



**EDUCATION REVIEW REPORT:
FRANCIS DOUGLAS MEMORIAL COLLEGE**

JULY 2005

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School Statement

Prior to the review ERO offers schools the opportunity to provide some background in the form of the school's location and context, significant achievements since the last review, and issues being considered by the Board of Trustees.

Francis Douglas Memorial College has not provided a school statement.

This report has been prepared in accordance with standard procedures approved by the Chief Review Officer.

1. About the School

Location New Plymouth

Ministry of Education profile 175
number

School type	Secondary (Year 7 – 15)	
Decile rating [1]	8	
Teaching staff:		
Roll generated entitlement	48.80	
Number of teachers	49	
School roll	753	
Gender composition	Male 100%	
Ethnic composition	NZ/Pākehā 81%, Māori 11%, Pacific 2%, Other ethnic groups 6%.	
Special features	State Integrated Catholic Boys' School College Hostel	
Review team on site	June, 2005	
Date of this report	14 July 2005	
Previous ERO reports	Education Review	September 2002
	Accountability Review	August 1998
	Assurance Audit	August 1994
	Review	October 1990

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2. The Education Review Office (ERO) Evaluation

Francis Douglas Memorial College is a Catholic boys' college with a roll of 753 students, of whom 125 are boarders. The special character of the school is reflected in the emphasis on holistic education based on Catholic and Lasallian principles. Management and staff work together to encourage students to become caring, honest citizens.

This review evaluates the achievement of students, the implementation of the health and physical education curriculum statement and Māori and Pacific student achievement. In addition, aspects of compliance and provision for students in the college hostel are evaluated.

Buildings are well maintained and classrooms contain age, ability and interest appropriate resources. A new technology/art block is near completion. The well-managed college hostel provides boarding students with comfortable, secure accommodation in a caring and supportive environment. Hostel students are integral to the life of the college.

Motivated and interested students participate in well-paced lessons. Positive, respectful learning environments promote student engagement in learning. Students know learning and behavioural expectations and build strong relationships with teachers. Students have many opportunities for participation in sporting and cultural activities. Professional development has increased teachers' awareness of the educational needs of boys.

The profile of results from 2004 indicates that the college performed above national averages in National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 1 and 2. Results for Level 3 show that over 50% achieved university entrance. Over 90% of students achieved Level 1 literacy and numeracy requirements in 2004. Individual subject results indicate most subjects compare favourably with national averages for schools of similar decile. Departments use the analysis of results to refine courses and develop strategies to better prepare students for external assessment.

The new management team, appointed since the September 2002 ERO report, adopt a collaborative

approach, using complementary skills and clear role division to work as a team. The astute principal has made positive changes to increase academic performance. He has delegated responsibility to empower middle managers. Students benefit from management's thorough practices.

Trustees are aware of their roles and responsibilities, and express confidence in the principal's ability to manage the school. They have a clear understanding of the difference between governance and management and of their financial responsibilities. Following the previous ERO report, the board developed an action plan to successfully implement the recommendations in the report. Although formal consultation with the community has been limited, trustees have completed their obligations for charter and strategic planning and have set targets for 2005. The complementary strengths of the principal and board provide sound governance and management of the school.

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. Therefore ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

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3. School Specific Priorities

The Focus of the Review

Before the review, the board of Francis Douglas Memorial College was invited to consider its priorities for review using guidelines and resources provided by ERO. ERO also used documentation provided by the school to contribute to the scope of the review.

The detailed priorities for review were then determined following a discussion between the ERO review team and the board of trustees. This discussion focused on existing information held by the school (including student achievement and self-review information) and the extent to which potential issues for review contributed to the achievement of the students at Francis Douglas Memorial College.

ERO and the board have agreed on the following focus area for the review:

- student achievement.

ERO's findings in this area are set out below.

Student Achievement

Background

The board believes significant progress has been made in implementing the recommendations in the previous ERO report, especially in relation to literacy, assessment procedures, monitoring departmental planning and appraisal systems. Management is developing strategies to improve academic achievement. The board believes that all aspects of life in the college, including social, spiritual, cultural and sporting endeavours influence achievement. The board agreed that it was appropriate for ERO to evaluate the effectiveness of college systems that support and enhance student achievement. ERO approved this focus area.

