



**Excellere College**

Whaia te Maramatanga o Te Karaiti

***Staff  
Special  
Character  
Handbook***

## **Purpose of the Handbook**

The purpose of this Handbook is to assist you to know and understand our Christian Special Character learning environment, and our professional expectations of staff.

The Handbook sits alongside any relevant Collective Agreements and the Teaching Council 'Our Code Our Standards' document, to underpin employment expectations.

## **Special Character - What makes us different?**

We are a Christian-based College, which supports Christian morals and Christian values. Our parents are our partners in their child's learning.

We recognise that each student is created in God's image and has a unique purpose and destiny. As staff in a Christian College our goal is to encourage the development of this purpose and destiny in the school setting.

Our pastoral care recognises that each student is individually created by God and has great worth.

We focus on establishing a positive, nurturing Christian environment which encourages young people to live as Christians. This atmosphere is maintained through Christian staff who live by Christian values that are encouraged in the College culture.

Students are taught a Biblical Christian worldview, and encouraged to live according to these principles. As they progress through the College they are also given opportunity to explore other ideas that impact on society so that they are equipped to deal with the issues they will face in life.

Students learn academic skills and knowledge through a curriculum based on solid Christian principles. Our focus is to assist the home and Church to train a generation of young people who are empowered, equipped and educated, to make a Christian difference.

### **Vision:**

(What we see)

'Excellence in learning; Christianity in living.'

### **Mission:**

(What we do)

'Educating students to develop and excel in their God-given gifts and talents, according to His Word and purpose.'

### **Values:**

(What we display)

Compassion  
Integrity  
Honour

## **Special Character**

The Special Character of the School is determined by the Christian beliefs, values and lifestyle of the Christian Church as determined from time to time by the Whangarei Christian Education Trust, and is to be upheld in word and fulfilled in practice by staff.

Because God is

The Creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible, sustaining and ruling over creation including man ...

And is the source of all wisdom and knowledge.

God the Father, Jesus his Son and the Holy Spirit are relevant to every area of study and endeavour in the school.

The School reflects this by:

- a) Experiencing Godly relationships, showing the character of Christ in love, using the Bible as the basis for exploring God's world, and as a standard against which to compare and interpret all curriculum material.
- b) Teaching Christian values and behaviour through the process of acknowledgement of sin, repentance and acceptance of Jesus' gift of grace.
- c) Using prayer as a key tool in learning, inviting the Holy Spirit into every learning situation.
- d) Encouraging each child to give their best because God creates and equips each person for their unique role in His service, and acknowledging achievement in accordance with the child's effort.
- e) Inextricably integrating knowledge of the world and Christian beliefs, through an integrated approach of an appropriate Christian curriculum and developed programme plans.
- f) Acting as a continuum and extension of the teaching provided in Christian homes.
- g) Providing an environment where children, parents and teachers can experience godly relationships, show the character of Christ in love, discipline, respect, honour and trust, and witness an exemplary demonstration of Biblical truths in the lives of others.
- h) Employing staff who are role models for students, who promote values and standards based on Biblical principles.

This is expressed through our core values.

## **Essential Understandings...**

### **Students at Excellere College will have the following deep understandings:**

- To have the knowledge that God is real and the Creator of our Universe and that by following him my life is enriched
- To know the importance of a living relationship with Jesus Christ and to know that God loves me.
- Faith, Hope and Love. i. Faith in God. ii. Hope for the future and confidence to step out iii. Love for others and the environment
- To understand that according to God's purpose every life has value and that God will help me in all things
- To strive for personal excellence in all the abilities God has blessed me with
- Be able to demonstrate integrity, resilience, persistence, courage and meaningful connections with others in a positive way.
- To see everything as an opportunity to learn and grow and that learning and living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century requires me to make courageous choices, founded on core Christian values.
- Everything in the world is interconnected and I have a responsibility to care and conserve

