

Craig Brownie  
Chairperson  
Board of Trustees  
St. Mary's College  
11 New Street  
Ponsonby  
AUCKLAND 1011

Michelle Holly  
451 Old North Road  
Kumeu 0892  
RD2

13<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Dear Craig

**Re: Principal Position, St. Mary's College**

Further to your advertisement in the Education Gazette, I wish to apply for the position of Principal of St. Mary's College. I have read the appointment criteria, the school's ERO reports and the website and I have a strong sense of an inclusive learning community that nurtures the faith of its students and promotes success for all. I am confident that I have the skills and passion to lead your school in the next phase of its development. As I am a practising Catholic, I would relish the opportunity to become part of your community and to continue to nurture your young women, who, as disciples of Jesus, will grow in their ability to live a life that exemplifies His teachings, and will walk in the footsteps of Catherine McAuley as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Women of Compassion. In addition to a commitment and passion for Catholic education, I have a proven track record in leadership that builds collaborative teams; I work alongside both staff and students to ensure they are each able to reach their full educational, spiritual, physical and social potential; and I have strengths in building strong, positive and caring relationships with all of my stakeholders, nurturing an ethos based on the Mercy values that are the cornerstone of your school.

I bring a wealth of experience in working with young people across the primary, intermediate and secondary sectors, in both Catholic and state schools in the UK and New Zealand. I am currently employed as Principal of St Mary's School in Northcote. In early 2015, the school was given a 1-2 year, longitudinal review, by the Education Review Office. I took up appointment at the end of 2015 with a mandate to urgently improve many areas of operations. By building a trusting and transparent relationship with the board of trustees, ERO and a limited statutory manager, a substantive review was undertaken and a significant change process put in place. Whilst this was a challenging time for all involved, ERO placed the school back on a normal review schedule within 18 months and the limited statutory manager moved out in just over a year. As a principal, I learned a lot about my own leadership; about leading people through change; and about the importance of relationships if change is to be effective. The school is now going from strength to strength and I am proud of the journey we have travelled. The school culture has been completely transformed and it is now a positive, rewarding and exciting place in which to work.

The skills I have developed as a successful principal of a Catholic school and the time spent in my previous position as Assistant Principal at Sancta Maria College in Botany, are very transferrable to the context of your school and have equipped me to be able to lead St Mary's College forward as its next Principal. The Northcote community I currently serve, has high expectations of academic achievement for its students, whilst also focusing on developing and nurturing its young people to be faith-filled, responsible, respectful, compassionate and socially aware members of their community. I believe that your community is very similar and I would therefore feel very comfortable leading in your environment. If appointed to the position, I would work to ensure that the learning needs of every student are met; that the dispositions of engaged and successful learners are grown in each young woman; that those with learning differences are supported to be personally successful; and that each young woman's talents and passions are identified and developed, through providing them with opportunities for enrichment. I am particularly excited by the musical heritage of the College and would look to nurture this and the wider co-curricular programme, something I have successfully done in my current school.

As an educational leader, my passion lies in building collaborative, high-performing teams, where teacher strengths are recognised and developed, and leadership is shared, ensuring that all learners are able to achieve and make progress. I am committed to my own professional growth and that of others. I work to establish caring, supportive professional learning communities, where teachers and students learn with and from each other. A focus on continuous improvement in my own school, has been developed through the building of high relational trust; growing collaborative teacher inquiry; and developing the ability to engage in robust professional dialogue about the learning of our students and its relationship with our teaching practice. I believe in the adage 'we, not me' as a basic philosophy for building great schools.

As a leader, I am also interested in developing modern learning practices and this has been a focus in my current principalship. For me, modern learning practice is not about the spaces in which our young people learn, although these do determine the way we organise learning. Modern learning practice is about students being at the centre of, and directly involved, in the decisions that are made about their learning. As teachers, we have to be adaptive practitioners, ready, willing and able to innovate and to look divergently at our practice. Our students need to be engaged and agentic, knowing where they are at in their learning, understanding where they are going, and able to articulate what they need to do to get there.

I believe that the building of positive relationships is central to the success of all learners and that effective partnerships contribute greatly to this success. As Principal, I ensure I am visible around the school and model Christ's values at all times. I regularly visit classrooms and work alongside leaders and teachers to nurture the high trust relationships that underpin the development of effective teaching and learning partnerships. I also work to build authentic and respectful relationships with parents and Whānau and I have had very good feedback from parents about the way I work with them to support students to be successful. I have also cultivated strong relationships with our Kahui Ako of Catholic schools. This building of shared understandings about effective teaching and learning, means that strong educational pathways are built for our young people, and that transitions are seamless.

As well as curriculum strengths, I also bring experience and capability in carrying out the management tasks necessary to the effective running of a school. All resourcing decisions are made strategically, with student achievement and well-being at the centre. During the time in my current position, I have transformed our finances; led significant property developments that have completely changed the school environment; reviewed all policies and procedures as we re-systemised the school; and very importantly, ensured that all human resource systems were compliant.

