

# **Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School**

• 3 Tilsley Street • Rotorua 3010 • New Zealand •

## ***ACCREDITATION REPORT***

**August 2017**





## VISITING COMMITTEE STATEMENT

# Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School

**The Visiting Committee met and evaluated the Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School on 21 and 22 August 2017.**

### Members of the Visiting Committee

Dr Carol Tasker, Education Director, SPD

Dan Carrasco, Associate Director of Education, NZPUC

**The Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School is recommended for re-accreditation for the Term and under the conditions placed on page three of this report.**



Dan C Carrasco  
Associate Director of Education  
New Zealand Pacific Union Conference



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# ACCREDITATION RECOMMENDATION

## Period

It is the unanimous professional judgement of the Visiting Accreditation Committee that the Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School be granted re-accreditation for a period of 3 years from September 2017 until August 2020 subject to the terms and conditions stated below.

## Conditions

1. That in the event of a change of school principal, the Union Director of Education will initiate a post-accreditation visit for the purpose of reviewing the self-study document and official report with the new principal. Such a visit is to be scheduled as soon after the new principal is appointed as is practicable.
2. That a post-accreditation visit by the NZPUC Directors of Education take place by May 2018. The purpose of the visit will be to receive an initial action plan report from the school board and to determine what steps will be made by the school in implementing the recommendations.
3. That a Mid-Term accreditation visit by the NZPUC Directors of Education take place before June 2019. The purpose of the visit will be to receive a written progress report from the school and to determine progress made by the school in implementing the recommendations.

## ASSURANCE STATEMENT

The Visiting Accreditation Committee acknowledges that New Zealand Seventh-day Adventist Schools receive in-depth evaluation from the New Zealand Education Review Office (ERO) as an Integrated-State school in New Zealand. The current ERO Report (December 2015) is to be considered as part of this accreditation process and is included as an appendix to this Accreditation report.

The period of accreditation recommended by the General Conference Board of Regents through the South Pacific Division Commission on Accreditation was reached by considering not only the aggregate of items presented in the New Zealand Proprietors accreditation Module but generally on several more fundamental criteria. These major areas may be summarised as follows:-

1. The institution meets operating standards as mandated by the New Zealand Ministry of Education.
2. The Board of Trustees functions in harmony with denominational policy and practice as well as complying with Ministry of Education mandated procedures and is carrying out its delegated responsibilities effectively.
3. The school's stated philosophy and objectives are in harmony with Seventh-day Adventist philosophy and objectives and further there is evidence that the Adventist ethic and perspective is upheld and presented to students.
4. The school plant, facilities (including library) and equipment are adequate for the curriculum offered and for current student enrolment.
5. The financial operation of the school, including Board of Trustees capital and operating, is in harmony with the school's special character.
6. The future viability of the school in terms of projected enrolment, church and community support is reasonably secure.
7. There is evidence of student learning not only in formal curriculum areas, but also in such areas as wholesome attitudes and Christian values.
8. The Board of Trustees has had a role in administering and conducting the self-study process in a responsible way and has involved the school's constituency.
9. The Administration and Board of Trustees have effectively implemented the recommendations contained in the previous Self Study and Accreditation Report.

# ABOUT THE SCHOOL

## Background

The Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist Primary School is located on approximately 0.2 hectares at 3 Tilsley Street Rotorua.

The school commenced at this site in 1953 in a room at the rear of the Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist Church. Due to a lack of students the school closed for a brief period in the early 1960's. In 1964 the school reopened in the present building. In 2002 the additions to the front of the school were completed providing a reception area, principal's office and staff room.

In 2015 major renovations to the school buildings was undertaken to support the innovative teaching and learning of the school.

## Integration History

On 2 August 1993 the school became integrated as the *Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School* with a roll of approximately 20 and a maximum roll of 25 (10% non-preferential maximum). In February 1994 a roll increase to 45 was approved.

In 2017, the school board formally applied to the Proprietors for a roll increase to 50 students. Currently the process is with the New Zealand Seventh-day Adventist Schools Association to recommend to the Ministry of Education.

