

**CONFIRMED
PRIVATE SCHOOL
REVIEW REPORT**

KING'S COLLEGE

December 2007



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1 Background

Introduction

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

Under section 35A of the Education Act 1989, private schools are required to be “efficient”. The Act defines “efficient”, in relation to a private school as -

- (a) Having suitable premises, staffing, equipment, and curriculum; and
- (b) Usually providing tuition for 9 or more students who have turned 5 but are under 16; and
- (c) Providing suitably for the inculcation in the minds of students of sentiments of patriotism and loyalty; and
- (d) Giving students tuition of a standard no lower than that of the tuition given to students enrolled at secondary schools of the same class.

This report focuses on the extent to which the school meets this requirement and other statutory obligations.

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

About the School

Location	Otahuhu, Auckland
Ministry of Education profile number	89
School type	Private School - Secondary Year 9-13
Numbers of teachers	75
School roll	950
Number of international students	19
Ethnic composition	New Zealand European/Pākehā 79%, Māori 3%, Asian 11%, Pacific 3%, other European 1%, other ethnicities 3%
Gender composition	Boys 87%, Girls 13%
Special features	Junior school boys only, Senior school co-ed Boarding facilities
Review team on site	October 2007
Date of this report	6 December 2007
Previous ERO report	Private School Review, November 2004 Accountability Review, November 2001 Accountability Review, January 1998 Assurance Audit, June 1995 Assurance Audit, July 1992

2 Efficient

King's College continues to provide a high standard of education for students. The College offers a well-balanced education that addresses the academic, cultural, social, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of students within a Christian environment. The core values that underpin the college's special character are clearly evident in the operating philosophies, the shared responsibility for learning and the respectful relationships evident among all members of the college community.

Students have opportunities to participate in a wide range of curriculum and co-curricular activities. They demonstrate a pride in the college and achieve very well in academic, sporting and cultural endeavours. The house structure promotes a sense

of belonging and attachment for both boarders and day students, and fosters competition, loyalty and school spirit. Students take full advantage of the numerous opportunities provided by the college to develop and fulfil leadership responsibilities.

At the time of the 2004 ERO review, the board of governors had recently appointed a new headmaster. Since that time, the headmaster has worked with senior managers to review aspects of the school, including curriculum management, the junior curriculum (Years 9-10), teaching and learning approaches and student behavioural expectations. These reviews have contributed to the professional and increasingly reflective staff culture that encourages 'best practice and innovation, whilst valuing the importance of traditions'.

Suitable curriculum and standard of tuition

The school provides students with a suitable curriculum. Students are encouraged to pursue 'the best all round education that is possible to attain'. The New Zealand curriculum provides the basis for teaching and learning programmes at Year 9 and 10. At senior level, students are offered a choice of qualifications pathways within the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) and Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). There is provision for students to combine courses from NCEA and CIE.

Students achieve at a high level in CIE and overall achievement in NCEA shows significant improvement in 2006 when compared with success rates from previous years. A high percentage of students obtain University entrance and go on to university. Senior managers continue to work with teachers to improve the analysis and use of achievement information to further promote student performance. Senior managers are reviewing programmes to see how they can better cater for those students who are not going on to university.

Students are ability grouped at Years 9 and 10. Their achievement is closely monitored and the information gained is used to report student progress to parents. Improved assessment procedures have resulted in more appropriate class groupings and have reduced the need to make subsequent adjustments to class placements. Parents are kept well informed about school programmes and current emphases on the development of teaching and learning.

The Education Act 1989 requires private schools to ensure that students develop sentiments of patriotism and loyalty. These sentiments are reflected in the college's core values, including generosity of spirit and tolerance, and are fostered through many college activities, which include a strong emphasis on students giving service to the local community. Staff and students acknowledge New Zealand's bicultural heritage and New Zealand contexts and literature are included in the school curriculum.

The headmaster and senior managers are strategic in their approach to broadening the curriculum and improving strategies for teaching and learning. A significant number of staff are involved in professional development, which is intended to improve teaching

and learning by focusing on strategies to further develop students' thinking skills and deepen their levels of understanding. A range of teaching strategies is valued and a balance of teacher led and interactive approaches is encouraged. The headmaster continues to recognise the importance of ensuring that classroom teaching reflects national and international models of best practice.