Please find enclosed my current curriculum vitae, further detailing the knowledge, skills and experience I hope to bring to your learning community, along with my completed S464 and self-assessment, application form and the names of my referees. I very much look forward to discussing my application with you.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Holly



*Helen Michelle Holly*  
*Curriculum Vitae*

451 Old North Road, Kumeu.  
0892.  
Mob: 027 445 7050  
E: mholly9c@gmail.com

*I am an experienced teacher and educational leader who is passionate about growing leadership and developing teacher capability, so that all students can excel. I am particularly interested in modern learning practices and in teacher collaboration. I am currently Principal of St Mary's School, Northcote.*

#### KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE RELEVANT TO THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL OF ST MARY'S COLLEGE

##### *Special Catholic Character*

- I am a practising Catholic
- I have worked in a number of Catholic schools in New Zealand and the UK and whilst they have all been coeducational, I am confident that I have the skills and knowledge to be able to lead in a girls' school.
- I have confidently and competently rebuilt my school's focus on its special Catholic character, through improvements in R.E. teaching and the enhancement of the prayer and spiritual life of the community. Feedback from parents and the parish community is that this is now a strength of the school.
- My school has Dominican founders but also has a Mercy heritage and so, the values of a Mercy school are at the heart of my school's charism. I work always to model these values and to grow them in our students and the wider community.
- I have led a number of projects to ensure our Catholic character is front and centre in our faith community. We are an unapologetically Catholic school.

##### *Leadership*

- I have been an educational leader since 2003, a senior leader since 2010 and a principal since 2015. I am passionate about my job. Having led successfully in three New Zealand schools, and in particular, as the principal of a 'turn-around' school, I have a proven track record as a very successful senior leader.
- Feedback from stakeholders has been that my passion for the role of Principal is evident. In my 2018 appraisal, one comment received from a school leader was:  
*Michelle has done an incredible job of bringing the whole staff together, on a friendly and professional level. Trust has really grown across the staff. It feels seamless across the year groups. The children are at the heart.*  
A parent also commented:  
*I feel very proud and privileged to have such a visionary lead the school. Not only having the vision but also delivering on it.*
- I have strengths in pedagogical leadership and modern learning practices. I drove and implemented a very successful digital immersion project in my school, including 'Bring Your Own Device'. We opened a ten classroom (equivalent) flexible learning space in late 2016 and this has required the adoption of effective, evidence-driven modern learning practices across the school, both in the new building and in the remaining single-cell classrooms. I am committed to ensuring the most effective student-centred learning practices are used, ensuring our students have agency and are engaged in their learning.
- On taking up my appointment in my current school, there were significant personnel issues and a challenging staff culture. The necessary change journey has been difficult at times, but I have always led by treating people with dignity, assuming positive intent and having open and honest conversations when necessary. The culture in the staff has completely transformed and I believe this is because high relational trust has been developed and because I also take the time to get to know all staff members on a personal basis. My appraiser stated in my 2018 appraisal:  
*Michelle's inclusive leadership approach is affirmed in all stakeholders interviewed.*
- I work always to be visible and accessible, to staff students and the community. My office door is literally open whenever possible and staff and students often 'pop in' for a chat.
- I love learning and believe that professional learning is at the heart of improved student outcomes. When interviewing prospective staff members, I emphasise the importance of a commitment to professional growth. My

within-school Kahui Ako leaders report that our school is now known for its quality professional development and for our commitment to innovation.

- I have very high expectations of academic excellence. I also expect every student to leave school with a strong love of learning, knowing themselves really well as learners. Leaders and teachers must also ensure that they support young people to believe in themselves and to know that they can excel. This is done through developing resilience, encouraging a growth mindset, and ensuring that teachers do not put a ceiling on learners' capabilities.
- I am passionate about growing leadership. I have a distributed leadership team in my current school, where young teachers, as well as those who are more experienced, are given opportunities to lead in meaningful ways. My senior leaders support emerging leaders through regular coaching sessions.
- As my school has moved out of crisis, we have started to attract talented and passionate teachers. I believe that this is because we are becoming known as a school that supports the professional development of its teachers and grows leadership.
- I support the place and the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and Tikanga Māori. Over my time in my current school, this has been a strong area of focus. I have created a leadership position so that we can increase teacher knowledge and capability in being more culturally and relationally responsive; we have reviewed education outside of the classroom to incorporate learning about our bicultural heritage for all students; we are beginning the implementation of a Te reo and Tikanga Māori programme for all learners. One of my staff commented in my appraisal:

*Michelle is very culturally responsive – all adults and students. This I see as a huge strength.*

