



Wesley College Trust Board

Governance Review

Phase Three: Governance Findings,
Future State and Recommendations

Prepared by Pūmau Ltd | September 2026





“The Wesley experience is what drives me, is the belief that we can provide at Wesley an opportunity for people to do well in their lives.”

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1. Executive Summary

The Methodist Church of New Zealand Conference's decision to dissolve the previous Wesley College Trust Board and establish interim governance was a significant governance intervention and provides the immediate context for this Review. Against that background, the Review also identified important strengths to retain through the transition, including deep commitment to the College and its students, enduring Methodist Special Character, significant institutional knowledge and continued investment in Wesley's future.

The Review nevertheless found material weaknesses in the way the overall governance system has operated. Existing strengths, structures and governance frameworks have not been consistently translated into clear, coordinated and accountable governance practice. The different Wesley College governance bodies each hold legitimate responsibilities, but the points between them are not clear. Roles, decision rights, information, assurance and strategic priorities have depended too heavily on individual relationships, institutional knowledge and key individuals rather than sufficiently reliable governance systems. This makes governance harder than it needs to be and limits the ability of governors to focus collectively on Wesley College's future.

These are system findings, not judgements on individual governors. However, the significance of Conference's intervention and the findings of this Review indicate that incremental improvement alone is insufficient. The future governance system requires a deliberate reset of accountability, strategic direction, capability, information, assurance and the interfaces between governance bodies

1.1 Overall Assessment

Finding	Overall assessment
Governance structure and accountability	Formal governance arrangements exist, but roles, delegations and accountability have not been sufficiently clear, consistently understood or reliably applied where responsibilities intersect
Strategic direction	Wesley has substantial planning, property and investment activity, but not one shared long-term direction connecting these decisions to College and student outcomes.
Special Character and bicultural relationship	Methodist Special Character is strongly valued. Its governance, monitoring and connection to the student experience need to be more explicit, including the Church's bicultural relationship with Te Taha Māori.
Capability and composition	Commitment and institutional knowledge are strengths but recurring weaknesses in capability, participation, induction, succession and continuity require a more systematic approach to Board composition and governance development.
Operational support and information	Inconsistent information flow and concentrated reliance on particular individuals constrain governance and can draw governors into operational matters.
Safeguarding and risk assurance	While positive safeguarding development has occurred, governance ownership, escalation, strategic risk identification and mitigation with independent assurance require continued strengthening.

1.2 Recommended future state

We recommend **Option B, Two Boards One Governance System**, subject to final legal advice. This model retains the distinct responsibilities of the Trust Board and School Board while deliberately connecting them through one long-term vision, clear decision rights, agreed governance interfaces and common expectations for information, Special Character, safeguarding and assurance.

This is different from the status quo. It requires the interface between the two Boards to be designed and maintained as part of the governance system, rather than relying on goodwill, additional meetings or the relationships of current officeholders.

1.3 Governance Recommendations

1. Confirm the future governance model after considering the legal advice.
2. Develop one long-term vision and integrated strategy for Wesley College.
3. Set out roles, reserved matters, delegations, governance interfaces and accountability in one practical framework.
4. Strengthen governance composition, appointment, induction, succession and ongoing development.
5. Establish explicit governance oversight of Methodist Special Character and the Church's bicultural relationship with Te Taha Māori.
6. Embed safeguarding within the governance risk and assurance system.
7. Undertake a separate operational review once the future governance requirements are clear.
8. Establish and govern a sequenced implementation and transition programme.

2. Review Context, Purpose and Scope

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this review considered the governance system surrounding Wesley College and whether that system has operated with sufficient clarity, accountability, capability and assurance. It examines the formal arrangements created through legislation, the Integration Agreement, Church structures and governance documents, and how those arrangements operate in practice. Its purpose is to identify the systemic weaknesses requiring reform, the strengths that should be retained, and the governance arrangements required to support Wesley College into the future

2.2 Scope

The Terms of Reference cover governance structure and accountability; frameworks, policies, delegations and decision-making; relationships and information flow; capability and succession; risk and safeguarding; financial, property and asset stewardship; Special Character; the governance and operational interface; Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Te Taha Māori and the Church's bicultural commitments; and future governance arrangements. The Review was deliberately inclusive of Te Taha Māori, ensuring that Te Taha Māori perspectives and the Church's bicultural relationship were incorporated throughout the Review's scope, engagement and analysis, rather than treated as a separate area of inquiry. This approach recognised bicultural responsibility as an integral part of the wider governance system and its future design.