## Leadership

The school has had a change of leadership since the last review with both a new Principal and Board of Trustees Chairperson.

Mrs Lanea Strickland, was appointed Principal in 2013, and this review is her second experience in leading out with the school board. The Board of Trustees Chair is Mrs Maraea van Gent who was appointed consecutively since 2016.

The North New Zealand Conference appointed Pastor Harvey Gangadeen in 2017 as the school Chaplain. The Accreditation review acknowledges the contribution by Pastor Paul Jonkers for his ministry at the school since 2013 to 2016.

## Demographics

The current roll of the school is 45 students (New Zealand residents), 9 more than the previous visit in 2014. The maximum roll approved by the New Zealand Ministry of Education is 45 with up to 10% non-preferential students. The school currently has no foreign fee-paying students enrolled.

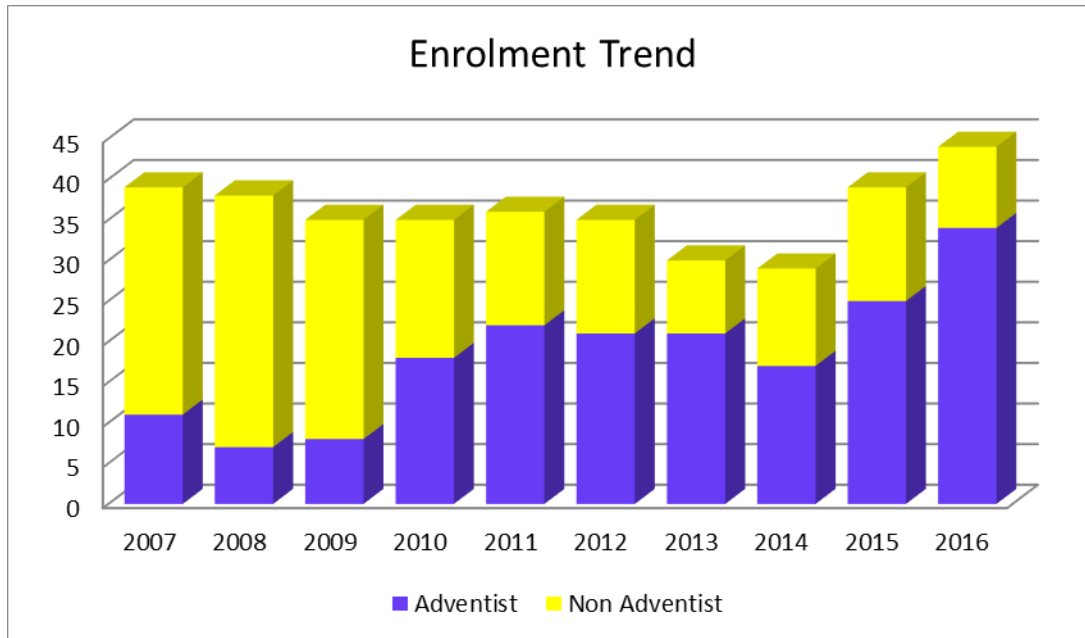
The school draws its pupils from Rotorua. The school's roll is made up of approximately 55% Seventh-day Adventists, a reduction 6% from the previous review. This has been a shift since the 2011 accreditation visit when only 16% were Adventist. The remainder of the school consists predominantly of other Christian families who are from the Apostolic, Catholic and Destiny Churches in Rotorua. There are currently no non-preference students enrolled.

The ethnicities of the community supporting the school reflect a combination of the demographics of the local Seventh-day Adventist Church in Rotorua and those of the area in which the school is located. There are approximately 46% Maori (decrease), 23% Pasifika (increase) and 19% New Zealand European (increase) students in the school. The other ethnicities in the school include Zimbabwean and Indian account for approximately 12%.

Students come from a wide range of family structures. The community expects the school to provide a balanced education, in a holistic manner within the Seventh-day Adventist Christian world-view.

