

# SPECIAL CHARACTER

## SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING

### PROPRIETOR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE BOARD – SUMMARY OF GUIDELINES

Issued by the Proprietor to support Board governance and assurance

#### Purpose

These expectations are provided by the Proprietor to guide the Board in **giving effect to the school's special character** through governance, strategy, and oversight.

They clarify what the Proprietor requires of the Board and how the Board demonstrates assurance that special character is being protected and strengthened.

#### The Board's role

The Board governs the school on behalf of the Proprietor and the Crown. In doing so, the Board is expected to:

- actively **protect, uphold, and promote** the school's special character
- treat special character as a **foundational lens** for all significant decisions
- work in **partnership with the Proprietor**, engaging early where risks or tensions arise

Special character is not limited to religious education or philosophy classes. It applies to **all aspects of school life**.

#### What "giving effect to special character" means in practice

The Proprietor expects the Board to ensure that special character is evident in:

- **Strategic direction**  
Vision, values, and priorities clearly reflect the school's founding purpose and ethos.
- **Governance decisions**  
Property, staffing, enrolment, finance, policy, and complaints decisions explicitly consider special character impact.
- **Leadership and staffing**  
The principal and leadership team are appointed, supported, and evaluated for their capacity to lead special character.
- **School culture and curriculum**  
Relationships, wellbeing systems, learning programmes, and community engagement align with the school's character.

## **Core practices the Board uses as a governance lens**

The Board uses agreed **core practices** to guide planning, monitoring, and review. These may include:

- spiritual, worship, or formative life
- values-based culture and relationships
- curriculum and pedagogy shaped by special character
- service, justice, mission, and community engagement
- partnership with whānau, parish, trust, or faith community

The Board does not manage these day to day. It seeks **assurance** that they are being lived out.

## **Minimum governance expectations**

The Proprietor expects the Board to:

- include special character explicitly in strategic and annual planning
- receive regular principal reports on special character outcomes
- ensure policies are reviewed through a special character lens
- include special character criteria in principal appointment and appraisal
- support Proprietor Appointees and Board formation in special character

## **Assurance and reporting to the Proprietor**

To demonstrate effective stewardship, the Board will:

- provide **annual reporting** on special character aligned to these expectations
- undertake **regular self-review** of its special character governance
- respond constructively to Proprietor review findings and recommendations

## **When special character may be at risk**

If special character may be compromised, the Board is expected to:

- identify risks early
- engage promptly with the Proprietor
- take agreed actions to protect and restore special character

The Proprietor retains the right to act where necessary to safeguard the school's special character.

***This summary should be read alongside the full Special Character Guidelines and the Integration Agreement.***