This is a governance review. It does not replace legal, regulatory, employment, operational, property or safeguarding processes. It does not reinvestigate historical allegations or determine individual responsibility. Where specialist work is required, the Review identifies the governance issue and recommends the appropriate next step.

2.3 Governance context

Wesley College operates within a more complex environment than a standalone school. The School Board holds statutory responsibility for governing the school. The Trust Board holds proprietor responsibilities connected to property, assets and Special Character. Both sit within the wider accountability and bicultural relationships of the Methodist Church.

Property, investment and any future use of hostel facilities intersect with educational purpose, financial sustainability, pastoral responsibility, safeguarding and Special Character. Te Taha Māori brings an important Māori theological, cultural and governance voice within the Methodist system. These interests are distinct, and the intersectionality exists at the school serving the students, their whānau and the community. Effective governance therefore depends on clarity about each mandate and deliberate connection where responsibilities overlap.

Furthermore, this Review is occurring during a significant governance transition period. Conference's decision to dissolve the previous Trust Board and establish interim governance means the Review is not considering governance arrangements in the abstract. It is assessing a system in which concerns were sufficiently significant for Conference to intervene directly and require an independent assessment of the governance arrangements needed for the future. The Review has therefore considered both the immediate circumstances of the transition and whether the evidence identifies weaknesses that are structural, systemic or recurring across different governance periods.

24 Participants Invited

Current and former governance, Church and College leadership, and other identified contributors

21 Interviews or responses completed

87.5% participation

16 Online Interviews

76% completed interviews

2 College Site Engagements

Property development and student environment

5 In-person Interviews

24% of completed interviews

1 Wesley College Trust Board Strategy Hui

Trust Board only; no conclusions drawn about interaction between the two Boards

2.4 Method

The Review was completed in three phases. Phase One examined the governing documentation, previous reviews, delegations, plans, board and committee records, risk and safeguarding material, financial information and relevant Church documentation.

Phase Two tested the documentary picture through interviews, site engagement and observation of governance practice. Phase Three brought the evidence together and tested the findings against the Terms of Reference and their governance significance.

Greater weight was placed on matters supported across documents, interviews and observation. Frequency was not the only test. Matters with significant implications for statutory responsibility, safeguarding, fiduciary stewardship, Special Character or long-term sustainability were considered even where raised by fewer participants.

2.5 Limitations

The documentary review depended on the material provided and does not represent every governance document or interaction. Interview evidence reflects participants' knowledge, experience and recollection. Some participants held long institutional histories and others had more recent or role-specific perspectives. The Review considered these differences through triangulation rather than treating any single phase as determinative.

Legal advice on the future governance options was still pending when this report was prepared. The preferred model is therefore a governance recommendation subject to confirmation of the relevant statutory and legal requirements.

3. What Is Working

Wesley College is not starting again. The Review found established governance infrastructure and several strengths that should be retained through the transition.

3.1 Commitment and institutional knowledge

Participants consistently expressed a strong commitment to Wesley College, its students and its future, even where their views about past decisions or future structures differed. Current and former governors and leaders also hold considerable knowledge of the College, the Church, property development, Special Character, safeguarding and previous organisational change. This knowledge is an asset and should be captured through transition, induction and succession rather than left with individuals.

3.2 Methodist Special Character and bicultural relationship

Methodist Special Character remains a clear point of common purpose. Participants connected it with mission, service, pastoral care, inclusion, relationships and responsibility to young people. The Review also heard a strong expectation that the Church's bicultural relationship with Te Taha Māori should be visible in future governance, decision-making and accountability. The opportunity is to make these commitments clearer and more consistent in practice.

3.3 Governance development

The Church and Wesley governance bodies have invested in governance reviews, frameworks, delegations, planning, capability development and safeguarding. However, the Review found that the existence of these frameworks and previous improvement activity did not ensure their consistent implementation in governance practice. The governance challenge is not simply the absence of policies or frameworks but the failure to consistently translate them into clear accountability, disciplined governance practice and effective assurance. Future reform must therefore focus on implementation and accountability rather than another disconnected improvement process

3.4 Investment and stewardship

The evidence shows a sustained focus on long-term stewardship, including significant property and investment activity intended to support Wesley College. Site engagements made visible both recent investment and the remaining infrastructure challenge. The next step is to show a clearer connection between assets, investment decisions, College development and outcomes for students.