Areas of good performance

- Student achievement in NCEA

The profile of results from 2004 indicates that the college performed well above national averages in NCEA Level 1 and 2. Results for Level 3 show that over 50% achieved university entrance. Over

90% of students achieved Level 1 literacy and numeracy requirements in 2004. Individual subject results indicate most subjects compare favourably with national averages and schools of similar deciles.

All departments use a consistent format to comprehensively analyse and report NCEA results. Comments include a summary of student successes and challenges for the future. Departments use the analysis of results to refine courses and develop strategies to better prepare students for external assessment.

- **Expectations for student achievement**

Clearly defined expectations for student achievement and assessment procedures guide teaching practice. Schoolwide documentation, including broad strategic goals in the annual plan, refers directly to achieving high quality outcomes for students. The senior management executive provides effective leadership in decision-making towards improving students' learning opportunities.

New initiatives include strengthening the teacher development focus in the appraisal system, and the current schoolwide professional development on meeting boys' educational learning needs. Both initiatives are impacting positively on students' learning. Teachers are focused on improving student achievement.

- **Literacy committee**

The literacy committee, representative of staff across year and subject levels, provides strong professional leadership designed to raise the profile of students' literacy needs and improve the quality of teaching. Well-considered methods for sharing current developments in boys' education, promoting useful resources and encouraging professional reading and discussion maintain the momentum for effective change. Students benefit from involvement in schoolwide literacy activities, and particularly the focus on increasing their comprehension and vocabulary capability towards successful NCEA outcomes.

- **Teaching strategies**

In many classes where teachers employ a range of effective strategies, students fully engage in learning. Teachers use thoughtful questioning to promote active discussions where students confidently share their ideas. Well-paced lessons include practical components and opportunities for cooperative and individual work. A recently developed award system in the junior school impacts positively on improving student diligence and motivation to succeed. Students respond well to the diverse range of teaching strategies designed to meet their needs.

- **Learning environment**

Students learn in well-managed, cooperative learning environments, where mutual respect is evident. Routines are well established and understood. The use of appropriate learning resources reflects students' interests and ability. Positive classroom tone and supportive interactions ensure that the focus is on learning rather than behaviour management. An industrious working atmosphere enhances students' learning.

- **Pastoral care**

School support systems impact positively on student learning and wellbeing by identifying and addressing their personal needs. Clear procedures in the staff handbook ensure adults and students are aware of expectations for achievement and behaviour. Deans meet regularly to discuss individual students and maintain a cohesive approach to pastoral care. Other events, including religious observances and class retreats, support students to develop self-awareness, self-esteem and help to build positive relationships. Students benefit from an environment that promotes sound attitudes and values.

- **Additional support for student learning**

Useful assessment information is gathered from entrance testing and data from contributing schools. This information is effectively used to inform learning support programmes that match students' prior achievement levels and learning needs. Strategies designed to improve students' literacy levels

include: grouping for instruction in Year 7 and 8 homerooms; ability-based classes for Year 9 and 10 English classes; and tutoring by trained adults and senior students. Support programmes are regularly evaluated to determine their effectiveness in improving students' literacy achievement. Achievement results indicate significant improvement for most students.

Some senior students participate in the careers pathways programmes that provide work experience and work related training. These students are well monitored and supported in their learning, promoting effective transition from school to work.

- **Reporting**

Parents receive useful, regular student progress and achievement reports, including information about subject options and career opportunities. Teachers communicate effectively with parents concerning learning support interventions, and are responsive to parental requests and concerns. The board is well informed, through departmental and principal's reports, about student progress and achievement. Regular reporting assists the board in their self-review processes to focus on improving student achievement.

- **Additional achievement opportunities**

A wide range of available sporting codes and increasing variety of cultural activities enhance students' leadership skills and promote high levels of participation. Teamwork, cooperation and senior students' role as mentors for juniors are developed and valued. Students experience success across a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The number of students achieving recognition at national and regional level is noteworthy. Their successes are acknowledged and celebrated at school assemblies, in newsletters and in the school's magazine.