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#### *Management*

- I have strengths in the financial and resource management of a school. I have transformed my current school's finances, whilst also ensuring that the school is very well resourced.
  - I have managed IT infrastructure at a previous school, and have strengths in developing and implementing forward-looking strategic plans for digital technologies.
  - I have a deep understanding of staffing and have successfully managed to keep staffing within MOE entitlement for the last three years, in response to the school being previously significantly over-staffed.
  - I have been part of a large property development in my current and in a previous school. The physical environment of my current school has been transformed over the last three years because I have been determined to ensure the students and staff have a safe, attractive, well-maintained school in which to learn and work.
  - I have had to re-systemise my current school to set-up the conditions that enable all students to achieve. I am data literate and have collected, collated and analysed whole-school data in all of my leadership positions. I ensure that learning programmes meet the needs of individual students through careful, ongoing monitoring of student achievement data.
  - I have worked with my board of trustees to re-vision my school, in response to the findings of the 2015 ERO report, and then again last year, because of the changing needs of my school. This has included consultation with staff, students and the parent community. From the strategic plan, I create an annual improvement plan and report against this on a monthly basis to my board. I very much enjoy the strategic aspect of leadership.
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#### *Personal Qualities*

- I am an effective communicator and feedback has been that I am a strong public speaker.
- Students are at the centre of all decisions I make.
- I work hard to develop positive and respectful relationships and always try to work towards win-win solutions in challenging situations.
- My door is always open for all. If needed, I will do what it takes to meet with concerned parents, staff or students on short time-frames.
- Turning around a school in a challenging situation has meant that I have developed resilience in a very challenging role. I love my job and find that it energises me.
- I believe strongly in the power of positivity, fun and laughter.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### ***St Mary's School, Northcote, Auckland, New Zealand***

Principal

**December 2015 to date**

At the beginning of 2015, St Mary's School had been given a 1-2 year, longitudinal review from the Education Review Office. I was appointed to review and put in place, a process focused on implementing significant improvement of many aspects of school operations. On taking up my appointment in December 2015, it became clear that the situation was more serious than first believed and over 18 months, along with the board, I carried out a substantive review of all areas of the school. We identified priorities, re-visioned the school and returned us very quickly to a normal review cycle. Over the last two years, we have continued to put in place the conditions that have led to a complete change of school culture. The school is now focused on high expectations of achievement and progress for every student; leading edge pedagogy to enable this to happen; and a culture of learning for all ākonga, both adults and children. We are now in very good shape and benefit from a very supportive community and an enthusiastic and committed staff and board of trustees. The collection of student voice over my time as principal shows that our learners are now more engaged, feel safer and have greater pride in their school.

### ***Sancta Maria College, Auckland, New Zealand***

Assistant Principal, Middle School Director,  
Y7-10,

**July 2013 to December 2015**

I was responsible for day-to-day running of the Middle School (Years 7 – 10) and for developing future-focused curriculum and pedagogy. I had school-wide responsibility for professional development, appraisal, learning support and enrichment and student leadership. I oversaw enrolment and was SLT liaison for the PTFA. I led our e-learning, teaching as inquiry and modern learning practice contract. From time to time, I also deputised for the principal when she was away from school.

### ***Glenfield Intermediate School, Auckland, New Zealand***

Associate Principal, Director of Curriculum and  
Student Well-being,

**July 2010 to July 2013**

In addition to curriculum and student wellbeing, I was also responsible for ICT and e-learning, was SENCO for most of my tenure and was Head of Literacy, Languages and ESOL. Working alongside the principal, I also had responsibility for professional development. I regularly deputised for the principal, as she had responsibility for international marketing and often travelled overseas.

### ***Glenfield Intermediate School, Auckland, New Zealand***

Curriculum Coordinator,

**January 2010 to July 2010**

I was responsible for school-wide curriculum and pedagogy, with my main focus initially being on developing school-wide consistency and coherence in teaching and learning. Over time (and into my time as Associate Principal), this included building high-performing teams that worked in a high-trust collaborative model, where teachers supported each other to grow professionally.

### ***Glenfield Intermediate School, Auckland, New Zealand***

Senior Teacher,

**July 2007 to December 2009**

I was responsible for leading a team of Year 7 & 8 teachers; held school-wide responsibility for literacy, ESOL, languages and special programmes; was teacher in charge of relievers; taught mainstream, extension and learning support classes; and was often given responsibility for more students who needed greater support in relation to their behaviour and engagement with school.

### ***Glenfield Intermediate School, Auckland, New Zealand***

Scale A Teacher,

**July 2006 to July 2007**

Year 7 & 8 class teacher, ESOL teacher

### ***Eston Park Secondary School, Middlesbrough, UK***

Head of Department of Modern Languages,

**April 2004 to February 2005**

Languages were taught as a core subject and so I led a department of six teachers. I also had some whole-school responsibility to review and promote new approaches to curriculum and pedagogy at Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) and was a co-opted member of the Senior Management Committee, which was charged with strategic planning across the school. This comprised the senior leadership team and some key middle leaders.