4. Critical Issues

Whilst the review found key strengths, the following identifies critical issues and show what the governance weaknesses meant in practice. Conference intervened because it believed the system had not provided the direction, participation, scrutiny and accountability needed to govern Wesley College reliably.

No shared collective vision

Clearly reiterated throughout the review, there has been no agreed long-term vision connecting the Wesley College's educational purpose, property, investment, hostel and Special Character decisions.

Governance responsibilities and due diligence

Unclear decision rights and inconsistent information have made it difficult for governors to exercise informed oversight and demonstrate how decisions were tested. This has lead to operational staff having to take responsibility for creating the vision and executing leadership decisions on the future of the College and students.

Representation and communication

Interviews identified a lack of clarity about the roles of committees and representative members, and their accountability to the College Board. While reports were provided, they did not always convey the substantive matters discussed or the decisions required. This left the Board without a shared understanding of those matters and created ambiguity about responsibilities and next steps.

Participation and continuity

Recurring absences and reliance on a small number of individuals have weakened continuity, collective scrutiny and succession.

These issues are connected. The transition must address how the governance system works in practice, with clear responsibilities, reliable reporting and independent review of progress.



“

“We need a Trust Board that can drive Wesley College to a better place, and I think we need the right people in the right seats to drive that space.”

”



5. Findings

The six findings below draw together the documentary review, interviewee engagement, site visits and governance observation. Each finding identifies the governance issue and the change required. Supporting evidence is summarised in Appendix D.

5.1 Governance structure and accountability

Formal governance structures exist, but the overall governance system has lacked sufficient clarity and consistent application in practice. The most significant weaknesses occurred at the points where the responsibilities of the Trust Board, School Board, Methodist Church, Te Taha Māori and management intersected. Participants commonly understood their own role more clearly than the authority, accountability and decision-making arrangements operating across those interfaces.

The evidence identified recurring uncertainty around delegations, decision rights, governance-management boundaries, information pathways and ultimate accountability. This resulted in excessive reliance on individual relationships and institutional knowledge and left governance bodies without sufficient clarity about when they were informing, advising, deciding, delivering or seeking assurance.

Governance implication: The future model must make clear who decides, who delivers, who provides assurance and who is accountable. That clarity is required regardless of the final structure.

“ I’m not sure that [the roles and responsibilities] were understood to the depth required to be good governors. ”

5.2 Strategic direction and future state

Despite strong aspirations and substantial planning, property and investment activity, Wesley College has lacked one shared long-term direction connecting educational priorities, the student environment, property and infrastructure, potential hostel use, financial sustainability, investment and Special Character.

The absence of an agreed direction has contributed to fragmented and at times reactive governance. Individual decisions and initiatives have not consistently been anchored to an agreed view of what Wesley College is becoming, who it exists to serve and how its resources should support that purpose.

Governance implication: WCTB and Wesley College School Board must operate from one long-term vision and an integrated strategy against which College, property, investment and development decisions can be tested and their outcomes monitored.



5.3 Special Character and bicultural relationship

Methodist Special Character is strongly valued, but responsibility for governing, monitoring and assuring have not been sufficiently defined or consistently connected to governance decision-making. Participants described Special Character through connection to mission, service, care, inclusion, relationships and responsibility. They also identified a need for clearer connection between Church purpose, governance decisions, College practice and the experience of students and whānau.

Te Taha Māori and the Church's bicultural relationship should be expressed through more than representation. Future arrangements need to support meaningful participation, relationship, decision-making and accountability. Te Taha Māori should be consistently present and actively involved in shaping the framework rather than being asked to respond after it is designed.

Governance implication: Future governance should define what Special Character and bicultural commitment require in practice, where accountability sits and how both are monitored.

5.4 Governance capability capacity and composition

Commitment and institutional knowledge are important strengths, but they are not a substitute for deliberate Board composition. The evidence raised recurring issues about skills, experience, trustee capacity, attendance, induction, succession and continuity. These affect the ability of the governance system to exercise effective oversight, ask the right questions, challenge constructively and make well-informed strategic decisions.

Wesley College requires governors who collectively understand education, property and investment, Special Character, safeguarding, finance, strategy and the Church's bicultural relationship. It is imperative, incoming governors receive sufficient historical and organisational context to exercise informed judgement without becoming dependent on individual officeholders or constrained by past practice

Governance implication: Appointment, induction, development and succession must operate as one deliberate and continuing capability system across both Boards.