## **Introducing Excellere College - Where we came from:**

Kamo Christian College began life as a private school in 1980 to support the Christian beliefs of parents who attended Alive Church. Since then the College has extended its student body to include families from other Churches who want their children educated with positive Christian values. In order to reduce costs for families the College integrated as a Special Character Area School in 1996. Integration has meant that the College has continued to grow, while offering greater options in the Senior College. NCEA Courses are now embedded, without compromising the Christian world-view. In 2015 NZCPT became our Proprietors, with WCET as our Land Trust. In 2017 WCET finalised purchase of the property. We gained a roll cap increase from 200 to 230 at the end of 2017. New classrooms were added for 2019, housing Science, Art and Music. We gained another roll cap increase to 300 during 2019. Two new senior classrooms were added during 2020.



# Excellere College

Whaia te Maramatanga o Te Karaiti

## Core Values

1 Corinthians 13:13

Paul said...

“Three things will last forever - faith, hope and love-  
and the greatest of these is **love**”.

*Na, tenei te mau nei te Whakapono, te Tumanako, te Aroha, enei e toru; ko te  
mea nui rawa ia o enei ko te Aroha.*

*At Excellere College we show this love by living out these  
Core Values (Ngā Uara).*

### Compassion

#### Aroha

This means that we are:

- Considerate
- Responsible
- Hospitable

*“The LORD is gracious and righteous;  
our God is full of compassion” Psalm 116: 5*



### Integrity

#### Mana

This means that we are:

- Honest
- Peace-makers
- Respectful

*“May integrity and uprightness protect me,  
because my hope LORD, is in you.” Psalm 25: 21*

### Honour

#### Honore

This means that we are:

- Grateful
- Humble
- Servant leaders

*“My victory and honour come from God alone” Psalm 62: 7*

# Graduate Profile

**Excellence in learning; Christianity in living**  
Confident, connected, actively involved lifelong learners (NZC)

## Manaakitanga (T) The Promise

*A sense of God's purpose for our lives*

*Excellere College graduates strive to be obedient to God's Word, displaying character traits of a developing relationship with Christ.*

*Excellere College graduates understand that God has a purpose for their lives and are excited about life with hope for the future.*

**Maori potential approach (KH)**

## Whanaungatanga (T) Relationship

*A sense of God's love*

Responsibilities toward Others  
(Whakawhanaungatanga)

*Excellere College graduates demonstrate servant leadership and cooperate positively by contributing to the community and loving others.*

**Productive partnerships (KH)**



## Wanaga (T) Guidance

*A sense of God's Grace*

Responsibilities toward Environment / World  
(Kaitiakitanga)

*Excellere College graduates display a wonder for God's Creation, taking responsibility and caring for the environment.*

**Identity, language and culture count (KH)**

## Tangata Whenuatanga (T) Ako (T) Wisdom

*A sense of God's plan through history*

Responsibilities toward Self (Tino Rangatiratanga)

*Excellere College graduates have high aspirations, embrace change with confidence and are equipped with skills and qualifications.*

*Excellere College graduates have an enquiring mind and teachable spirit, and take responsibility for their own learning.*

*Excellere College graduates value who they are, understanding their identity, language, culture and heritage.*

**Treaty of Waitangi (KH)**

**Ako – a two-way learning and teaching process (KH)**

## **Code of Conduct**

It is expected that staff will at all times behave towards each other and towards the students in a manner that is acceptable to God.

The Bible, as the received Word of God, gives the College the code by which the staff measure their:

- Behaviour
- Language
- Relationships
- Personal Presentation.

Behaviour must be moderate and considerate in keeping with our Christian values.

Language must be free from blasphemy and swearing and as far as possible free from anger and gossip. It is desirable that language is positive and supportive.

Relationships must be Christian-based.

Personal Presentation must be modest and clean and chosen to enhance the reputation of the college in the eyes of the students and community.

## **Appropriate Relationships**

In line with our belief in supporting Godly relationships we expect that if staff are in a relationship, that they ensure it is appropriate for their role modelling of the school's Christian values.

You must inform your employer if your circumstances change, and are in conflict with the school's accepted Christian values.

