

WAIKATO DIOCESAN
School for Girls

Charter 2025

1. **Mission Statement and Our Vision**

Mission Statement:

To achieve excellence in education within a caring family atmosphere under the influence of the standards and practices of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia.

Our Vision:

Preparing confident, resourceful and resilient young women to make a positive difference in their world.

Our Values:

In achieving this vision, the WDSG community will promote its values of Courage, Empathy, Integrity, Tolerance, Respect and Diligence, underpinned by the Christian faith.

2. **Type of School**

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls is an integrated Anglican boarding and day school for Year 9 to Year 13 girls.

3. **Description of School**

The school was founded in 1928 by Bishop Cherrington to cater particularly for the needs of families in the Diocese of Waikato, and other families, who wanted a strongly based Christian education in the Anglican tradition. Apart from the boarding establishment, in 1983 the School became an Integrated School under the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975. The school's special character requires:

- a) that students undergo education in an atmosphere founded upon and emphasising established Anglican Christian standards, values and rules of conduct in all activities and the observance of practices, worship and doctrine of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia.
- b) that the boarding establishment is an essential and integral part of the school. The school is to be conducted so that all tuition, religious, recreational and cultural activities are organised so that, as far as is practicable, all students are offered the advantages offered to boarding students.
- c) the development of the whole person, culturally, spiritually, physically and generally in the broadest sense, with special emphasis on music, the arts, outdoor education, including recreation and the use of leisure time and the development of a sense of corporate responsibility in conformity with Anglican Christian values.
- d) that the historical significance of people who established the school's special character are recognised in the present day running of the school.
- e) that preference of enrolment is given to those students whose parents have a particular sympathy with the Anglican special character of the school or whose parents have a particular connection with the school.

The Proprietor of the school is the Waikato Board of Diocesan Schools. This Board delegates to the Proprietor's Board the responsibility for preserving and safeguarding the school's special character.

The school started when in 1928 the Diocese leased Sonning School which had been founded in 1909. Religious teaching was part of school life, as was church attendance and the importance of all-round development was stressed. At its peak, the Sonning roll reached 150 pupils, including 50 boarders.

Shortly after, the Board purchased the property of Mr W. Goodfellow further down the river as the site for their church school for girls. In 1930 the school transferred to this site. The homestead on the new site provided dining room and library; its barn served as chapel, hall, gym and recreation centre. Despite shortage of funds, a dormitory (Cherrington House) and five open-air classrooms were built. Inspired by the courage of the Antarctic explorers three new school houses were formed - Ross, Scott and Shackleton; later a fourth, Wilson, was added. These replaced the earlier Whitehorn and Drennan houses for competitions.

The school motto, chosen by Bishop Cherrington, is "Veritate" – by truthfulness and candour; "Simplicitate" – by straightforwardness and plain dealing; and "Fidelitate" – by faithfulness, constancy and loyalty.

The school's All Saints Chapel was finished in 1956. It was dedicated by the Archbishop of New Zealand, the Most Reverend RH Owen, 'to inspire girls to follow the path of duty with courage and joy in their hearts'.

The foundation stone of the Chapel bears the name of "Cecil Arthur Cherrington, BA, BD, first Bishop of Waikato, founder and benefactor of this school." He often said, if he had his way, the Chapel would have been built first with the pupils in tents living around it. The school strives to maintain this vision of the centrality of the Chapel to school life.

The current maximum roll of the school is 650 domestic students. In addition, there are 13 international students. At the start of 2025, there are 547 day girls and 149 boarders.

The school is located in a combination of historic and modern buildings in River Road, Hamilton, on attractive grounds notable for the many established trees, shrubs and gardens.

4. The School Community

The school community comprises families of diverse backgrounds living in both urban and rural areas of the Diocese of Waikato and further afield, all staff, past students and parents and members of the Boards.

Waikato Diocesan School for Girls is committed to ensuring every student, regardless of background, ethnicity or special education needs, is engaged in all school activities and is supported to achieve against the key competencies and learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum.

5. Consultation

The Board consults with its Māori community in accordance with the requirements of the Treaty of Waitangi.

To this end a whānau hui is held once a term, to which all members of the Māori community are invited.

The Board also consults with other members of its community.

6. School's Planning Year

The planning year for the Board will be from 1 January to 31 December – see attached Boards' work plan. Important dates in the School's Planning Year are:

- Adopt Budget: November
- Review Annual Operating Plan: November
- Review Strategic Plan: Terms 1-3.

7. Updated Charter

The Board will submit a copy of its updated Charter to the Ministry of Education by 31 March each year.

8. Annual Report

The Board will submit its Annual Report to the Ministry of Education by 31 May each year.

9. Strategic Planning Generally

- a) The School Board will develop, and annually review, a strategic plan which sets out goals to raise levels of student achievement in all core areas of the curriculum. The goals will reflect the ongoing learning needs of the students and the means to address those needs.
- b) Each year targets will be set, based on identified needs of students. These targets will be evaluated and help inform future goals and targets. The Board will report annually to the Ministry of Education on how it has met targets.
- c) The school's management will compile for Board approval an annual operation plan which details activities the school will undertake in order to effectively meet its targets.

10. Strategic Plan

See attached document.

11. Annual Operating Plan

See attached document.

12. Annual Targets for Student Achievement

See attached document.

13. Code of Conduct for Trustees

The School Board confirms it is charged with the responsibility of working as a partner of the Proprietor's Board in an atmosphere of co-operation, harmony and mutual trust, to uphold and maintain Bishop Cherrington's vision and to provide the best learning opportunities possible for young women.

The School Board agrees to adhere to the following code of conduct. Board members will:

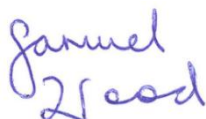
- ensure that the needs of the students and their learning are given full consideration when planning, resourcing and implementing the school's curriculum.
- ensure that all students are provided with an education which respects their individuality and which challenges them to reach the highest standards of personal achievement.
- serve their school and their community to the best of their ability and be honest, reliable, trustworthy, loyal and fair.
- respect the integrity of staff, the principal, parents and students.
- ensure strict confidentiality of papers and information relating to the Board's position as employer.
- accept that the principal is the professional leader of the school who is responsible to the Board.

The School Board confirms the guidelines, definition of role and procedures and practices set out in the School Governance Charter.

Charter Undertaking

In accordance with Section 139 of the Education and Training Act 2020, the Waikato Diocesan School for Girls' School Board, in preparing the School's strategic plan, undertakes to consult the School's community, staff, and any other appropriate stakeholders, and comply with any other regulations relating to the development of strategic plans, and ensure that the draft strategic plan reflects the School's special character.

The School Board of Waikato Diocesan School for Girls accepts this Charter and its undertaking to the Minister of Education and submits it for approval.



Presiding Member, School Board

20 February 2025

Date