***Eston Park Secondary School, Middlesbrough, UK***

Second in Department of Modern Languages,  
Head of French,  
**January 2003 to April 2004**

***High Tunstall Secondary School, Hartlepool, UK***

Teacher of Modern Languages,  
**September 1997 to September 1998 and  
September 1999 to April 2000**

***St David's RC Secondary School, Middlesbrough, UK***

Teacher of Modern Languages,  
**September 1996 to September 1997**

***Cardinal Wiseman RC Secondary School, Coventry, UK***

Teacher of Modern Languages,  
**September 1992 to January 1995**

## **EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

I am intending to complete my Masters of Educational Leadership, having completed the four pre-requisite postgraduate papers last year.

***The University of Warwick, United Kingdom***

Postgraduate Certificate of Education

Completed July 1992

***The University of Aston-in-Birmingham, United Kingdom***

Bsc (Hons) 2.1 Modern Languages

Completed July 1991

## **PERSONAL INTERESTS**

- I am married to Martin and we have two grown up children, aged 20 and 23.
- I have two Labradors and enjoy long walks in the forest with them. I am currently training my newest dog so we attend weekly obedience classes. I hope to train him as a therapy dog.
- I am an avid reader.
- I speak French, Spanish and Italian and enjoy traveling and finding out about cultures and languages other than my own. I maintain a high level of spoken and written French by keeping contact with friends in France and have also developed a network of French friends in Auckland.
- I live on a lifestyle block and have a range of animals to care for - I love being outside 'on the land'.

## **REFEREES**

**David France, Board Chair, St Mary's School, Northcote**

Ph: 021 769 800

E: [france@ktc.co.nz](mailto:france@ktc.co.nz)

**Lisa Smith, Outgoing Board Chair, St Mary's School, Northcote**

(I have included Lisa, as she has just stepped down as Board Chair and has worked with me throughout the last three years)

Ph: 021 261 6795

E: [lisaandduncan@hotmail.com](mailto:lisaandduncan@hotmail.com)

**Emma Kingston, Colleague (ex-deputy principal at St Mary's)**

Ph: 021 616 715

E: [emmaloisekingston@gmail.com](mailto:emmaloisekingston@gmail.com)

**Maggie Ogram, Appraiser, Osprey Consulting Ltd.**

Ph: 021 168 6455

E: [maggie@ospreyconsulting.co.nz](mailto:maggie@ospreyconsulting.co.nz)

# APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT

**TO: CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF TRUSTEES (Envelopes should be endorsed  
"Confidential Application")**

**POSITION APPLIED FOR:**

## PERSONAL DETAILS:

Name: Helen Michelle Holly	Home Phone: N/A
Address: 451 Old North Road, Kumeu, Auckland 0892. RD2	Work Phone: N/A
	Mobile Phone: 027 445 7050
	Fax: N/A
Citizenship: British	Email: mholly9c@gmail.com
Registration No: 259295	Practising Cert. No: N/A
	Expiry Date: 29 July 2020

## PRESENT EMPLOYMENT:

Name of Present Employer: St Mary's School, Northcote	Work Phone: 027 445 7050
Address: 45 Gladstone Road, Northcote 0627.	
Position Held: Principal	Date Commenced: December 2015

## REFEREES:

Name: David France	Home Phone: N/A
Address: 168 Hinemoa Street, Northcote Point, Auckland.	Work Phone: N/A
	Mobile Phone: 021 769 800
	Fax: N/A
Relationship to Applicant: Board Chair	Email: France@kfc.co.nz
Name: Lisa Smith	Home Phone: N/A
Address: 29 Church Street, Northcote, Auckland.	Work Phone: N/A
	Mobile Phone: 021 261 6795
	Fax: N/A
Relationship to Applicant: ex Board Chair	Email: lisaandduncan@hotmail.com
Name: Emma Kingston	Home Phone: N/A
Address: 23 Monarch Avenue, Hillcrest, Auckland.	Work Phone: N/A
	Mobile Phone: 021 616 715
	Fax: N/A
Relationship to Applicant: Colleague (ex Deputy Principal at St Mary's, Northcote)	Email: emmalouisekingston@gmail.com

**TERTIARY EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS:**

Institution Attended	Year	Qualifications Attained	Date Awarded
AUT	2018	Completed fourth paper towards Masters in Educational Leadership	
UNITEC	2013 - 2015	Completed three papers towards Masters in Educational Leadership	
The University of Warwick, UK	1991 - 1992	Postgraduate Certificate in Education	July 1992
The University of Aston-in-Birmingham, UK	1987 - 1991	BSc(Hons) 2:1 in Modern Languages	July 1991

