

St Francis Catholic School

Board Of Trustees Newsletter



Our Mission:

“Providing a Catholic Education that develops the whole person.”

Our Vision:

“To provide challenges for all students, enabling them to develop as well-rounded individuals and socially responsible Catholics.”

Kia ora St Francis Catholic School community, it's so good to see our students and staff back at school!

The past few months have been a challenging and stressful time, and we are blessed to have a school community that has rallied together to help us through.

Throughout the weeks of lockdown, the Board was in regular contact with Lisa and staff to help provide additional support when needed. We wanted to take this opportunity to thank Lisa, the Senior Leadership team, and all the staff for their hard work during this period. We are very appreciative of the work they put in behind the scenes to ensure each student was able to access online learning and assist those who needed additional help.

To those teachers who returned in Level 3, we are grateful for the additional workload they took on, being present

throughout the day for students who returned to classes, in addition to juggling remote learning.

Finally, we wanted to thank our parents and caregivers who supported our students' at-home learning during this time. We know this was no small task! The understanding and gratitude you gave our staff throughout this time was very appreciated – they too had to master a new way of working.

Although life at school is beginning to return to a new normal, we are aware of the lasting impact of the pandemic. Our students are amazingly resilient and our staff is doing all they can to ensure they are settling back into their learning routine, while keeping abreast of all Ministry of Education guidelines on hygiene practices.

What we're working on

School assessments

Knowing what impact our teaching and learning programmes are having on our students is key, however, with the Covid-19 crisis, accurately gathering this information and assessing it will take a little more time.

It's important we give the best feedback to parents to determine the needs and development of our students.

This year, formal assessments take place in Term 3, with Term 2 focussing on teaching and learning. Parents will receive mid-year reports on Friday July 24, with parent / teacher interviews taking place on Wednesday July 29 and Thursday July 30.

The Mid-Year Report will be focused on effort and NZ Curriculum Key Competencies rather than academic progress and achievement. Normal procedures will return

for the End of Year Report in Term 4.

Many parents have provided feedback on how they enjoyed knowing what their children were working on during lockdown. Lisa and staff are developing ways the school can continue to regularly communicate with our families on what children are learning.

School policies

Our school policies are continuing to be reviewed, and to date our Catholic Character and Curriculum Delivery and Assessment have been finalised. Over the next few months we will complete our Enrolment, Equal Employment Opportunity and Finance policies. All will be available online, in addition to our new strategic plan 2020-2023, which sets out the goals the school wants to achieve with our students, community and culture.

School roll

Our roll is growing, and by the end of the year we expect to have 300-plus students with our maximum capacity standing at 330. The Board is working on our enrolment policy, which will be finalised by the end of this month. As the school reaches capacity, all parents should familiarise themselves with this policy. The school can legally enrol up to 5 per cent non-preference or non-Catholic students, provided that all preference applicants are accepted prior to any non-preference enrolments being accepted.

Kāinga Ora development

Plans to hold a morning tea with Kāinga Ora (formerly Housing New Zealand) to talk through its apartment development on the corner of Great North and Pt Chevalier Roads was postponed due to the Covid-19 crisis.

The Board and Kāinga Ora Stakeholder and Relationship Manager, Terrena Griffith, are working to secure a new date for this event. Our next meeting with Terrena will be at our July Board meeting to hear more information on the timeline for the build. Parents who would like additional information about the development or have any questions or concerns, please contact Terrena at terrena.griffiths@kaingaora.govt.nz or on 021 598 131.

School grounds and safety

Our new caretaker Andy Wilkie is on board and last term the Board reviewed the school buildings and grounds.

A maintenance programme is now underway. Welcome Mr Wilkie.

We've had a number of concerning safety incidents this year around our school and the surrounding area. The security and safety of our students is paramount. We would like to thank Lee Smith and his security company who continue to patrol our school grounds at night and Andy Wilke during the day. We ask parents to remain vigilant, to report any unusual behaviour around the school, and always ensure children are not dropped off before 8.00am and are collected before 3.15pm.

A special acknowledgement

The Board would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Lisa's first year with us here at St Francis. Lisa has ensured St Francis is firmly on the map in Pt Chevalier by personally delivering pamphlets to all the early learning centres and is in regular contact with all surrounding schools. Hence our fabulous closing roll for 2020. Lisa has brought a fresh approach, whilst acknowledging many of the St Francis traditions. It has certainly been at times testing, however Lisa has led our school with an even hand, a smile on her face and provided exceptional leadership. We look forward to working together for many years to come.

Contacting your Board of Trustees

The Board meets once a month and meetings are open for anyone to attend

We welcome feedback from parents.

If you would like to contact the Board regarding any queries, you can email us at office@stfrancis.school.nz. There are proper channels and procedures in place for concerns and complaints, and these can be found on the school website.

Co-Chairs:

Callie Fell and James Murphy

Proprietor's Representatives:

Stuart King, Carla Sheldon, Callie Fell
and Father John Webb

Parent's Representatives:

Emma 'Uhila, Victoria Farry, Caroline Botting,
Philip Jaggard and James Murphy

Staff Trustee:

Susan Milne