5.5 Operational support and information flow

Governance effectiveness is constrained by inconsistent information flow and insufficient support around Board processes. Participants raised the timeliness, consistency and context of information provided to governance, decision tracking and the systems used to connect governance bodies and management. These weaknesses have created excessive reliance on particular individuals and reduced the resilience and continuity of the governance system.

Where governance cannot obtain information or assurance through reliable systems, governors can be drawn into operational detail. This blurs accountability and reduces the time available for strategy, oversight and risk. It also creates continuity risk when knowledge and coordination sit with a small number of people.

Governance implication. Governance needs fit-for-purpose secretariat, reporting and implementation support, with clear information requirements and boundaries between governance and management.

“

“For any board to be effective, everyone needs to know what’s going on and be on the same page at the same time.”

”

5.6 Safeguarding and governance assurance

Wesley's history makes safeguarding an enduring and non-negotiable governance responsibility. It cannot be treated primarily as an operational policy or compliance matter. While the Review found evidence of positive safeguarding development and recently a stronger focus on accountability, the future governance system must ensure that these improvements are embedded and independently assured

Governance ownership of safeguarding must be explicit. Governors must receive appropriate information, material concerns and risks must be escalated promptly. Both Boards must be able to obtain reliable assurance that safeguarding expectations are operating in practice and periodic independent testing should be a standing component of that assurance

Governance implication: Safeguarding must remain embedded within governance induction, strategic risk, reporting, escalation and independent assurance throughout the transition and within the permanent governance model.

6. Future Governance Model

The Review considered three options. Each can incorporate improvements to governance practice. The central question is how far each option addresses the way the overall system connects.

6.1 Legal considerations

Pūmau Limited referred the relevant legal and statutory questions to the Methodist Church's legal advisers. These include the respective responsibilities of the Trust Board and School Board, the Integration Agreement, delegations and decision rights, governance membership and conflicts, Special Character, Te Taha Māori participation, property and hostel responsibilities, and the extent to which greater integration can lawfully occur.

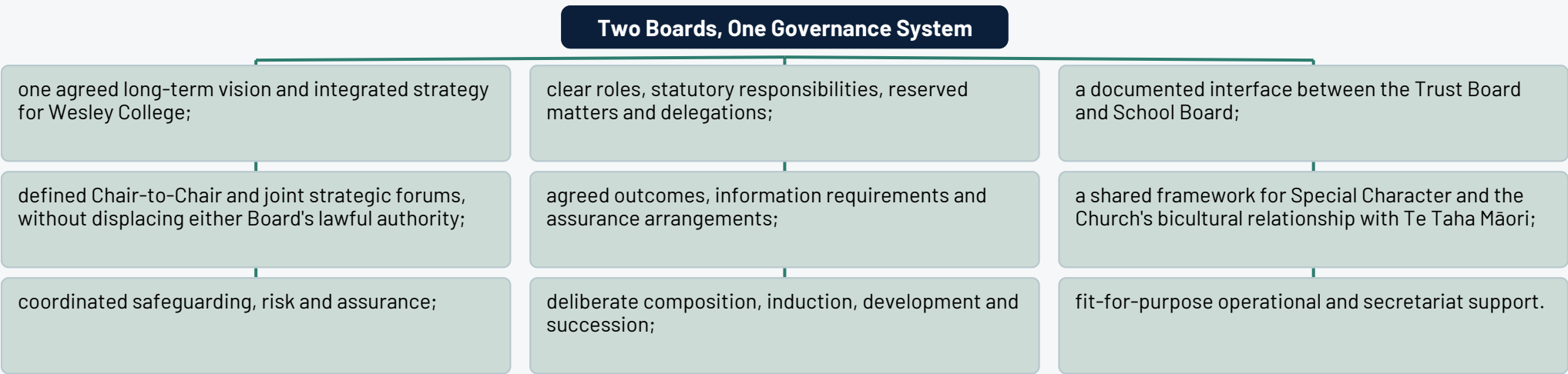
The assessment below is therefore a governance assessment. Any implementation that changes legal responsibilities, governing instruments or statutory decision-making must be confirmed through legal advice.

Option A Maximum Governance Integration	Option B Two Boards One Governance System	Option C Strengthened Status Quo
Approach Integrate governance as far as the law allows. Main strength Strongest potential to simplify the system and combine capability. Main risk Greatest legal, conflict and transition uncertainty. Structure alone would not resolve capability, support or assurance issues.	Approach Retain distinct Boards and deliberately design how they work together. Main strength Clear responsibilities with one strategy, formal interfaces and coordinated assurance. Main risk Requires disciplined implementation. Without clear decision rights and enduring mechanisms, it could revert to the current state.	Approach Retain the current architecture and improve governance practice. Main strength Least disruption and allows immediate improvement. Main risk Weakest response to fragmentation and remains dependent on relationships and sustained coordination.