**TEACHING SERVICE (list all schools and positions) :**

Position	Class Level	Salary Scale	School	Date From	Date To
Principal	Y1- 6	U5, Step 5	St Mary's School, Northcote	Dec 2015	Date
Assistant Principal	Y7-13	Q3+ 5PMU + 1SMA	Sancta Maria College	July 2013	Dec 2015
Associate Principal	Y7- 8	Q3+ 5PMU + 1FTU	Glenfield Intermediate	July 2010	July 2013
Curriculum Coordinator	Y7 - 8	Q3+ 4PMU	Glenfield Intermediate	February 2010	July 2010
Leader of Learning/ Team Leader	Y7 - 8	Q3+ 2PMU + 1 FTU	Glenfield Intermediate	July 2007	February 2010
Teacher	Y7 - 8	Q3+ Scale A	Genfield Intermediate	July 2006	July 2007
Head of Modern Languages Department	Y7-11	UK Pay Scale - equivalent of 3PMUs	Eston Park School, UK	April 2004	February 2005
Second in Modern Languages Department	Y7 - 11	UK Pay Scale - equivalent of 2PMUs	Eston Park School, UK	January 2003	April 2004

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Please give details below:

Auckland Primary Principals Association

North Shore Principal Association

New Zealand Principal Foundation

Auckland Catholic Primary Principal Association

New Zealand Catholic Primary Principal Association

☐ ☐
**OTHER INFORMATION**

Have you had any injury or medical condition which the tasks of this job may aggravate or contribute to? If yes, please give details below:

Yes ☐ No ☒

Do you have any matters relating to yourself currently or previously before the Teachers Council? Do you have a current New Zealand drivers licence?

Yes ☐ No ☒

I give permission for St Mary's College Board of Trustees or Ahead Associates Limited on its behalf to check my record with the NZ Police.

**PRIVACY ACT 1993 (To be signed by the Applicant)**

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This Application is submitted with the understanding that any further information given is for the use of the employer and their authorised representatives who may at any time have access to this information.

Furthermore members of the Board of Trustees (or their agents) may make enquiries of my present or past employers or colleagues or any other person who may assist in establishing my suitability for the position of Principal at this school. My express consent will be sought before any person I have not specifically nominated is contacted

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: Michelle Holly DATE: 13/05/2019

#### DECLARATION:

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF AN OFFENCE AGAINST THE LAW? (apart from minor traffic offences) Received police diversion for an offence, have charges pending or know of any reason why you should not be employed to work in a school environment?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If YES, please provide date and details of offence(s) on a separate sheet. Please note that you may be asked to provide a copy of the relevant court records available from the registrar of the court concerned.

I certify that I am registered (or provisionally registered) as a New Zealand teacher. I solemnly and sincerely declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information given in this application and in my C.V. is correct.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: Michelle Holly DATE: 13/05/2019

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# S464 FORM

Education Act 1989, Section 464  
(Previously – Private Schools Conditional Integration act 1975, Section 65)

## APPLICATION FOR A POSITION RELATED TO SPECIAL CHARACTER IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

### A. POSITION BEING APPLIED FOR

Position: Principal
School: St Mary's College
Address: 11 New Street, Ponsonby, Auckland

### B. PERSONAL

First Names: Helen Michelle
Surname: Holly
Address: 451 Old North Road, Kumeu, Auckland. 0892. RD2
Religion: Catholic
Telephone Number Day: Evening: 027 445 7050
e-mail: mholly9c@gmail.com

### C. PARISH

1.0 Are you a member of a Catholic parish community? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, name and address of parish: St Mary's Parish, Northcote

2.0 Are you involved in parish ministry? (eg. Youth Ministry, Ministry of Word, Eucharist, Hospitality, Service, Liturgy) Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, name of Ministry or Service: Minister of the Eucharist

### D QUALIFICATIONS OR COURSES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND/OR THEOLOGY (See Notes)

Qualification/Course Attended (Include your Certification for Teachers in Catholic Schools if applicable)	Institution and Year
RE 502 Spirituality for Teachers	TCI, I will complete this in July 2019
Living Life to the Full	I am registered for this course in August 2019

Duplicate and attach relevant CV material or certificates etc as appropriate.

3.0 If you are a beginning teacher, were you associated with a Catholic school as part of your practice teaching professional training? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, name and address of school(s):

#### E. PREVIOUS TEACHING EXPERIENCE RELATED TO THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Position	School	Year Level	From	To
Principal	St Mary's School, Northcote	1 - 6	December 2015	Date
Assistant Principal	Sancta Maria College	7 - 13	July 2013	December 2015
Teacher of Modern Languages	St David's RC Primary School	7 - 11	September 1996	September 1997
Teacher of Modern Languages	Cardinal Wiseman RC School	7 - 13	September 1992	January 1995

#### F. OTHER QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE RELEVANT TO THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL (See Notes)

I was schooled in the Catholic System in the U.K.

**G. CATHOLIC CHARACTER REFEREES** Please provide three referees. At least one referee must be a priest, ethnic chaplain or lay pastoral leader who is familiar with your religious practice. (See note on referees.)