## **Exemptions**

In some cases it is acknowledged that not all personnel working in or for the college will be able to fully comply with the Personnel Code of Conduct. This particularly applies to:

- Specialist staff
- Specialist support staff
- Visiting speakers
- Education advisors
- Parent helpers
- Contractors

Staff are encouraged to promote the special character of the school to visiting personnel.

## **Staff Dress Code**

### **GuideLines**

All staff should be clean, neat and tidy, and presented to a professional standard.

The following are not acceptable

- Track pants (unless for teaching PE)
- Singlets
- Jandals
- Clothing with inappropriate logos
- See-through garments and other clothing which is inappropriately revealing.
- Barefeet

### **Devotions**

Staff are rostered to take Staff devotions Mon, Wed, Friday from 8.15 am. to 8.30am. This may include leading prayer or worship, sharing a Scripture, a reading or story, leading korero on an issue, or another Christian sharing activity. It is a non-pressured situation that all teaching staff are asked to take advantage of. Wednesday time may be used for Special Character PLD.



# Effective Teacher Profile Professional Growth Cycle

Indicators of expectations for our teaching staff.

Teacher Profile Capabilities	Indicators
<b>Display a positive outlook that reflects the hope they have in Christ, affirming the strengths and talents of their students.</b>	<i>Incorporates scripture, shares and outworks their faith in the school and community.</i>
	<i>Demonstrates the fruit of the spirit in their lives and are quick to listen, slow to speak and become angry.</i>
	<i>Shares their testimony which affirms God working in their lives.</i>
	<i>Affirms the work that the Lord is doing in their students' lives.</i>

Teacher Profile Capabilities	Indicators
<b>Display servant leadership towards those around them, actively contributing to, and enhancing the wellbeing of others (Hauora).</b>  <b>Work as a positive team member of the staff, and the larger school whanau, bridging the gap between school and home, supporting community events.</b>	<i>Responds to student voice to improve relationship-based learning practices.</i>
	<i>Actively contributes to the well-being (Hauora) of our wider learning community.</i>
	<i>Uses relationship-based learning principles (ie: whanaungatanga, discursive practices) in professional interactions.</i>

Teacher Profile Capabilities	Indicators
<b>Life long learners, proactive in improving their own understandings and knowledge of teaching and learning, whilst using reflective inquiry through pedagogical practice.</b> <b>Embrace change, to have a positive effect on student learning.</b>	<i>Being proactive in their own learning by demonstrating a commitment to learning about, and staying up-to-date with the latest research about how akonga learn and understanding and working to improve the impact of their practice on valued student learning outcomes.</i>
	<i>Uses reflective practice to adapt and grow effective teaching practice.</i>
	<i>Confidently uses a range of digital tools in the classroom to enhance student learning, ensuring students operate in a cybersafe environment both locally and globally.</i>
<a href="#"><u>Whanaungatanga</u></a> <b>Share their own culture and stories from the past, whilst respectfully listening and embracing the stories of others.</b>  <b>Demonstrate high expectations of every student.</b>	<i>Actively seeks to understand and implement the concept of 'Whanaungatanga' as relates to Relationship-based learning.</i>

<p><u>Discursive practices</u> Empowering students to play a role in their own learning.</p> <p>Deliberately cultivating culturally responsive pedagogies in their practice.</p>	<p><i>Actively seeks to understand and implement the concept of 'Discursive Practices' as relates to Relationship-based learning.</i></p>
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Teacher Profile Capabilities	Indicators
<p><b>Good role models who show and develop an appreciation for God's creation.</b></p>	<p><i>Provides opportunities for students to explore, and show an understanding of God's creation (ie: spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural and social environment)</i></p>
	<p><i>Provides opportunities for students to develop student agency by taking social action in caring for God's creation (ie: spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural and social environment)</i></p>

# Policies

## Special Character

**Reason for procedure:** In conjunction with proper management of the curriculum, the school management recognises the primacy of Special Character in regard to the purpose and intent of Excellere College as a Christian educational institution. It is important therefore that the College ensures a procedure is in place to ensure the Special Character is protected and fostered.