## ENROLMENT TRENDS

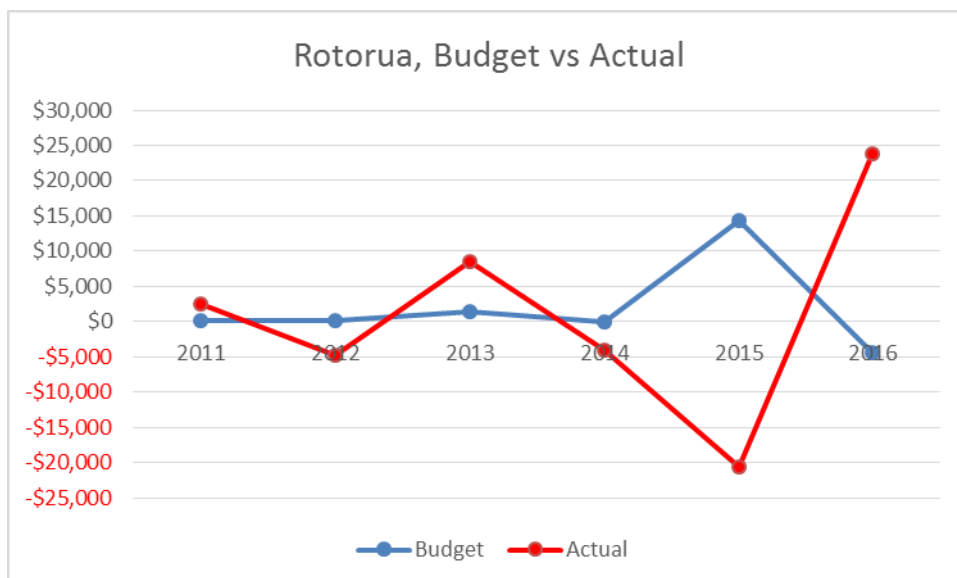
Since the last review the school has steadily increased to maximum capacity and achieving the highest enrolment since 2006. The previous review commented on the concerns of roll decline, however due to the principal and board’s initiatives to offer scholarships and marketing to promote Rotorua’s “best kept secret” has generated a consistent roll maximum. One noticeable trend that is change in the non-Adventist enrolments. This is predominantly due to the positive community perception of the value and quality of Christian education the school is providing.



## FINANCIAL TRENDS

### Financial Operations

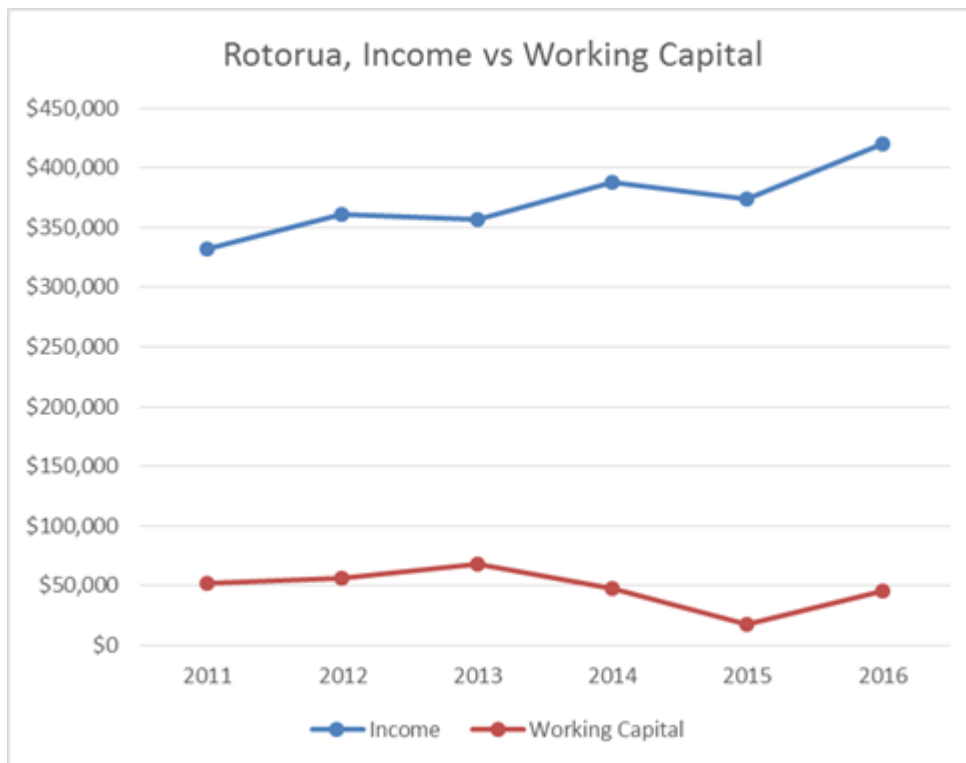
The school has annually budgeted for neutral budgets, however, the review team noted two deficit budgets in 2014 and 2015. The board strategically spent on classroom furniture to match the building renovations in 2015. The school also generated a healthy surplus in 2016 profit to restore the deficit expenditures in 2014 and 2015.