<b>1</b>	Name	Fr Lio Rotor	Phone: Day	N/A
	Address	St Mary's Parish 117 Onewa Road Northcote	Night	N/A
			Cell	021 258 3804
	Email	liorotor@hotmail.com		
<b>2</b>	Name	Lisa Smith	Phone: Day	N/A
	Address	29 Church Street Northcote Auckland	Night	N/A
			Cell	021 261 6795
	Email	lisaandduncan@hotmail.com		
<b>3</b>	Name	Maggie Ogram	Phone: Day	N/A
	Address	51 Pine Harbour Parade Beachlands, Auckland 2018.	Night	N/A
			Cell	021 168 6455
	Email	maggie@ospreyconsulting.co.nz		

I acknowledge and accept that the information I have supplied will be used by the Proprietor (Board of Trustees in secondary schools) in terms of Education Act 1989, Section 464 to assess my **acceptability** for the position as defined in the Act, and also by the Board of Trustees to determine my **suitability** for the position as defined in the Act. I have read the information in this document that explains acceptability.

Signed: Michelle Holly

Date: 13/05/2019

# SELF ASSESSMENT

*Please complete the following self-assessment. Please limit your responses to the space provided. Bullet points are acceptable.*

## Personal Statement

*Summarise your reason for being a strong candidate for the position of Principal of St Mary's College School.*

- I am a practising Catholic and have over 25 years experience as a teacher, I have taught in a range of both Catholic and state schools, at primary, intermediate and college level, giving me a deep understanding of the educational journey of a young Catholic person.
- I have been a senior leader for almost 10 years in a range of schools, with three years as Principal of St Mary's School in Northcote. I am a strong educational leader, with particular interests in growing all staff to be the best they can for their students; a commitment to modern learning practice that ensures that learners are well-prepared for the world after school; and a passion for growing effective teams that work collaboratively and share responsibility for their learners, because together, we can do far more than we can do alone. I lead at all times, with moral purpose, and with the desire to treat everyone with respect and dignity, no matter what the situation.
- I have a proven track record of being an effective manager. My current school was on a longitudinal review when I took over. I needed to ensure the school could become more financially stable; the property needed significant improvement; staffing needed to be brought back in line after years of significant overstaffing; HR practices needed to be systemised; and the culture of the school needed to be significantly improved in all aspects. The school is now in very good shape with a strong focus on continuous improvement. Whilst I am very much aware of and will respect the traditions of St Mary's College and its strong position as a very successful school, I am also able to envision and lead change and would be focused always on building the future of the school, to ensure an excellent Catholic education for the girls, equipping them to leave school as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Women of Mercy.

## Curriculum Delivery & Pedagogy

*Describe an initiative that you have set up for an innovative approach to curriculum delivery, and how this initiative impacted on the teaching and learning process. How was the effectiveness of this initiative measured?*

Responding to data showing that a number of our children at St Mary's were struggling to acquire early literacy and numeracy skills, I have worked with a group of teachers to inquire into what the barriers are for these children. We have identified that oral language can be a barrier and can stop them 'getting going' across the curriculum. We had a hunch that the children were also struggling to engage in what has traditionally at my school, been a euro-centric curriculum, even though our community is very multicultural. We decided therefore, to trial some more authentic and relevant approaches to teaching and learning, where some of our children would spend one day per week experiencing 'learning without walls'. The children would be outside of the classroom, undertaking a wide range of learning experiences - gardening, building, environmental projects, camp skills etc. The curriculum for the remainder of the week, would be built around these experiences, which in themselves, would integrate a range of curriculum areas. The learning is largely student-led, with them making decisions about what they will do, as well as planning, implementing and reflecting on their learning. We are finding that this initiative is having positive impacts in a number of areas. Student achievement in reading, writing and maths is improving. Children who were previously difficult to engage, are enthusiastic about their learning. Oral language skills are improving and children who previously struggled to take risks in their learning are now doing so. Teachers are closely monitoring each child in this project, and in particular, the target learners, whose voice we also collect through their reflections. This is part of our normal tracking of learners. A concern was that 'losing' a day of more traditional learning a week, might impact negatively on achievement and progress, but this is not the case at all. We see the children thriving with this innovative approach to learning.

## Professional Leadership

*How do you currently enact the role of 'Professional Leader of Learning' and how do you demonstrate being a learner?*

- I am continuing with my own postgraduate studies and the teachers are aware of this. I also participate in all professional learning with my staff. For example, I am currently undertaking the RE 502 paper with the teachers this semester.
- In our assessment for learning project, I ensure teachers know that the senior leadership team is learning how to lead practice analysis conversations, just as the teachers are learning how to implement assessment for learning practices. We video ourselves conducting the conversations, just as teachers video their own practice. This ensures the teachers know that we consider ourselves to be learners too.
- I share my leadership inquiry and appraisal goals with my teachers and in leadership meetings, I report back on my progress, just as the leaders report back to me and each other on their progress.
- Along with my leadership team, I attend and participate in leadership professional development provided by an external facilitator.
- I participate in a leadership professional learning group with my leadership team and take my turn to find and discuss relevant readings as part of the group.