6.2 Preferred future state

On the evidence available, we recommend **Option B, Two Boards One Governance System**, subject to legal confirmation. It provides the strongest response to the Review findings without assuming that the distinct responsibilities of the Trust Board and School Board can or should be amalgamated.

The model should include:



This model is not an enhanced meeting schedule. Its value lies in making shared strategy, governance interfaces, information, escalation and review part of normal practice so that the system can survive changes in Chairs, trustees and management.

“
If we want the school to thrive for another 200 years, we need key visionaries.
”

7. Recommendations

The recommendations form one programme of governance change. The model and legal requirements should be confirmed first. Governance architecture, strategy and capability can then be developed around that decision.

Recommendation	Lead	Timing	Required action
1. Confirm the future governance model	Methodist Church and Interim Trust Board	Within 1 to 3 months	Confirm Option B, subject to legal advice. Retain each Board's distinct responsibilities and agree the mechanisms that connect strategy, decisions, information, Special Character, safeguarding and assurance.
2. Develop one long-term vision and integrated strategy	Trust Board and School Board with Methodist Church input	Commence within 3 months and complete within 6 to 9 months	Agree the future direction of Wesley College and connect educational outcomes, the student environment, Special Character, bicultural commitments, property, infrastructure, potential hostel provision, financial sustainability and investment. Set outcomes and measures for both Boards.
3. Establish the governance architecture	Interim Trust Board and Methodist Church with School Board and legal input	Within 3 to 6 months	Produce one practical framework covering statutory responsibilities, reserved matters, delegations, governance and management boundaries, committees, joint matters, information pathways, escalation and accountability.
4. Strengthen composition capability and succession	Methodist Church appointing bodies and both Boards	Framework within 6 months then ongoing	Use a skills and experience matrix, transparent appointment criteria, independent capability where required, trustee capacity expectations, succession planning and ongoing development. Establish a shared induction covering Wesley's history, Special Character, bicultural relationship, safeguarding, property, finance and the two-Board model.

Recommendation	Lead	Timing	Required action
5. Govern Special Character and the bicultural relationship	Methodist Church and Te Taha Māori with both Boards	Within 6 to 9 months	Develop a shared framework defining what Methodist Special Character requires in governance practice, where responsibility sits and how it is monitored. Agree with Te Taha Māori how the Church's bicultural relationship is expressed through participation, relationships, decisions and accountability.
6. Strengthen safeguarding governance and assurance	Trust Board and School Board within their responsibilities	Framework within 3 to 6 months then ongoing	Define governance ownership, reporting, escalation and assurance. Include safeguarding in risk reporting, induction and Board capability, supported by periodic independent assurance.
7. Undertake a separate operational review	Methodist Church and Trust Board with independent operational and people capability	Commence within 3 to 6 months after confirming the model	Assess the roles, resources and systems needed to support governance, including secretariat support, position descriptions, workload, Board papers, decision tracking, information flow and implementation capacity. Complete this after the governance requirements are clear.
8. Establish an implementation and transition programme	Methodist Church and Interim Trust Board transitioning to the future Boards	Establish immediately after confirming the model	Set clear sponsorship, owners, milestones, dependencies and reporting. Maintain safeguarding assurance and institutional knowledge through the transition. Review whether the new arrangements are working after an appropriate period.

8. Implementation Roadmap

0 months

24 months

Period

Priority actions

Markers of Change

Immediate – 0 to 3 months

Consider legal advice on the proposed model, including each Board's statutory responsibilities, governing instruments, the Integration Agreement and any implications for membership, delegations and decision-making.
Confirm who will sponsor and oversee implementation.
Maintain explicit safeguarding oversight.
Commission a shared vision and strategy process with the School Board, Church and Te Taha Māori involved from the outset.

Conference has recorded its decision on the model and the legal advice informing it.
An implementation mandate names the decision-makers, leads and reporting requirements.
Safeguarding ownership and escalation remain clear during the transition.
The vision and strategy process has agreed participants and terms of reference.

Establish 3 to 6 months

Approve a practical governance framework covering reserved matters, delegations, due diligence requirements, information flow and escalation.
Define the formal communication and representative pathways between the Trust Board, School Board, hostel governance and wider Church governance.
Complete a skills and experience matrix and establish transparent expectations for appointments, attendance, induction and succession.