Senior managers have initiated a review of the school curriculum. They are considering the appropriateness of the courses and qualifications offered in order to make the curriculum more relevant to the needs of students. They established a new junior curriculum framework in 2006 based on the core competencies of the new national curriculum. A Year 9 integrated studies course was trialled in 2006 and the school plans to extend the junior curriculum programme to Year 10 in 2008. Many teachers are enthusiastic about curriculum innovation and are keen to trial and share different teaching strategies. Teachers' strengths are valued and a culture of sharing of ideas is evident.

Heads of department and their staff have developed annual management plans that link school-wide and department goals. These goals form the basis for evaluation and annual reporting on student progress to the headmaster and the board. Further planning is in place to link departmental goals with the development goals and professional development priorities of individual teachers. This alignment should help to ensure that staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the board's long-term objectives for the College.

Classrooms are settled and productive work environments. Students are focused, on task, and enthusiastic about their school and schoolwork. Positive relationships between teachers and students and among students are evident. Students contribute confidently to discussions, and ask and answer questions to clarify their thinking and understanding. In keeping with school traditions, staff and students value and celebrate achievement in many different ways.

Students benefit from good teaching in all curriculum areas and a range of high quality teaching practices is evident throughout the college. Some teachers are particularly skilled in involving students actively in their learning by promoting student enquiry, sharing learning aims and providing detailed, constructive written and verbal feedback to students on the development of their learning and the quality of their work. Students at risk of not achieving are identified and their parents are included in developing individual plans to support their learning and progress. These strategies provide opportunities for students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

Catering for the needs of Māori and Pacific students is a development focus of the headmaster and senior managers. The achievement of Māori students is carefully tracked to ensure that expected progress is being made and that appropriate learning pathways are accessible. The Pacific Island High Achievement (PIHA) initiative continues to support the achievement of Pacific students. Pacific students report that they feel well supported at the college.

Staff are continuing to develop the use of information computer technologies (ICT) across the curriculum at all year levels. New technologies are introduced to reflect new styles of teaching and learning. Students enjoy working in an increasingly integrated learning environment. They often make use of both school and boarding house computer facilities for the completion of curriculum tasks and personal study.

Senior managers have identified the need to provide ongoing leadership in curriculum development initiatives, particularly in the junior school. These initiatives should be clearly linked to coordinated professional development to promote the sharing of new ideas and to support the development of best teaching and learning practice in all classrooms.

Suitable staffing

The college employs a suitable and well-qualified staff. Teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about their work. Many maintain active links with subject-related professional organisations. They are well supported by the Headmaster, who has an inclusive leadership style and, together with the senior management team, effectively manages the operation of the college and boarding houses.

Strong pastoral care systems provide students with good support. The pastoral team of tutors, counsellor, chaplain, housemasters, matrons and medical centre staff work alongside all teachers to provide ongoing and accessible support for students. The board also employs sufficient staffing to enable small classes and manageable teaching loads, giving teachers time for planning, marking and co-curricular involvement. Staff know students well and these good relationships contribute to the family-like atmosphere that is a characteristic of the college.

The board acts as a good employer and provides staff with favourable employment conditions to support them in carrying out their duties. The performance review programme operates on a two-yearly cycle, with individual staff goal setting each year and a fuller review involving classroom observations and student surveys every two years. Each staff member has a biennial review with the headmaster and an annual review of their goals with their line manager. Teacher personal development goals contribute to decisions that senior managers make about staff professional development.

Suitable premises and equipment

An outstanding feature of the college is the high standard of premises and equipment provided for students. Grounds and facilities are very attractively presented and well maintained, with a successful blending of new facilities and historic buildings that serve to remind students and staff of the school's history and traditions. Buildings are well maintained and systems are in place to monitor student and staff health and safety.

Since the 2004 ERO report trustees have made improvements to the premises and teaching facilities. Renovation of the Lusk classroom block is now complete and the staff common room has been upgraded. A new floor and acoustic improvements in the Greenbank Gymnasium have made this a more useable teaching space. In 2006, all of the playing fields were re-levelled and full-size artificial cricket wickets were put in place. In 2007 the Campbell Sports Complex, which includes an international standard hockey turf and surrounding synthetic athletic track, was completed. This high-class facility will be of great benefit for the future sporting and physical education programmes of the college.