## Modern Learning Environment

*Discuss how current educational trends/theories will help prepare or students to be 21<sup>st</sup> Century Woman of Mercy*

There has been much discussion about the ways in which education is changing in response to technological advances. One discourse relates to the kinds of skills and dispositions students need so that they can able contribute successfully in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I have been interested recently in one of the schools of thought that believes that we are no longer in the 'Information Age' but that we are moving beyond this to the 'Human Age'. Machines are increasingly able to do what humans used to do, and so, we need to be able to do more than machines. Thinking related to the 'Human Age' takes us to a new set of dispositions we should be developing in our young people - curiosity, creativity, initiative, multi-disciplinary thinking and empathy. These align beautifully with the values of a Mercy school, where we should be focusing on growing young women who are compassionate and who are a force for good in our world. The dispositions are as follows:

CURIOSITY - really engaging with issues, rather than skimming the surface. Noticing what is happening and asking questions, lots of questions about what is known and most importantly about what is not known. Being curious is an ability that humans have but machines do not.

CREATIVITY - once you have noticed and asked questions, thinking creatively, not just in an artistic way, but scientifically, technologically, mathematically, connecting ideas and making personal meaning from them is the next step - what can you do about your noticings?

INITIATIVE - taking initiative is about discerning when it is appropriate to do something about your creative ideas and then reaching out to do something with them.

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY THINKING - reaching out to a range of people to gather their input as we create. Collaboration across disciplines is a key to making a difference.

EMPATHY - really connecting deeply with people is a key skill, and one that is increasingly rare in our world. By developing empathy, in conjunction with all the skills above, we will ensure that we are growing our academically capable women into 21<sup>st</sup> Century Women of Mercy, able to put their knowledge, skills and talents to good use, both now and in the future.

# Referee's Report

(Confidential to Ahead Associates Limited  
and St Mary's Board of Trustees )

**For: (Candidate to complete**

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**Referees Name:** Emma Kingston

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**Address:** 23 Monarch Avenue, Hillcrest, Auckland 0627

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**Home Phone:**

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**Work Phone:**

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**Email:** emmalouisekingston@gmail.com

**1. What is your relationship to the applicant? How long have you known them? What opportunities have you had recently to see them at work?**

I have known Michelle since she begun for role as principal at St Mary's School in Northcote in 2016. I was working there in the capacity of a cluster facilitator at the time we met, then became her deputy principal. Over the time we have worked together I have got to know her incredibly well and worked very closely together, for much of that time sharing an office and sharing the responsibility of turning around a school following poor ERO review. Working together in such a challenging and termultuous situation meant that we both got to know eachother very well, very quickly.

## 2. What are the main reasons that they will stand out as being an excellent candidate for this Principal position?

Michelle is a leader who leads with a strong moral compass. She leads with kindness, compassion, integrity and a strong drive to meet the needs of each and every part of the school community. She keeps the learners at the centre of all decisions and treats every member of the school community with respect. Michelle is highly reflective and models being a learner for her colleagues. She sees the importance of adapting one's practice as she learns and grows as a leader and educationalist, and acts on this. She also has the same expectation of her staff, making for a positive and professional staff culture, of continual improvement.

Michelle is collaborative, utilising the strengths of the people around her to meet the needs of the organisation as a whole. She operates a 'no blame' culture which definitely helps build collaborative structures.

Michelle is forward thinking and is able to lead change, even in incredibly difficult circumstances. She is able to balance the need to change and improve, with the needs of teachers and the community.

Michelle is truly inclusive of all learners and has a growth mindset for all learners. These are not just theoretical understandings but embodied by Michelle.

Michelle is knowledgeable. She has a deep understanding of the breadth of both primary and secondary curriculum and pedagogy. She also is well read with regards to leadership literature and theories.

Michelle is tough! She has led a very difficult and emotionally taxing change in a school that was not functioning well in so many respects, as a first time principal. I don't know any other first time principals who could have done that and done it so successfully, in such a short time frame. She was, and is, up for a challenge and has learned so many things through this process that many principals with more years under their belt would not have experienced in their tenure.

**3. What is their Achilles' heel? weaknesses? Or, areas needing development?**

Perhaps an area that we all find difficult - to know exactly when it is best to step in and address areas that need development in staff. By this I mean getting the balance right between stepping in quickly to 'nip the problem in the bud' but risking not having all the facts first; and gathering all the facts but risking leaving the problem to fester or get worse.

**4. Any other comments that will help this BOT consider this applicant?**

**Please return directly to:**

**Janne Pender**

**Ahead Associates**

**By email: [jannepende@aheadassociates.co.nz](mailto:jannepende@aheadassociates.co.nz)**

# Referee's Report

(Confidential to Ahead Associates Limited  
and St Mary's Board of Trustees )

**For: (Candidate to complete**

Michelle Holly

**Referees Name:** Maggie Ogram

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**Email:** maggie@ospreyconsulting.co.nz

1. What is your relationship to the applicant? How long have you known them? What opportunities have you had recently to see them at work?

