

## EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT: GARIN COLLEGE

10 December 2008

### To the Parents and Community of Garin College

These are the findings of the Education Review Office's latest report on **Garin College**.

Garin College, an integrated Catholic secondary school, opened in 2002. Its attractive, purpose-built buildings were designed for the delivery of a modern curriculum. The student population is drawn from a wide geographical area from the top of the South Island and overseas. While the majority live locally, 45 students are accommodated in one of the two college hostels and others board privately. The Board of Trustees, principal and staff place high priority on promoting holistic achievement that is inclusive of students' spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and cultural development.

The 2002 ERO review evaluated the management and delivery of teaching and learning programmes for years 9 and 10 students, and the quality of pastoral care systems school wide. In 2005, ERO reported on the quality of curriculum management and delivery with an emphasis on provision for senior students. At that time, there was a need to conduct in-depth analysis of achievement data and to improve the college's quality assurance and performance management systems.

This 2008 review evaluates the quality of teaching and student engagement in learning. The report also includes findings about: student achievement overall; progress since 2005 in improving the achievement of Māori students; provisions for international students and those in the college hostels; preparations for teaching *The New Zealand Curriculum* in 2010; and thinking about the college's longer-term future. Compliance with legislative requirements, including those for health and safety, was also investigated.

The board's 2008 to 2010 strategic plan places a priority on student achievement. This complements the continued holistic vision introduced when the college was established. The importance of changing teaching practice to raise student achievement is recognised. In accord with the strategic approach focused on improving outcomes for students, staff have considered how the key competencies, principles and values of *The New Zealand Curriculum* align with the college's special Catholic character.

Teachers effectively challenge, motivate and engage students in learning. They convey high, but realistic expectations. Differentiated programmes are increasingly provided to meet varying identified needs and abilities. Across the college there is a very settled and purposeful working tone. Students report that they are well supported and value the family atmosphere and inclusive nature of the college.

Contribution to the wider life of the school and the importance of key values such as self management, social responsibility and respect for others are fostered. Many students accept leadership roles in sporting, cultural, academic and service activities as well as house competitions and assemblies. Student well-being is nurtured through a sound pastoral care network. Seniors are also involved in mentoring and peer mediation.

Opportunities for success and achievement are available through participation in curriculum related competitions as well as sporting and cultural activities. Senior students continue to achieve well in national qualifications. While some assessment information is available for students in years 9 and 10, there is still no school-wide analysis of progress that shows trends and patterns of achievement for these students, across and within year levels. In addition, there has been no formal consultation with the college's Māori community to develop achievement targets for Māori students.

Quality assurance and performance management systems still require improvement. There is also a need to define lines of accountability within the senior leadership team and develop an integrated system for

monitoring and reviewing all college operations. Creating regular opportunities for school-wide discussion to clarify, define and share best practice should help capitalise on professional development and support ongoing school improvement.

### ***Future Action***

ERO is confident that the board of trustees can manage the school in the interests of the students and the Crown and bring about the improvements outlined in this report.

ERO is likely to review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

### ***Review Coverage***

ERO reviews do not cover every aspect of school performance and each ERO report may cover different issues. The aim is to provide information on aspects that are central to student achievement and useful to this school.

If you would like a copy of the full report, please contact the school or see the ERO website, <http://www.ero.govt.nz>.

*Signed*

Lennane Kent  
Area Manager  
**for Chief Review Officer**