## Fiscal Viability

Including the 2017 year, over the last three years the school's income has increased as a result of increased student enrolment which supports long term sustainable financial viability. This was observed in the 2013 Review where the school has seen growth in its income however the drop in enrolment. Overall, the school continues to maintain a good working capital which has increased over the last few years, however the amount places the school in a fragile financial position. With sound fiscal management the board will be able to consistently maintain a future viability.



# ATTENDANCE DUES

## Background

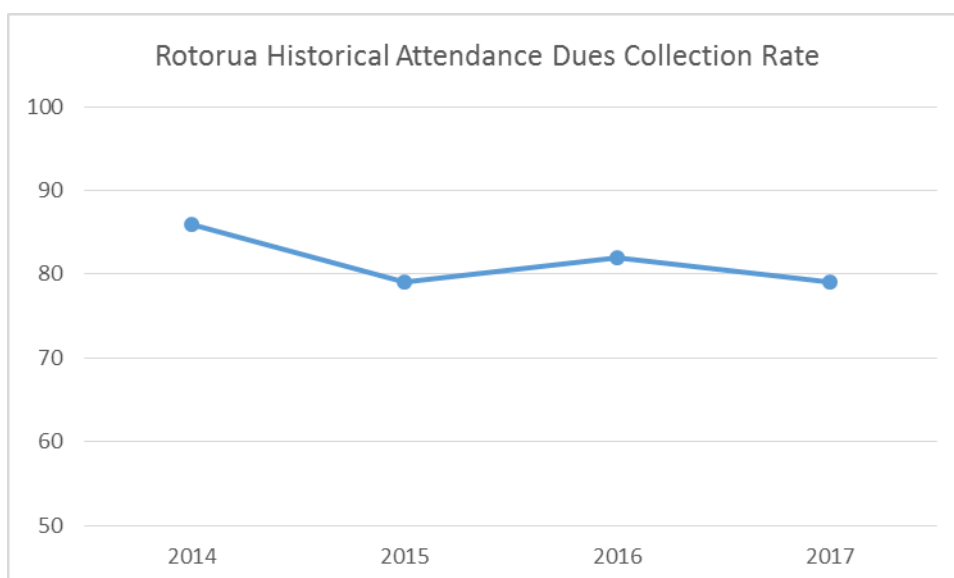
Under the Education Act 1989, Part 33, s447, the Proprietor of an Integrated School is able to charge Attendance Dues. Attendance Dues are a charge made by the “Proprietor” (NZ SDA Schools Association) as a condition of enrolment at an integrated school. This is a compulsory charge and not a donation, nor is it tax deductible. The amount may be differ from year to year.

Attendance Dues are used to help with upgrading school buildings and facilities in line with the Third Schedule. They can be used to pay for leases, debts or mortgages, and insurances that the Proprietor has on the land or buildings of the school. The school can’t use the money for anything else.

The chargers, as set by the Proprietors, was \$450 in 2014 and increased over time to \$550 in 2017.

## Historical Collection Rate

The school’s collection rate over the period 2014 to 2017 shows a decline with a range between 86% in 2014 to 79% in 2017. The Proprietors have set a national collection rate target of 95%.



