

POLICY 23  
**SPECIAL CHARACTER**

*The daily life of the College will be permeated with the values of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Special links will be maintained with the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions as the College Founders and their special charism reinforced in the College.*

**1.0 Purpose and Scope**

The Catholic Character of Sacred Heart Girls' College is at our core. The Board of Trustees (the Board) in consultation with the Principal shall ensure that the Special Character of the College, namely its commitment to provide an education in which the Gospel values of the Catholic Church are promoted, will be maintained at all times. All policies, processes and practices will be measured against this Special Character.

**2.0 Guidelines**

2.1 The Principal, Director of Religious Studies (DRS) and Director of Faith & Mission, in conjunction with all staff and all students, are responsible for promoting the Catholic Character within the College and our Parish Communities.

2.2 Therefore the Principal shall:

- Ensure that the school policies, procedures and structures reflect the values of Jesus Christ;
- encourage staff to reflect the Gospel values and support the Special Character of the school in their work and their attitudes and relationships with students and colleagues;
- assist staff in their understanding of the Special Character of the school by encouraging a minimum of Level 1 *Certification in Catholic Special Character* and ongoing professional development;
- ensure that the College culture and physical environment reflects our Catholic Character.
- provide a spiritual retreat annually for each student.

2.3 Operational procedures relevant to this policy include:

- The Proprietor's 'appointees on the Board of Trustees responsibilities for reporting to the Proprietor;
- Special Character Sub-Committee;
- Reporting to the Board at regular meetings;
- Provision of Chaplaincy Service;
- Orientation Programme to assist newly appointed staff in their understanding of SHGC Special Character;
- Time of prayer to be included in all meetings and classes;
- Implementation of the National Curriculum of Religious Education - "Understanding Faith" secondary school syllabus;
- Provision of opportunities for the Board, staff, parents/caregivers, and students to take part in Sacramental or Liturgical celebrations.

**REVIEW:**

This policy shall be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Review schedule: March Triennially

Review next due: March 2021

**REFERENCES:**

- Integrated Schools and Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975
- Handbook for Board of Trustees of New Zealand Catholic Integrated Schools 2016
- National Curriculum of Religious Education in Catholic Schools
- SHGC Strategic Plan
- SHGC Mission Statement
- The Catholic Education of School-Age Children, NZ Catholic Bishops Conference 2014
- Code of Ethics for Staff and Boards of NZ Catholic Schools 2014
- Education Act 1989
- Special Character Review & Development Handbook:  
[http://nzceo.catholic.org.nz/media/resources2013\\_Special\\_Character\\_Review\\_update.pdf](http://nzceo.catholic.org.nz/media/resources2013_Special_Character_Review_update.pdf)

Approved by the Board of Trustees at the meeting held on 27 August 2018

  
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**CHAIRPERSON**