Current projects include a new design technology, art and graphics centre to cater for the growing interest in this curriculum area and the construction of a Chapel Close to enable the school's religious and community service programme to operate to its full capacity.

The college provides a high standard of resourcing for teaching and learning. Resources are well organised and maintained, and are stored around the school in ways that make them easily accessible to staff and students. The ICT infrastructure is well developed and maintained so that it is up-to-date and effective. Smart boards, portable MP3 players and sets of portable laptop computers are currently being added to the school's ICT resources.

3 Statutory Obligations

The college meets its statutory obligations relating to the monitoring of student attendance, discipline procedures, health and safety requirements, and student and staff privacy requirements.

4 Other Matters

Provision for International Students

Compliance with the *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students* and the Provision of English Language Support

King's College 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. This is a requirement of all schools that enrol international students in terms of the Act. Schools are also required to provide English language support for their international students.

The college complies with all aspects of the Code.

The college currently has 17 male international students. All are accommodated in the college boarding houses. Thorough initial academic assessment is used to gauge

students' academic ability. There is an expectation that competency in English literacy is a requirement for enrolment.

The inclusive school and boarding house environments benefit international students, who report a high level of satisfaction with the education and care that they receive. They value the wide range of sporting and extra curricular opportunities offered to them.

The college has comprehensive policies to cover the welfare of international students. Policies are backed up by detailed procedures to ensure that high standards of care and safety are maintained. All international students have ready access to advice and guidance services provided by the boarding houses and college.

The director of admissions maintains accurate administrative records for students and works closely with the associate headmaster, who oversees the pastoral care of all students at the college.

Recommendations

Although the director of admissions regularly reviews implementation of the Code, senior managers agree that this self-review process could be extended and further strengthened.

Provision for Students in the School Hostel

In this review ERO evaluated the extent to which the school hostel provides a safe physical and emotional environment that supports learning for students accommodated in the hostel.

From 1 March 2007 school hostels are required to be licensed by the Ministry of Education and comply with minimum standards specified in the hostel regulations.

The college boarding houses, Selwyn House, St John's House, School House, Averill House, and Parnell accommodate 350 boys. Middlemore Lodge accommodates 50 girls. Boarders comprise 43% of the school roll. Boarding houses offer either full boarding or weekly boarding or a combination of both. They are owned by the King's College Trust and have been licensed by the Ministry of Education. The boarding houses are a valued and integral part of the organisation and character of the college.

Boarding houses are well staffed. Each has a housemaster, a matron, house tutors and pastoral tutors. Housemasters and matrons live in the hostels and are available at all times. Tutors live in close proximity to the hostels. Staff are carefully selected and vetted for their roles in the hostels, have clear job descriptions and are annually appraised.

Boarding house students receive nutritionally sound meals and their physical and health needs are carefully monitored. All house matrons have current first aid

certificates. The school medical centre operates 24 hours a day. The centre is staffed by two registered nurses and is attended regularly by a doctor and physiotherapist. Boarding house premises are kept secure through comprehensive procedures for monitoring exit and entry.

Boarding house staff and senior students have clearly defined responsibilities related to students' emotional welfare. A mentoring programme, through which senior students support their junior colleagues, operates within houses and across the college. All students also have access to counselling and pastoral support personnel within the college. The college chaplain strongly promotes leadership through service and provides spiritual and pastoral support for all students, including those in the hostels.

Junior boarding students interviewed during this review comment that most senior students have taken on a supportive role to help them adjust to boarding school life. Senior managers should, however, further strengthen systems to monitor the consistency of behaviour expectations across the boarding houses to support a culture of positive interaction between junior and senior students. Each boarding house publishes a handbook to inform boarders and their parents about life in the house. While variation in these handbooks is important to reflect the different character of the houses, senior managers agree that there should be greater consistency of information relating to behaviour management procedures and guidelines.

Although most aspects of safety in the boarding houses are well managed, some minor hazards were identified by ERO. These included partly obstructed fire exits and trip hazards. Senior managers should now review the ways in which hazards are identified and managed within each boarding house and should ensure that systems are in place to enable them to be assured that students continue to be safe.

5 Conclusion

King's College is deemed to be efficient, as defined within section 35A of the Education Act 1989. The College complies with all components of its suitability statement and continues to provide high standards of care and education for students.

ERO will review the college again as part of the regular cycle for private schools.

SIGNED

Elizabeth Ellis
Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer

6 December 2007