## Collection Self Review

The School has made a concerted effort to the ongoing review on improving the collection rate to meet the national target of 95%. As a result of the school’s review the following areas has been considered:

- Clarity with Attendance Dues Guidelines and procedures and Enrolment Procedures that payments are term in advance or committed to an automatic payment plan
- Parental clarity with their obligations to the compulsory commitment to paying Attendance Dues on enrolment and throughout the year
- The schools acknowledges to manage the responsibility of carry any outstanding debt for those students who are re-enrolled
- Attention to the monthly Attendance Dues Reports from the Proprietors by monitoring critical clients who may be falling behind payments
- School Principals to apply for Financial Hardship Assistance for clients with genuine hardship

# FINDINGS

## Overview

The visiting committee spent two days in the school. During this time they observed classes, reviewed documentation, inspected the premises and spoke with teachers, students, Board of Trustees and the Principal. The committee were made to feel welcome, shown gracious hospitality and enjoyed the interaction with all involved in this process.

The visiting committee wishes to express its sincere thanks to the principal, the self-study committee, the staff and board for their work in preparing for the accreditation visit.

## Dimensions of Seventh-day Adventist Character

The following findings are examples to illustrate how the scope and influence of the Seventh-day Adventist Character permeate every aspect of school life at the Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School:

### 1) Evangelism and Discipleship

- There are a range of events and programmes which use the relative strengths of the Chaplains and staff to support learning within a Seventh-day Adventist Christian environment.
- Teachers and staff are significantly involved in church life within the local church communities. Their goodwill and commitment to the mission of the school and the Adventist church is evident. Students are also involved in church programs throughout the year.
- The Chaplain and principal for their endeavours with the school wide spiritual faith development programmes.

### 2) Nurturing Faith and Worship

- Teachers attend proprietor-sponsored professional development sessions to increase their spirituality and competence in teaching, witnessing and transmitting faith to their students.
- The team visited the classrooms to observe Bible Encounter lessons and also made visits to classes throughout the school day. A number of displays were observed many of which reflected special character emphasis. These were evident in every room. There is evidence that some integration of Bible and special character into other areas of the curriculum.
- Chaplain works alongside teachers and students to deliver effective and meaning worship culture through weekly chapels and Student Week of Prayer.

### 3) Health and Well-being

- The school was recognised and gained a Bronze Accreditation by the Health Promotion in Schools programme.
- Teachers' interaction and engagement with students was appropriately warm, relaxed and friendly. The school shared a strong collegial spirit between staff.
- The School That the Board of Trustees and Principal consult with the Proprietor as part of the required review of the health curriculum that reflects the special Seventh-day Adventist character of the school.

### 4) Inclusiveness and Diversity

- The visiting team was welcomed with a whole school powhiri which included haka, waiata, and mihi in languages reflecting the cultural diversity of the school. The strong sense of identity and pride in being a New Zealand school that is Adventist and multi-culturally continues to be a strong feature.

- The student and parent community very clearly identify that this is a special character school. It is clear that this is an important feature of the school and its operation which students and families appreciate and value.

#### **5) Service and Social Justice**

- The students were friendly and welcoming and willingly engaged with the team when opportunities arose in a polite and friendly manner.
- Students are actively encouraged to participate in school wide coordinated community programmes and services such as Salvation Army Can Appeal, Elderly Home Visitations and Amber Day tree planting programme.

#### **6) Stewardship / Governance**

- The school's special character is reflected in the Charter, through the policies and procedures of the school, into planning, delivery.
- The special character of the school was clearly evident from the signage on the buildings as the school is entered and right throughout the school complex.
- The team appreciated the neat presentation of the school and its grounds. It is obvious that the stewardship of the school is taken seriously and the school ensures that the plant and property are truly representative of the high standards the church would expect. The Board fulfils its responsibility to the Proprietors on matters relating to property.
- School documentation including policies, school charter, administration and curriculum documents, job descriptions, programs of work and assessment was reviewed. Long term plans reflect special character but the flow through into units of work is not obvious and varies.
- The school had its regular ERO visit. The Board expects the school's three-year cycle review by ERO either Term 4, 2017 or Term 1, 2018.

In order to further develop the Special Character of the school the following commendations and recommendations are provided.