Areas for improvement

- **Enhancing student achievement**

Management has identified the need to improve the number of students obtaining merit and excellence grades in NCEA. ERO concurs that additional strategies are required to improve motivation of students to aim for higher achievement throughout the college.

Management should consider a range of strategies including:

- maintaining and extending literacy initiatives to reduce limited reading abilities as a barrier to learning in all subject areas;
- extending and enhancing students' goal setting practices to improve ownership of learning;
- ensuring students understand the expected learning outcome of lessons;
- providing regular and appropriate feedback to students with suggestions on how they can improve; and
- extending the use of a range of exemplars to assist students to produce high quality work.

- **Consistency in departmental documentation**

Departmental guidelines lack consistency. Some examples of good practice exist in the school. These departmental documents contain clear expectations for curriculum delivery, moderation of assessment, learning support, classroom management, expectations for quality of student work, organisation and responsibilities. Management should ensure that all teachers have access to such high quality guidelines to develop consistent practices across the school and maximise student achievement opportunities.

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4. Areas of National Interest

Overview

ERO provides information about the education system as a whole to the Government. This information will be used as the basis for long term and systemic educational improvement.

ERO collected information about Francis Douglas Memorial College. These findings are included in this report to ensure that information about the school is transparent and widely available.

Current Areas of National Interest

ERO is currently collecting information for reports to the Government on:

- the achievement of Māori students;
- the achievement of Pacific students;
- implementation of the Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum; and
- provision for students in the school hostel.

The Achievement of Māori Students

Background

During the review, ERO evaluated the extent to which the school has knowledge of and strategies for promoting the achievement of Māori students.

Areas of good performance

- **Analysis of student achievement**
Management and teachers use a broad range of assessment strategies to provide comprehensive information on Māori student achievement. Strategic planning targets to improve Māori student achievement results from analysis of this data. NCEA data is collated and analysed to show that although Māori students are generally achieving above expectation when compared to national benchmarks, they gain 25% less credits than non-Māori students at the school. Most departments use student achievement data to review and plan future programmes. Assessment of newly enrolled students identifies those with special needs and abilities. Māori students' needs are addressed through careful monitoring of their achievement.
- **Student engagement**
Māori students effectively engage in learning. Students build strong, positive relationships with teachers. Teachers have high academic and behavioural expectations of Māori students. Most departments make connections between curriculum contexts and the life experiences of Māori students. They are motivated and interested in learning.
- **Inclusive practices**
Students actively participate in a diverse range of cultural opportunities. The school kapahaka group meets regularly. New teachers are welcomed by pōwhiri. Year 7 students are welcomed at a marae. Chapel services and school daily notices include karakia. Māori students have access to a range of sporting, cultural and leadership programmes. Students confidently engage in school activities where they share their cultural experiences.

Area for improvement

- **Professional development**
Not all teachers demonstrate an understanding of and empathy with Māori culture. Professional development to increase teachers' knowledge of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori should ensure that students' cultural needs are met in all classrooms.

The Achievement of Pacific Students

Background

During the review, ERO evaluated the extent to which the school has knowledge of and strategies for promoting the achievement of its Pacific students.

Area of good performance

- Achievement
The number of Pacific students enrolled is less than 2%. The achievement of these students is monitored individually and they have access to the full range of courses, interventions and support systems the school offers.

Area for improvement

- Analysis of achievement
Collating and analysing schoolwide achievement data, to identify trends and support needed for Pacific students, should assist teachers to maximise their participation and achievement in school programmes.

Implementation of the Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum

Background

Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum has been a requirement in schools since December 2001 and is compulsory for students to Year 10.

During the review ERO investigated the extent to which *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* is being implemented throughout the school so that the aims of the curriculum are met.