Each Governance body knows what it decides, what information it needs, and how it reports or raises matters with the others.
Board papers and decisions show those pathways being used.
Appointment and participation expectations are recorded and acted on.

Transform 6 to 12 months

Agree one long-term vision and integrated strategy for the College.
With Te Taha Māori, co-design how the Church's bicultural relationship and Methodist Special Character are expressed in governance, participation and accountability.
Implement appointments and induction, and complete the operational review, including the support, capacity and wellbeing of kaimahi who enable governance and College delivery.
Strengthen secretariat, reporting and independent assurance arrangements.

Both Boards are working to the agreed strategy within their respective responsibilities.
Te Taha Māori has shaped, and agreed its role within, the relevant governance arrangements. Governance receives timely information that allows decisions to be tested and recorded.
The operational review has resulted in a resourced response.

Embed 12 to 24 months

Monitor delivery of the strategy and review whether decision rights, communication pathways, participation, safeguarding and assurance are working in practice.
Address gaps identified by the Boards, Te Taha Māori, kaimahi and independent review.

In independent assessment tests the operation of the governance system, not only the existence of its frameworks.
Conference and both Boards receive the findings, agree any further changes and track them to completion.

8.1 Implementation Principles



Keep legal responsibilities clear. Legal advice should determine how any proposed change to formal authority, membership or governing instruments can be implemented. Each Board must continue to exercise its own lawful responsibilities.



Co-design where the relationship is affected. Te Taha Māori should help shape the arrangements for bicultural governance and Special Character before they are finalised.



Test practice, not paperwork. Board papers, attendance, decisions, reporting and escalation should demonstrate whether the new arrangements are being used.



Protect continuity through the transition. Capture institutional knowledge, maintain safeguarding assurance and ensure kaimahi have the support needed to carry out agreed responsibilities.



Report progress to Conference. Implementation should have named owners, regular reporting, clear escalation and an independent review of effectiveness.



9. Appendices

1	Appendix A	Scope of the Review
2	Appendix B	Detailed methodology, engagement statistics and participant cohorts
3	Appendix C	Documents reviewed
4	Appendix D	Detailed findings and evidence matrix
5	Appendix E	Comparative governance practice
6	Appendix F	Governance Assessment

Appendix A: Scope of the Review

Following the Methodist Church of New Zealand Conference's decision to dissolve the previous Wesley College Trust Board and establish interim governance was a significant governance intervention and provides the immediate context for this Review. The Wesley College Governance Review was commissioned to independently examine the governance system supporting Wesley College and to inform the development of clear, sustainable and future-focused governance arrangements. The scope and approach to the Review deliberately included Te Taha Māori. This ensured that Te Taha Māori perspectives and the Church's bicultural relationship were incorporated into the Review from its design, rather than considered only as a discrete area of inquiry. These considerations informed the Review's examination of governance structures, relationships, capability, Special Character, decision-making and future governance arrangements

The Terms of Reference and Letter of Engagement established the mandate, scope and approach for the Review. The focus was on the governance system and its effectiveness, rather than the performance of individual governors or staff.

The Review considered:

- governance structures, roles, responsibilities and accountability across the Methodist Church, Wesley College Trust Board and School Board;
- governance frameworks, delegations and decision-making arrangements;
- relationships, communication, information flows and collaboration between governance bodies;
- governance capability, capacity, composition and succession;
- risk management, safeguarding and governance assurance;
- financial and property stewardship;
- Wesley College Special Character and its relationship with the Methodist Church, including Te Taha Māori and bicultural commitments;
- the interface between governance and management; and
- future governance arrangements capable of supporting the long-term direction of Wesley College.

The Review was undertaken across three phases.

Phase One comprised documentary review and analysis to establish the evidence base and emerging governance themes.

Phase Two involved stakeholder engagement, site engagement and observation to test and deepen those findings.

Phase Three triangulated the documentary and engagement evidence against the Terms of Reference and developed the final findings, future governance model, recommendations and implementation pathway.

The Review was designed to identify the strengths that should be retained alongside structural and systemic weaknesses, material governance risks and areas requiring reform. It did not replace specialist legal, regulatory, operational, property or safeguarding processes, nor was it intended to reinvestigate historical matters falling within those processes.

The final Review therefore provides an evidence-based assessment of the governance system and recommendations intended to support the Methodist Church and Wesley College governance bodies in determining and implementing future governance arrangements.

