THE CHARACTER OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL
EXPECTATIONS FOR STAFF EMPLOYED IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

1.0 This statement is to be read in association with the School Charter, a copy of which is available from the school.

2.0 The Catholic Church has developed an international network of schools because it believes the Church has a pivotal single intention: "that God's kingdom may come, and that the salvation of the whole human race may come to pass." (Gaudium et Spes, 45a: Second Vatican Council.)

3.0 The Special Character of a Catholic school is defined in the school's Integration Agreement as follows:

'The school is a Roman Catholic School in which the whole school community, through the general school programme and in its religious instructions and observances, exercises the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ. These values are as expressed in the Scriptures and in the practices, worship and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, as determined from time to time by the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese.'

3.1 In schools owned by a Religious Institute the Integration Agreement also defines the particular charism to be upheld.

4.0 A person applying for a position in a Catholic school needs to understand the commitment this involves.

4.1 All staff, whether Catholic or not, are part of the whole school community. Each staff member is therefore expected to use his or her specific strengths and skills to support the mission of the school.

4.2 A Catholic school shares the mission of the Church by developing students with knowledge, faith and values, all of which are in harmony.

4.3 The curriculum and specific subjects are taught for their own value and with their own objectives. Seeking truth, wherever it is found, is fundamental to a Catholic school.

4.4 The Religious Education programme is an integral part of the curriculum. The principles, truths and ethics of this programme permeate the whole life of the school. The students are taught that:

- God is creator
- Jesus Christ is God-made-man
- Humankind's ultimate goal is heaven
- Authority to teach and interpret God's revelation was entrusted to the Church by Christ, and is exercised by the Pope and Bishops.

4.5 The school as a whole subscribes to the Apostles' Creed which is the oldest of the formulas used by the Christians to express their faith. It accepts the two-fold commandment of Christ, love of God and neighbour and the other values expressed by Christ as norms for living. The focal point of the whole school is Christ.

5.0 No staff member will be required to act against their own conscience or personal philosophy of life. Such a requirement would not be in keeping with Catholicism and is contrary to the aims of the school.

6.0 However, in accepting a position in a Catholic school it is assumed that staff members realise that:

- Staff work as a team. Therefore all staff are expected to contribute, according to their individual strengths and within their personal convictions, to the total purpose of the school. No school can operate successfully if any staff member undermines the positive efforts of others.
- Staff are expected to support, uphold and be actively involved in the total life of the school and its special character irrespective of their personal beliefs.
- Staff are role models for students, colleagues, parents/caregivers in living the mission and values of the school.
- Staff who do not profess Catholicism are expected to promote the Catholic Character of the school, and to refrain from doing or saying anything that would be antithetical to the school's Catholic Character.
- Staff are expected to abide by the Code of Ethics for Staff and Boards of New Zealand Catholic Schools.
- In schools owned by a Religious Institute staff are also expected to uphold the defined charism.

7.0 New staff will find others who are willing to assist them in gaining a fuller understanding of the school and its Catholic Character, and in solving any difficulties that may arise in the course of their work. In addition the following resources will be helpful.

- *We Live and Teach Christ Jesus*: *NZ Catechetical Directory* (NZ Catholic Bishops Conference, 1974)
- *The Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977)
- *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982)
- *The Church's Confession of Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults* (German Bishops' Conference, St Ignatius Press, 1987, San Francisco)
- *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988).
- *Religious Education in the Catholic Secondary School, Syllabus Document* (NCRS, 1991)
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (June 1994)
- *Religious Education Programme Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools in Aotearoa New Zealand* (NCRS, 1996)
- *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (Congregation for Catholic Education, July 1998)
- *The Declaration* (New Zealand Council of Proprietors of Catholic Integrated Schools, 1997, revised 2007)

I agree to uphold the expectations outlined in this document.

_____ Staff Member

_____ Principal

_____ Date