## COMMENDATIONS

### Review Committee Commendations

The following commendations were observed by Review Team in the School's endeavour to "preserving and maintaining the special Seventh-day Adventist character":

1. The Board of Trustees, Principal, Teachers and Chaplain in affirming the centrality of worship through their commitment in attending staff worships, participation and involvement in Assembly, Student Week of Prayer, church visitation and other student faith developing programmes of the school. (*Godliness*)
2. The Principal, Teachers and Staff for their strong and noticeable collegial and supportive staff environment. (*Rich Relationships*)
3. The Principal and Teachers for their work towards incorporating the special character into their teaching and learning. (*Ownership of Learning*)
4. The Principal, Teachers, and Chaplain for positive collaborative ministry and service opportunities they provide, which is deeply appreciated by the children and parents of the school. This partnership will be strengthened through continued shared vision and mission. (*Wisdom in Decision-making*)
5. The Board of Trustees and Principal for the active approach of marketing Adventist Christian education in the Rotorua region through multiple community platforms, including community activities, events and classroom learning in the school's Facebook page. (*Wisdom in Decision-making*)
6. Teaching staff for their care, commitment and dedication in supporting students' emotional and spiritual well-being, as reflected through the student interviews and the School's Satisfaction Survey. (*Transformation Learning*)
7. Chaplain for presenting God and His word to staff, parents and students in engaging ways that encourages joy, wonder, inquiry and commitment. (*Harvest Focus*)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Review Team Recommendations

The Review Team along with the Board, Principal and Teachers agree to the following "Next Steps":

1. The Board of Trustees, Principal, Teachers, Chaplain and Staff define, develop and deliver a cohesive special character curriculum framework that clarifies the school's mission, vision, and values. This will be clearly seen and formalized through school charter and annual strategic plan, including school policies that underpins this framework.

*[The Review Team noted that the school's mission, vision and values did not consistently permeate throughout the school's teaching and learning documentation. Such clarity would provide clear direction for all decision-making for the Board and School management]*

2. The Principal and Teacher give urgent attention to the development of a school-wide scheme which outlines the plan for learning across the school. The Principal and teachers ensure that the special character becomes an integral part of all teaching and learning with an intentional focus in the development of a digital pedagogy.

*[The Review Team noted that the teaching schemes have not been addressed since the 2014 Accreditation Report and therefore, needs urgent attention]*

3. That Board of Trustees, Principals and Chaplain provide support with all Fixed-Term appointees who do not meet the Tagged criteria in providing an Induction of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs, values and lifestyles to ensure the school's special character is maintained and preserved.

*[Review Team observed that new and non SDA Teachers are teaching the Encounter Bible programme and opportunities to strengthen and build up distinctive Adventist teaching]*

4. The Board of Trustees, Principal and staff review the parent and student surveys and implement suggestions as appropriate.

*[Whereas the Review Team noted the value of parent and student feedback, recommend for the School Board, Principal and Teachers to address significant areas for continued improvement and strengthening the school's mission and vision.]*

## **SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **School Generated Recommendations**

The Review Team reviewed and endorses the school board's school generated recommendations:

1. Implement and develop a strategic marketing plan to ensure the sustainability

*[Whereas the Board will study the Adventist Schools Perception Report and to implement a marketing strategic plan to increase student enrolment in the community.]*

2. School improve the school culture by reviewing student uniform that includes the school logo.

*[Whereas the Board will consult with the Proprietors, parent and student feedback, to recommend the School Board the appropriate school uniform that will improve and strengthening the school's credibility within the community and engender school pride.]*

## **ACCOUNTABILITY ACTION REQUIRED**

### **Conclusion**

The Principal in consultation with the Board submit a proposal for addressing the above recommendations as part of the School's Strategic Plan, Annual Plan or Operational expectations as appropriate. This proposal is submitted to the Adventist Education Office by March 1, 2018.

As a result of this Special Character review, the Accreditation Review Team is satisfied that Rotorua Seventh-day Adventist School identifies and aligns itself to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## **APPENDICES**

**School Self Study Documentation**

**ERO Report, December 2015**

**School Satisfaction Surveys**