I am currently contracted as Michelle's Appraiser and Leadership Coach. I have worked with Michelle in these capacities since 2015. This has provided the opportunity to understand Michelle's leadership knowledge, and skills and observe her professional leadership practice.

**2. What are the main reasons that they will stand out as being an excellent candidate for this Principal position?**

Michelle shows the following leadership capabilities and strengths as evidenced through interviews undertaken with Board members, staff, parents, students through annual appraisals:

- Communicates the clear expectation that the Catholic Faith is visible and the centre of all that the school community does;
- Espouses and practices a shared and collaborative leadership approach;
- Places an emphasis on Professional Learning for self and all staff to positively impact on student learning;
- Has strong capabilities in the systems leadership component linking to the school vision, strategic plan, and annual goals;
- Is inclusive in her leadership;
- Communicates with the Board and all stakeholders in an open and transparent way.

**3. What is their Achilles' heel? weaknesses? Or, areas needing development?**

Michelle is a highly competent, committed and hardworking professional leader. Having given due consideration to an area of development to suggest it would be to consider her own well-being more as she works to serve the community.

**4. Any other comments that will help  
this BOT consider this applicant?**

I have no hesitation in recommending Michelle Holly for this position  
and fully support her application.

**Please return directly to:  
Janne Pender  
Ahead Associates  
By email: [jannepender@aheadassociates.co.nz](mailto:jannepender@aheadassociates.co.nz)**

# Referee's Report

(Confidential to Ahead Associates Limited  
and St Mary's Board of Trustees )

**For: (Candidate to complete**

Michelle Holly

**Referees Name:** Lisa Smith

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1. What is your relationship to the applicant? How long have you known them? What opportunities have you had recently to see them at work?

I met Michelle when she applied for the principal position at St Mary's Northcote in 2015. I was a parent elected member of the board of trustees, and an active participant in the appointment process. In January 2016 I became chairperson. During my time as chair I met with Michelle weekly and we established an excellent working relationship. The task was at times very difficult, due to the serious findings of the 2015 ERO review, and we have supported each other well. In February of 2019, after a lot of discussion around succession planning, I resigned the chair position, and the board elected David France. I continue to be a trustee and intend to stay for another term to continue working on our journey of improvement.

2. What are the main reasons that they will stand out as being an excellent candidate for this Principal position?

Michelle stands out as an excellent candidate for this position for a number of reasons, so I have chosen three main points to focus on. Firstly, her commitment to the Catholic Character of the school. Michelle is passionate about Catholic education, in particular the process of embedding the Catholic Character in everything we do, as well as raising the level of religious instruction and ensuring that the pedagogy around this is at the same high level as other areas of the curriculum. Since joining St Mary's School, she has also immersed herself in the life of the parish, attending Sunday mass regularly and becoming a Eucharistic Minister. She is involved in Parish/school joint functions, and welcomes opportunities for parishioners, students and school families to celebrate together. Secondly, Michelle always has the interests of the children at the centre of everything she does. She is a firm believer that every student can learn, and is working on many ways to promote an inclusive environment where all students are empowered to reach their potential. Her focus on knowing each learner, and huge improvements in the area of cultural responsiveness, have made a noticeable difference during her time at St Mary's. Michelle is a lifelong learner herself - she studies and uses evidence-based research to improve pedagogy, and is also willing to adapt when something might not be working. Thirdly, Michelle's ability to form excellent working relationships with all stakeholders. Michelle is a warm, generous person who takes time to get to know students, staff, parents, and other members of the community, while at the same time remaining very professional. She regularly spends time in classrooms and in the playground talking with students. Her office, which she shares with the two deputy principals, is always open for staff to come in if they need her. Michelle promotes continual learning for her staff and has introduced more shared leadership throughout all levels. Board meetings are planned in advance with the chairperson, there is honest communication, reporting to the whole board is excellent and she articulates information and answers questions well.

**3. What is their Achilles' heel? weaknesses? Or, areas needing development?**

I have been fortunate to watch Michelle grow as a leader over these last three and a half years. She is very reflective and always open to areas of development. Some of the things I believe she is working on include taking a step back after a problem arises and thinking things over before reacting, and accepting that although she has a strong vision, people may have alternative ways of achieving that vision which might be different from hers.

**4. Any other comments that will help this BOT consider this applicant?**

I would be very happy to keep Michelle longer at St Mary's primary, however I sincerely believe she would be an asset to St Mary's College. Although I have not worked with Michelle in a secondary setting, I have seen her interact with older children on a number of occasions, and I value the discussions we have about our own young adults, drawing on her wisdom and experience. I know that her colleagues at Sancta Maria College were sad to see her go. I think she would be an intelligent, caring, Catholic role model for the girls and young women at St Mary's College, and would work extremely hard to see each of them reach their God-given potential. I wish her all the best for whatever comes next on her journey.

**Please return directly to:**

**Janne Pender**

**Ahead Associates**

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