Areas of good performance

- Health and Physical Education curriculum
Comprehensive Physical Education (PE) and Health schemes for Years 7 to 13 ensure that the programme is in line with the national curriculum. Both schemes provide an overview and units to promote full teaching coverage. Units for the health programme are of particularly high quality. Teachers use detailed implementation plans to deliver the curriculum. Students receive a wide and well-planned programme in both PE and health.
- Programme delivery
The programme is taught mainly by qualified PE teachers and a specialist health teacher. Year 7 and 8 teachers teach their own health programme. However, they are provided with appropriate resources to achieve the required outcomes. Specialist teachers are knowledgeable and skilled practitioners in the subject.
- Regular exercise
All students participate in regular PE where exercise is a prime requisite of the programme. A feature is the high participation rates in regular programmes. Students enjoy these periods and show enthusiasm while increasing their fitness and confidence in skill building.
- Sporting involvement
Many students are fully involved in college sport. A wide range of sports is offered, both at team and individual level. Boarders, in particular, take a full part in sporting activities, and are encouraged to achieve. Students' response to competition is seen in the number of high-level achievements at school, regional and national level. Appropriate resources and coaching support student activities. Boys' physical development and competence is enhanced through regular involvement in physical activity.

- Reporting and self review
Student progress and programme suitability is regularly reviewed. An example is the development of the movement strand in curriculum activities and the consideration of NCEA results in senior PE. Student achievement is reported to the board and to parents in the school newsletter. Monitoring and improvement of student achievement in PE and health is completed through self-review procedures.

Areas for improvement

- Health programme consultation
Health programme consultation was due in 2004. Minor consultation took place in the newsletter and through an open day. It is a requirement for a parent meeting to take place. The teacher in charge of health is aware of this and has planned community discussion for this year.
- Teacher training
Teachers in Year 7 and 8 provide health programme to their own classes in 2005. Professional development for these teachers should help in the delivery of the curriculum statement. A review at the end of 2005 should be useful to evaluate the success of curriculum implementation.

Provision for Students in the School Hostel

Background

There are 125 students boarding in the five houses at the college. This represents 17% of the college roll. The hostel is operated by the Trust Board of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in New Zealand, through a delegated authority to the Francis Douglas Memorial College Hostel Board. The principal successfully exercises day-to-day oversight of the hostel. A competent boarding master is in charge of all the houses, each of which is controlled by experienced housemasters. A matron assists with the health and welfare of students.

The hostel and college are on the same grounds in close proximity to each other. The buildings complement each other. Hostel students are integral to the life of the college.

Hostel Management

Areas of good performance

- Boarding organisation
The hostel board and principal provide clear expectations for students residing in the houses. Organisational booklets give thorough information for administration and hostel life. These booklets are high quality, comprehensive manuals, which cover most eventualities. The management structure and procedures are well understood by all parties. Detailed procedures guide parents, students and hostel staff.
- Care and concern
The principal has made successful changes to boarding management and procedures. These changes make processes more rigorous. Monitoring of student wellbeing is carefully undertaken. The boarding master provides sound management. He shows care and concern for students and is constantly looking for methods to improve student life. He is well informed and enthusiastic in fulfilling his role and responsibilities, fully supported by experienced and knowledgeable housemasters.
- Staff communication and development
Communication between staff is regular by email and through meetings. Parents also communicate with the boarding master if any concerns arise. Professional development for staff is ongoing with regular internal courses. Housemasters have Level One care certificates. The boarding master regularly attends boarding conferences. Staff are thoroughly appraised. Students benefit from the outcomes of these procedures.

Area for improvement

- Strategic planning
The hostel has a detailed operations manual. However, the development of a strategic plan and annual plan should ensure that ongoing review and development continues. These plans should ensure that the hostel continues to be effectively managed.

Physical Environment

Areas of good performance

- Year groups
The various year groups live in different houses, all of which are comfortable, clean and tidy. Most senior students have their own rooms and Years 9 and 10 have partitioned areas. Good safety provisions exist with sound systems for entry to and exit from the hostel at all times. Safety of students is carefully considered.
- Facilities
Students' academic development is supported through the use of the school's facilities. Study facilities are adequate. However, senior students are very well catered for. A strong emphasis on sport allows full use of the college grounds, gym and pool areas. Students experience balanced recreation opportunities as boarders.
- Student wellbeing
The hostel board has satisfactorily established systems to monitor student health through the use of an extensive sick bay and the availability of a matron, during the day. Evacuation drills are regular and a night supervisor is vigilant. Students' physical wellbeing is a high priority.

