

18 February 2011

## **To the Parents and Community of St Francis Xavier School**

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on St Francis Xavier School.

St Francis Xavier School is an integrated, Catholic, contributing school in a Dunedin hill suburb. The school is well supported by the community and is an integral part of the local parish. Students attending the school mostly come from families living locally. The roll is currently 99, with a possible maximum of 120. The well-maintained school buildings, compact grounds, and a range of play equipment and areas combine to provide learning environments that children enjoy.

Children choose to stay on at the end of the school day to play and enjoy each other's company. Many parents gather at the school at this time. They take this and other opportunities to have regular, helpful interactions with teachers about their children's wellbeing and learning. Parents and the community are well informed about important events at the school.

Students achieve well at the school. In reading, writing and numeracy, students are mostly achieving at or above the school's high expectations. Parents get useful summaries of the levels of student achievement. Māori and Pacific students are achieving at levels similar to those of their peers.

Students get the support and guidance needed to put the three parts of the school motto into action. The first is evident in the high quality expected in learning. The second is seen in the support teachers give students and are expected to give each other. The third part of the motto is modelled and encouraged so that students can demonstrate the values of respect in all they do. Teachers help students learn how to respect themselves, others and all aspects of the environment.

Students benefit from good to high-quality teaching. Teachers provide learning experiences with good pace and variety. They plan for students to be learning at the level that challenges them. Teachers are enthusiastic and ensure that students are actively at the centre of their learning. Students know what they are learning and what their next learning steps are. Students are encouraged and supported in their learning to assess themselves and their peers, to be confident in challenging themselves, and to be motivated, enthusiastic learners.

Senior students make presentations to the trustees about their learning and share their opinions about how the school might make changes for their benefit. They have a good range of leadership roles.

Students learn and play in a caring, safe, family-friendly learning environment. Students told ERO that they like the family atmosphere at their school. They feel well supported by each other and their teachers. The family-group time is a strong

feature of the school, enabling senior students and younger students to develop positive relationships for the benefit of all.

The school's professional leaders support one another, building their different strengths to lead the staff effectively.

Next steps for school development include extending the way the principal and teachers monitor progress for students as they move in year levels through the school, and refining aspects of the school's strategic direction.