Source documents:

Wesley College Governance Review – Terms of Reference

Pūmau Limited – Letter of Engagement

Appendix B: Detailed methodology , engagement statistics and participant cohorts

Review Approach

The Review was undertaken through three connected phases: Understand; Listen and Observe; and Analyse and Test. The phases were designed to build progressively from the formal documentary record, to stakeholder experience and governance practice and finally to an assessment of the evidence as a whole.

The methodology recognised that no single source of evidence could provide a complete picture of the governance system. Documentary evidence established the formal governance arrangements and recorded practice; interviews provided insight into how those arrangements were understood and experienced; and site engagement and observation provided additional context. The evidence was then brought together through thematic analysis and triangulation.

Phase One: comprised the desktop and documentary review undertaken in July 2026. Its purpose was to establish the formal governance environment, identify emerging governance matters and provide an evidence base for the subsequent engagement phase.

The documentary review included:

- constitutional and governing instruments, including the Methodist Charitable and Educational Trusts Act 1911 and Integration Agreement;
- governance frameworks, delegations, previous governance reviews and action plans;
- strategic planning, property and investment documentation;
- governance capability, succession and attendance information;
- Trust Board and committee minutes, including Audit and Risk and Hostel Council material;
- financial analysis and related documentation; and
- Methodist Church Conference records and other relevant Church and governance material.

The analysis considered both the existence of formal governance arrangements and the way those arrangements were intended to operate.

Phase Two: Tested and deepened the documentary picture through stakeholder engagement, site engagement and observation of governance practice.

Interviews Twenty-four participants were invited to contribute to the Review and twenty-one interviews or responses were completed. Participants included current and former governance members, Methodist Church and College leadership, and others with relevant governance, operational or institutional knowledge.

Interviews were semi-structured. A consistent set of governance areas was explored while allowing participants to speak from their own role, experience and period of involvement. Areas included:

- governance roles, responsibilities and accountability;
- delegations and decision-making;
- relationships between governance bodies;
- governance and management boundaries;
- information, reporting and assurance;
- risk and safeguarding;
- governance capability, capacity and succession;
- Special Character and bicultural governance;
- strategic direction and stewardship; and
- future governance arrangements.

The participant group included both current and former perspectives. This was particularly important because the Review was undertaken following Conference's dissolution of the previous Trust Board and during a period of interim governance. Including both current and former perspectives enabled the Review to distinguish matters associated with a particular governance period from weaknesses that appeared recurring or systemic across different governance arrangements.

Interview validation

Following engagement, individual interview summaries were prepared to capture the principal themes and perspectives arising from each interview, together with relevant supporting quotations.

The summaries were cross-checked against the interview transcripts to test the accuracy of the synthesis and attributed quotations. Participants were subsequently provided with their individual summary and invited to correct, clarify, add to or amend the record.

Individual interview summaries were treated as records of participant perspectives. They were not treated as findings of the Review in themselves. Matters arising from individual interviews were carried forward for testing against the wider evidence base during Phase Three.

Site engagement and governance observation

Pūmau Limited undertook two site engagements at Wesley College. These provided contextual understanding of the College environment, including property development and the student environment and assisted the Review in considering documentary and interview evidence within its physical and organisational context.

The Review also observed one Wesley College Trust Board Strategy Hui. This provided an opportunity to observe Trust Board governance discussion and practice. As the observation involved the Trust Board only, no conclusions about interaction between the Trust Board and School Board were drawn from that observation alone, consistent with the qualification recorded in the main report.

The engagement process was qualitative rather than a quantitative survey. Participant numbers and the frequency with which matters were raised assisted the analysis but were not treated as measures of governance effectiveness or stakeholder agreement.

Phase Three: brought together the documentary, interview and observational evidence through thematic analysis and triangulation.

Interview evidence was first analysed to identify recurring governance themes, areas of effective practice, concerns and opportunities for improvement. The analysis then considered where perspectives converged, where they differed and whether particular matters appeared across different participant groups, roles or periods of involvement. The emerging themes were tested against the Phase One documentary evidence and relevant observations from Phase Two.

Greater weight was placed on matters supported across multiple sources of evidence. Frequency was relevant, but was not the only test of significance. A matter raised by fewer participants could still carry substantial weight where it had implications for statutory responsibility, safeguarding, fiduciary stewardship, Special Character, financial sustainability or another material governance risk. This reflects the evidential approach stated in the body of the report.

Where participant perspectives differed, those differences were considered in context rather than resolved simply according to the majority view. Relevant considerations included the participant's role, period of involvement, access to information and the governance arrangements operating at the relevant time.