Emotional Environment

Areas of good performance

- Student support.
Students understand the carefully developed routines in the hostel. Clear instructions are developed for all aspects of college life. Students are well aware of the behavioural expectations. They understand the sanctions and usually keep to college requirements. Students receive counselling from staff and have access to the school deans and the guidance counsellor. Students generally follow set expectations for achievement, socialising and behaviour.
- Student relationships
Good rapport exists between staff and students. Students, at all levels, relate well with each other. Management is explicit that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. Policies clearly state expectations and strategies are in place for any students to report any behavioural concerns. Students, interviewed, were positive about hostel life and believe that they live in a safe environment.
- Hostel ethos
An ethos of care and mutual support is clearly evident in the hostel. The principal and management focus on developing a supportive, 'homelike' atmosphere, within a safe environment. Academic attainment is promoted through set study routines, enhancing student learning. Students are well cared for.

Area for improvement

- Student communication
Processes to allow students to share their opinions about hostel life are not in place. This situation is particularly applicable for junior students. Procedures should be developed to enable students to have input. Mentoring by seniors could strengthen junior students' feeling of involvement and

community.

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5. Board Assurance on Compliance Areas

Overview

Before the review, the board of trustees and principal of Francis Douglas Memorial College completed an ERO *Board Assurance Statement* and *Self-Audit Checklist*. In these documents they attested that they had taken all reasonable steps to meet their legislative obligations related to:

- board administration;
- curriculum;
- management of health, safety and welfare;
- personnel management;
- financial management; and
- asset management.

During the review, ERO checked the following items because they have a potentially high impact on students' achievement:

- emotional safety of students (including prevention of bullying and sexual harassment);
- physical safety of students;
- teacher registration;
- stand-downs, suspensions, expulsions and exclusions; and
- attendance.

ERO's investigations did not identify any areas of concern.

6. Recommendations

ERO and the board of trustees have developed the following recommendations that:

- 6.1 staff and management identify, implement and monitor strategies to improve the motivation of students to aim for higher achievement;
- 6.2 management ensure that high quality departmental guidelines develop consistent practices across the college to maximise student achievement; and
- 6.3 management organise professional development to increase teachers' knowledge of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori to ensure that students' cultural needs are met in the classroom.

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7. 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. Therefore ERO will review the school again as part of the regular review cycle.

Signed

Diana Anderson
Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer

14 July 2005

14 July 2005

To the Parents and Community of Francis Douglas Memorial College

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

Francis Douglas Memorial College is a Catholic boys' college with a roll of 753 students, of whom 125 are boarders. The special character of the school is reflected in the emphasis on holistic education based on Catholic and Lasallian principles. Management and staff work together to encourage students to become caring, honest citizens.

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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

Diana Anderson
Area Manager
for Chief Review Officer

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT REVIEWS

About ERO

ERO is an independent, external evaluation agency that undertakes reviews of schools and early childhood services throughout New Zealand.

About ERO Reviews

ERO follows a set of standard procedures to conduct reviews. The purpose of each review is to:

- improve educational achievement in schools; and
- provide information to parents, communities and the Government.

Reviews are intended to focus on student achievement and build on each school's self review.

Review Focus

ERO's framework for reviewing and reporting is based on three review strands.

- **School Specific Priorities** – the quality of education and the impact of school policies and practices on student achievement.
- **Areas of Specific Government Interest** – information about how Government policies are working in schools.
- **Compliance with Legal Requirements** – assurance that this school has taken all reasonable steps to meet legal requirements.

Review Coverage

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Review Recommendations

Most ERO reports include recommendations for improvement. A recommendation on a particular issue does not necessarily mean that a school is performing poorly in relation to that issue. There is no direct link between the number of recommendations in this report and the overall performance of this school.

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[\[1\]](#) Decile 1 schools draw their students from areas of greatest socio-economic disadvantage, Decile 10 from areas of least socio-economic disadvantage.