**Objective:** To specify the manner in which Special Character is protected and fostered within the College as provided for in the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act (1975) and the Integration Agreement for our school.

### **Guidelines:**

The College welcomes and encourages the presence of members of the wider Christian community to school liturgies and Special Character activities.

The College will place emphasis on prayer, and social action (including fund raising for charitable projects).

The Board will provide funding for Special Character, Bible Studies resourcing, along with teacher professional development in Religious Education, within the College. This includes making provision to ensure the College decor reflects Special Character.

Christian Living classes will be allocated time within the curriculum and all students are expected to attend such classes and produce work as required by the class teacher.

All programmes of learning will reflect the Special Character of the school.

The school management will ensure that its requirement to appoint staff that align with the special character

For any staff appointment involving an interview panel made up of Board members there may be one proprietor's representative involved.

Special Character will form part of staff Professional Growth Cycle.

For all students enrolled at the College, an interview process must take place, and an explanation of our Special Character is delivered by the Principal.

During interviews it is ascertained whether any candidate has barriers to supporting Special Character. All job offers contain a clause requiring that the employee does not undermine Special Character.

## **Student Relationships**

### **Rationale:**

In order to provide a safe, healthy learning environment students need to respect each other and form lasting, meaningful relationships. These relationships must be based on Christian principles and meet the expectations of the College.

### **Guidelines:**

Conversation of a sexually explicit nature, or racially or gender insensitive, is forbidden. This includes sexual innuendos, jokes, and language.

Showing physical affection to members of the opposite sex is not acceptable, unless members of the same family. Physical contact is limited to learning activities and then only under the supervision of a supervisor or adult. Hugging is not permitted.

Students are discouraged from forming 'romantic' boyfriend and girlfriend relationships either at school or socially.

Students must not spend time alone with members of the opposite sex.

Older students must respect and care for the younger students at the college who do not need to be involved in the level of conversation normally associated with older students.

## **Student Enrolment**

The BOT will ensure that the maximum roll of the school is not exceeded. The maximum roll of the school is currently 300 (as specified in the Deed of Integration Agreement of 03/09/2008 and Roll cap increase 2019).  
Considerations

The following are considerations to be made in the enrolling of any student into Excellere College  
Preference will be given to those pupils with parents who have established a particular or general connection with the Special Character of the School.

The BOT shall not give preference of enrolment to the parents of any child unless the Proprietor concurs that those parents have established a particular or general connection with the Special Character of the School.

The non-preference level shall be determined as specified in Clause 22.2 of the Integration Deed of Agreement, and any subsequent amendments as negotiated with the Ministry of Education. This is currently 5% of the maximum school roll (see above).

The numbers of students that can be accommodated at any particular age level.

## **Procedures**

1. School is contacted about possible enrolment. Details are noted in the Enrolment Folder kept in the Office.
2. A pack is forwarded which will include a copy of the relevant Enrolment Packs.  
(See separate folder for the relevant enrolment packs.)
3. If desired, a visit to the school can be arranged by phoning the School Receptionist 9.00 a.m. - 3.00 p.m., Monday to Friday.
4. Application forms can then be filled out. A separate Application Form is required for each student.
5. When all necessary forms have been received, they will be checked by the Principal, and College Leader relevant to the learning level if appropriate.
6. Academic testing in Numeracy and Literacy may take place, if deemed necessary. This is to ensure that the child's academic level is ascertained for appropriate placement.
7. An interview will be arranged for applicants, parents and child if possible, with the Principal, and Whangarei Christian Education Trust Rep, to ascertain preference through special character.
8. The Principal will go through the information relevant to Special Character.
9. Parents will be notified on preference status, and acceptance or non- acceptance into the College.
10. There is provision for New Entrants to spend transition time in the New Entrant Class prior to official enrolment.
11. All relevant Student Data, once the student is accepted, is then placed on the College Data base – MUSAC.
12. The relevant financial information will be communicated to the NZCPT office, along with a payment of a term in advance of attendance dues?

