and sometime music director in the absence of Mr Ellis, and so she was immediately at home – and is a wonderful champion of our aspirations for rebuilding St Michael's choral and instrumental traditions.

At the start of 2020, we opened separate classes in Y4 and Y5. Mrs Jo Eason the Y5 class teacher's role to her specialist Science load; and Miss Stef Innes joined the staff in the new Y4 classroom.

ERO

ERO, the Education Review Office, completed an inspection visit in May 2019. This was their first visit in seven years! It was a most rewarding and energizing week, as the inspectors were understanding of the school's recent challenges, impressed with the current state of play and encouraging by our future aspirations. Both inspectors had had long teaching and management careers, and their advice was invaluable and generously given.

In the final report, we were thrilled to receive not only recognition for the significant progress made in the last two years, but also of our Anglican character and the vital part that this plays in the children's education and everyday life at St Michael's.

The school's ERO report is available to view at <https://www.ero.govt.nz/find?Keywords=St+Michaels+Church+School>

Board of Governors

Mr Paul Marsh continued in the Chair in 2019, offering his vast experience in education, and providing invaluable support and leadership, before handing over the reins to Prof Spencer Beasley in December. Prof Beasley is a parent of three pupils, and bring his vast array of governance experience to St Michael's.

At the time that he took over, all was sailing fair, and I promised him that the chairmanship was a straightforward role. I have been apologising since the new decade dawned! The school has been incredibly fortunate to have the benefit of Prof Beasley's leadership and medical knowledge as the spectre of COVID-19 crept through the country, and this certainly enhanced our position as we were able to return to half numbers and then the full school back very quickly and successfully as each Alert Level was downgraded.

I wish to acknowledge Mrs Margaret Yorke, the Synod representative on the Board for 2010-2019. As a career teacher and long-serving deputy head at Middleton Grange, Mrs Yorke offered the Board wise counsel and valuable advice throughout her decade of service. As a new principal, I have been most grateful for her advice and quiet words of encouragement.

Please refer to the Report from the Chairman of the Board of Governors for further details.

PTFA – Parent, Teacher, Friends' Association

The PTFA, under the chairmanship of Mrs Katrina Anderson, has continued its generous support of the school community through fundraising, social events and quiet pastoral care.

At the year-end, the PTFA gifted the Uniform Shop to the school. This has benefits in terms of GST and insurance which are more appropriately managed by the bursar. We are most grateful for this gift, as the Uniform Shop raises funds for the school, and we remain indebted to Ms Lyla Heaslip, a parent who is our volunteer shop manager. Ms Heaslip has a passion for the school looking smart, and has grown the shop and its stock impressively over the last two years.

Finance

Please refer to the Report from the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the School's Annual Statements for details.

Communication & Marketing

The weekly newsletter remains popular, with news, photographs and notices to keep the School Family up to date. The newsletter is now delivered via the Mail Chimp platform which enhances delivery and visual impact.

Due to financial constraints, the school has a very small marketing budget compared with our competitors. With prudent management, our combined package of print advertisements, billboards, digital media and the website has generated positive response.

As part of our obligations to the St John's College Trust re their generous financial support of the school, quarterly reports have been sent, detailing events, roll, marketing and finance.

Health & Safety

Located as we are in the central city and opposite the law courts and police station, Health & Safety remains of paramount importance.

We are very grateful to the police and Justice Precinct Security for their support during the year.

Incidents on site and within the school building have included burglary, theft, drug finds, wilful damage, trespass and vandalism. With such a disappointing list, full security camera coverage and an update to the alarm system are at the top of the 'wish list'.

The new car park has added to the school both in terms of attraction to school visitors and security, discouraging some of the less audacious trespassers visiting the police and courts. Unfortunately, the incomplete front fence remains a hole in the plan.

Church and School

I continue to shamelessly use the church as the 'final convincer' on my tour for prospective parents. Their reactions are a joy, as they absorb the glorious building and peaceful atmosphere. I continue to tell them that we are lucky to have the church in our garden. I continue to hope you feel the same about your school.

I wish to thank again Mrs Carole Wright and Mrs Barbara Moreton for the hours of time they share with the school and the children. Mrs Wright works her magic in the Y1 and Y2 classrooms each week, supporting their reading and writing programmes; and Mrs Moreton tends to our library shelves, returning chaos to order, and creates great topical displays.

Our thanks, too, to Parish Secretary Mrs Taunya Kearns who filled the liaison gap between church and school administration seamlessly upon her arrival last year. We much appreciate the strengthened link that Mrs Kearns has created between church and school.

Finally, on behalf of the School Family, my thanks to Fr Chris, the Vestry, Parish Trust Board and parishioners for your support of the school. It has been another challenging year and one in which our shared values and foundations of *Faith, Hope, Love, Respect and Community* have carried us through, together.

*Miss Penny Tattershaw
Principal
17 June 2020*