



## Synod Report 2021

Despite the challenges of 2020 St Margaret's has continued its long tradition of academic, sporting and cultural achievements that we are all so very proud of. Our strong reputation, combined with small class sizes, modern campus facilities and commitment to continual improvement has been maintained. This year we started in a strong position with a healthy student roll. We maintain a waiting list for our early years programmes, and our Middle School reputation for outstanding opportunities continues to attract girls into these important years. As a family-focused school, we are always grateful for the ongoing support of our community and appreciate the continued strong interest of other families to join us.

We remain committed to creating empathetic, confident and connected global citizens, who strive to make a positive difference. The Board shares the community desire to maintain and improve the academic, cultural, sporting and personal opportunities available to the girls at St Margaret's, understanding and responding to their development over the course of their time with us while enhancing the warm big-sister-little-sister relationships. We continue to strengthen our wellbeing approaches across our schools with the appointment of two new deputy positions with responsibilities for Student Care and Experience in the Middle and Senior Schools this year. These roles will support the Deans and Tutors in the pastoral care of our girls and continue to develop our service and student leadership programmes.

The Board is proud of the school initiatives undertaken in support of other elements of our Sustainability Charter responsibilities, including plans to improve our social and community connections, the introduction of Te Reo Maori in the Junior School in 2021, this year's planting of 5,000 trees and a target to double that next year, as well as greater efficiencies being realised in power and waste on campus.

St Margaret's College continues to be one of New Zealand's top schools. The 2020 NCEA and International Baccalaureate results illustrate our student and staff commitment to academic excellence and the extraordinary strength of our teaching and learning with pass rates of 98% (University Entrance), 99% (Level 3), 99% (Level 2) and 98% (Level 1). Recent changes to NCEA Level 1 announced by the Government are at risk of weakening the qualification, diluting the academic offering and undermining the opportunity to prepare students well for their senior studies. In light of this, SMC undertook a review of the value of this course and what value it offers our girls in years to come. Our full academic team of teachers, Heads of Faculty and school leaders critically considered what will best prepare our students for Years 12 and 13, and beyond. From this process, we have developed the SMC Senior School Foundation Diploma which our Year 11's will be undertaking from 2022. The SMC Foundation Diploma will prepare our girls for future success in either of our senior pathways - IB and NCEA Levels 2 and 3. It will maintain rigorous academic and assessment standards while developing modes of thinking and introducing concepts, knowledge and the skills required for success for girls stepping up from Year 11 to Years 12 and 13.

Last year the Trust Board and school administration turned their attention to the economic impact of the various virus lockdown levels on the country's economy. We prepared for the resulting economic pressures that many in our school community will be under and we continue to use our hardship fund to

assist those most affected by the economic downturn with the costs of keeping their daughters at SMC. At the same time, we have continued our focus on the school's strong pastoral care culture and Anglican values to help students, staff and parents to deal with the increased anxieties about the world around us.

The Trust Board were delighted to announce the Reverend Stephanie Clay has been appointed as the College's new Chaplain, filling the shoes of our beloved Reverend Peg Riley. After 22 years of service to St Margaret's, Peg is moving to part-time ministry with St Peter's Anglican Church, Riccarton at the end of Term 2. It goes without saying that, in her role as Chaplain, Peg has been at the heart of our school. While the Anglican faith remains central to who we are, Peg's work at St Margaret's has far exceeded that of spirituality and she will be sorely missed by staff, students and our community.

As always, we are thankful for the efforts of those who support the SMC community. Be it volunteering for sporting or fundraising events, serving on the Trust Board or on any number of school support facilities, the SMC community is as engaged and committed as ever. The past year has seen considerable success for our school, but we have also seen effects on our everyday lives that we could never have imagined, with many of those impacts still ongoing globally. At these times we are challenged to live out our faith, to support each other, and to make the most of every opportunity.

Di Humphries

**Chairperson**

**St Margaret's College Trust Board**