It must be noted that waiting lists do occur, and the sending in of the application form does not constitute automatic or immediate enrolment.

## **Preference criteria**

Our school's Special Character is defined in the Special Character Statement. The legislation defining integrated schools makes it clear who can attend a state integrated school. The Education Act 2018, s442 states "The children of parents who have a particular or general philosophical or religious connection with a State-integrated school must be preferred to other children for enrolment at the school."

If a parent can demonstrate a connection to the school's special character then their children are entitled to be enrolled and are known as preference students. Integrated schools are allowed to take a small percentage of Non-Preference students (families who don't directly connect with the school's special character), that number is specifically stated by the Ministry for each school. In our school we can take 15 non-preference students.

## **Non-Preference Criteria priority**

NZCPT schools use a set of priorities when establishing the allocation of available non-preference places for enrolment.

Non-preference students will be enrolled only if enrolment places remain after all preference applicants have been enrolled. The maximum number of places available for non-preference students will be governed by the maximum allowable under our Integration Agreement, and this Policy's considerations and procedures. This is currently a maximum of 15 places.

**Non-preference places criteria:**

1. The applicants accept that they will be attending a school of special character and that their place is conditional on their participating in all school programmes.
2. The applicants accept that they will be required to pay attendance dues as set by the Whangarei Christian Education Trust, and these are not voluntary.

In this grouping, priority will be given in the following order:

1. Siblings of current non-preference students.
2. Siblings of former non-preference students.
3. Non-preference students coming from another Christian state-integrated school with the similar Christian special character.
4. Students from local schools who want to participate in the special character culture of our school.

**Waiting List Procedure**

All unsuccessful applicants may choose to have their names placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be kept within relevant priority categories, ranked in order. Students on the waiting list may be offered places at a later date if they become available. The waiting list will remain current until the beginning of the next enrolment intake.

**Pre-enrolment Procedure**

Each year applications may be sought by a date determined by the Board of Trustees and may be advertised in daily or community papers, school newsletters circulating in the areas served by the school. All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after the closing date.

**Notes**

Applicants seeking priority status on the basis of a sibling relationship will be required to produce proof of that relationship. Applicants seeking priority status on the basis of enrolment at another state-integrated school will be required to provide proof of enrolment at that school.

The Board delegates to the Principal, as the professional leader of the school, the responsibility to administer this enrolment procedure and to exercise discretion where necessary. This discretion may be exercised, where appropriate, in consultation with the Proprietors.

The selection processes described above will be the basis for students applying to enrol at all levels either at the beginning of or during the school year. Applicants on the waiting list will have first offer of places as they become available.

## **Sexuality Education**

**Reason for procedure:** The school management recognises its moral and legal responsibilities to consult on and deliver sexuality education to students at the school in a manner that adheres to Christian teaching and keeps parents fully informed. This procedure is written to outline the methods used to ensure these outcomes.

### **Objectives:**

1. To develop a partnership with parents so that our children may grow up with strong Christian values in their relationships.
2. To teach, under the authority of the Whangarei Christian Education Trust, a relationships programme that follows Church teaching.
3. To develop the knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes needed to develop, maintain and enhance personal and community health, safety, and physical development.

### **Guidelines**

1. Sexuality education will be delivered principally by designated staff; appointed in consultation with the Proprietor.
2. After notification to our Proprietor, consultation with our full parent community will occur at least every two years.
3. No programme approved after parent consultation may change its content until a subsequent full community consultation has been held.
4. Parents may view materials for classes on request.
5. Parents will be informed, through the weekly newsletter, near to the time when tuition is about to begin and they will be invited to contact the school for details of the content to be covered.
6. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sections of the proposed course (section 105D Education Act 1964). Children withdrawn will be catered for in a separate venue with material on another topic.
7. Parents of children who are not Christian (non-preference students,) must understand that the relationships programmes will always follow teachings based on Christian principles.