



**Education Review Office**  
Te Tari Arotake Mātauranga

**Southwell School**  
**Hamilton**

**Confirmed**

**Private School**  
**Review Report**

# Private School Review Report: Southwell School

## 1 Background

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

ERO reviews of private schools are significantly different in process and more limited in scope and reporting than those for state and state-integrated schools, focusing as they do on the *Criteria for Registration* set out in section 35C of the Education Act.

Section 35I of the Education Act 1989 requires the Education Review Office (ERO) to review private schools and to report to the Ministry of Education on whether each school continues to meet the criteria for registration. The schools are privately owned and the legislative requirements are significantly different to those for state and state-integrated schools. Private schools are not required to follow the National Education Goals or National Administration Guidelines.

What does apply in place of the legislation imposed upon state schools by the Education Act is the contract between the persons paying for the tuition of the child at the school – the parents – and the school authority. Those are matters between the parent and the school's governing body. More information about ERO reviews of private schools can be found on ERO's website [www.ero.govt.nz/Reviews-Process](http://www.ero.govt.nz/Reviews-Process).

The criteria for registration are that the school –

- a) has premises that are suitable, as described in section 35D; and
- b) usually provides tuition for 9 or more students who are of or over the age of 5 years but are under the age of 16 years; and
- c) has staffing that is suitable to the age range and level of its students, the curriculum taught at the school, and the size of the school; and
- d) has equipment that is suitable for the curriculum being delivered or to be delivered at the school; and
- e) has a curriculum for teaching, learning, and assessment and makes details of the curriculum and its programme for delivery available for parents; and
- f) has suitable tuition standards, as described in section 35F; and
- g) has managers who are fit and proper persons (as described in section 35G) to be managers of a private school.

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

Southwell School is a fully registered private school in Hamilton city, providing high standards of education for boys and girls from Years 1 to 8. The school was established in 1911 as a preparatory boarding and day school for boys. In the year 2000 girls were enrolled as part of the school's response to modern education systems.

A new headmaster was appointed for the start of Term 4, 2016. He is well supported by an experienced and competent senior leadership team. They are taking a strategic and considered approach to change management, which is supporting the building of relational trust throughout the school community.

The school is affiliated with the Anglican Diocese, and Christian values and practices are strongly promoted. The All Hallows Chapel was completed in 1926 and is central to the spiritual wellbeing of children, staff and the school community. The long-serving chaplain leads a daily service in the chapel during which opportunities are taken to recognise, value and affirm children.

'United as Southwell' is the strategic vision document being developed currently. It gives focus to teaching and learning, relationships, balance and wellbeing, and spaces. Environments are spacious, and attractive, and purposefully planned to support children's learning and development in academics, sports, culture, spiritual and social areas.

Southwell School Trust Board is an appointed group of trustees who oversee the Deed of Trust objectives and support for high quality education and care for children. Trustees bring a strong range of skills and expertise to their governance role. They are working on positive school developments, in close partnership with the new headmaster.

## **2 Criteria for Registration**

The new headmaster is bringing a renewed focus on values, manners and wellbeing for all. He seeks and respects input on school developments from a wide range of stakeholders. In addition to reviews of the senior leadership structure and boarding hostel staffing, he has initiated an 'ako nui' review team to consider support for strengthening bicultural practice in the school.

Children have outstanding opportunities to develop as confident and competent learners, in academic, cultural, sporting, spiritual, EOTC and social areas. School data indicates consistently high levels of achievement and progress throughout the school. Achievement information is well used to inform planning, monitor children's progress and report to parents. Children with additional learning needs, and their classroom teachers, are very well supported through the learning support staff and facility which adjoins the school library.

Learning is expected, affirmed and celebrated in extensively resourced classroom environments. The deans coordinate teacher planning and curriculum design in line with *The New Zealand Curriculum*. The use of whole-school themes to integrate areas of learning promotes authentic and meaningful learning experiences. Strengths of the curriculum include the:

- appropriate emphasis on literacy and mathematics
- creative and performing arts programmes, which include the annual 'opera' production, and are a feature of Southwell School
- use of specialist teachers in science, languages, technology and drama
- extensive and effective use of digital technologies by children and staff.

Teachers work successfully as a collegial team to provide children with challenging and engaging programmes of learning, balanced with a culture of affirming and supportive pastoral care. Very high levels of engagement in learning by children are evident. Teachers set and model high expectations for children. They establish safe classroom cultures where children are able to learn from each other and help one another to succeed. Many examples of formative practice, where children are able to understand and lead their own learning, were observed.

Staff are highly committed to reflecting on their teaching practice and professional development. Many generously give additional hours outside the classroom to sustain the numerous extra-curricular opportunities for children.

A feature of Southwell School is the intergenerational identification with, and pride in, the rich history and legacy of the school by past students, staff and families. This wider community is welcomed and involved in school activities as respected and valued partners at important school events.

The school meets its statutory requirements outlined in the Private School Assurance Statements in regards to premises, health and safety, curriculum, informing parents and operational policies. School managers have attested that they comply with the provisions of Section 35G in respect to being fit and proper persons to manage the school.

### **3 Other Obligations**

The board and school management are acting to ensure that appraisal of teaching staff by the professional leader of the school is evidence-based on the Practising Teacher Criteria, established for the issue and renewal of practicing certificates. The appraisal of staff with additional school-wide responsibilities is being acted on by the new headmaster to bring it into line to reflect board policy.

### **4 Other Matters**

#### **Provision for international students**

The school 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, and has attested that it complies with all aspects The Code. At the time of this ERO review there were eight international students attending the school.

International students benefit from the welcoming, inclusive and affirming culture present in the school. They are supported by 'student buddies' to settle in to their classes and to become involved in the wide range of activities available, including music tuition and sport. Two experienced teachers oversee the pastoral and academic needs of international students, and they coordinate language support and academic assessments. Formal and informal communication with parents is effective and reinforced through regular group meetings that allow for face-to-face conversations and the building of mutual understanding and partnerships.

#### **Provision for students in the school hostel**

Southwell School hostel, boarding house, accommodates 55 students, 9% of the school roll. It is owned by the Trust and is centrally placed in the school grounds. The hostel owner has attested that all requirements of the Hostel Regulations are met.

- The headmaster has overall responsibility for the hostel, and he is supported in this role by the two Directors of Boarding, a matron and associated house staff.
- Hostel students experience high-quality pastoral care and oversight of their daily routines.
- There is close and effective liaison between hostel and academic staff, and students have access to tutors and digital technologies to support their academic work.
- Hostel students enjoy significant access to the wide range of outstanding school facilities outside teaching hours.

## 5 Conclusion

On the basis of the information obtained during the review, ERO considers that Southwell School meets the criteria for registration as a private school set out in the Education Act 1989.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynda Pura-Watson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'L'.

Lynda Pura-Watson  
Deputy Chief Review Officer

30 May 2017

## About the School

Location	Hamilton	
Ministry of Education profile number	4141	
School type	Full Primary (Years 1 to 8)	
School roll	569	
Number of international students	8	
Gender composition	Boys 54% Girls 46%	
Ethnic composition	Pākehā	64%
	Māori	6%
	Chinese	15%
	Indian	6%
	Other Asian	4%
	Other European	4%
	Pacific Island	1%
Special Features	Boarding Hostel	
Review team on site	March 2017	
Date of this report	30 May 2017	
Most recent ERO report(s)	Private School Review	May 2013
	Private School Review	June 2010
	Private School Review	September 2007