A matter was more likely to be treated as systemic where it:

- appeared across multiple interviews or stakeholder groups;
- was supported by documentary or observational evidence;
- persisted across different periods or governance arrangements;
- affected more than one governance body, relationship or accountability pathway; or
- had material implications for governance effectiveness, safeguarding, stewardship, Special Character, bicultural responsibilities or long-term sustainability.

The final findings were therefore developed from the collective weight, consistency and governance significance of the evidence, rather than any single interview, document or observation. This is consistent with the report's findings section, which expressly brings together the documentary review, interview engagement, site visits and governance observation.

Appendix C: Documents reviewed

Document Category	Document Name	Notes
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 28 Nov 2024 DRAFT EE	Safeguarding, finance, strategy, policy and board capability evidence.
Trust Board strategy	WCTB Strategic Planning Minutes 10 Dec 2024 DRAFT EE	Future purpose, hostel sustainability, funding and special character discussion.
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 20 Feb 2025 DRAFT EE	Strategy workshop, Denton Hall, business case, budget and safeguarding queries.
Hostel Council minutes	Hostel Council Minutes 20 Mar 2025	Hostel operations, safeguarding code, risk policy and student support evidence.
Property and Investment minutes	PIC Minutes 13 Mar 2025 DRAFT EE	Property governance, investment sustainability and expenditure accountability evidence.
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 1 May 2025 EE	Governance framework, code of conduct, committee monitoring and ERO hostel response.
Infrastructure minutes	Infrastructure Sub Committee Minutes May 2025	Infrastructure planning, reporting lines, meeting cadence and action planning evidence.
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 19 June 2025 DRAFT EE	Subcommittee reports, new reporting formats, policy approvals and chaplain appointment evidence.
AGM papers	Wesley College Trust Board AGM Agenda 2025	AGM governance appointments, committee structure, grants processes, attendance expectations and auditor appointment.
Register	Conflict of Interest Register Wesley College Trust Board June 2025	Conflict register and board skills matrix evidence.
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 2 Dec 2025 DRAFT	New Board formation, induction, committee restructuring, delegated authorities and hostel transition evidence.
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 9 Dec 2025 DRAFT EE	Consensus decision-making, code of conduct, budget information requests and governance review scope.

Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 9 Dec 2025 DRAFT EE	Consensus decision-making, code of conduct, budget information requests and governance review scope.
Audit and Risk minutes	Audit and Risk minutes 16 Dec 2025	Budget, homestay, staffing, investment and merged risk register evidence.
Trust Board minutes	WCTB Minutes 18 Dec 2025	Financial oversight, homestay pause, risk register consolidation and documentation access evidence.
School Board minutes	School Board Minutes 27 Feb 2025	Annual plan, student achievement, attendance, wellbeing reporting and policy review evidence.
School Board minutes	School Board Minutes 26 Jun 2025	Child safety, attendance, achievement, wellbeing, policy framework and succession planning evidence.
Governance Framework	Wesley College Trust Board Governance Framework 2025	Standalone governance framework: subcommittee reporting, KPIs, annual review, annual report and strategic alignment evidence.
Governance Review	WCTB Governance Review 2021-2025	Multi-year governance review evidence: reforms, strategic oversight, role clarity, safeguarding and KPI-driven monitoring.
Governance Action Plan	WCTB Governance Action Plan 2025	Phased action plan with governance framework, reporting templates, strategic planning cycle, financial sustainability and annual review.
Delegations	Wesley College Trust Board Delegations 2025	Delegated authority, approval thresholds, monthly reporting controls, business case requirements and accountability pathways.
Strategic Plan	Wesley Trust Board Strategic Plan 2025-2027	Strategic goals, KPI reporting intent, Church reporting, Tiriti reporting and quality assurance expectations.
Strategy Report	Wesley College Strategy Report 2025	Strategy groups, five-year goals, 12-month goals, quick wins, metrics and accountability prompts.
Skills Survey	Wesley College Trust Board Skills Survey June 2025	Trustee self-assessment survey across education, governance, culture, finance, risk, HR, senior management and strategy.
Succession Matrix	Wesley College Succession Planning Skills Matrix 2025	Board skills matrix comparing current competency, future requirements and met/not-met capability areas.
Investment Strategy	WCTB Investment Strategy 2024 v2	Investment income, capital growth, cash return profile and cashflow sustainability evidence.
Attendance Register	Wesley Board Attendance Register November 2025	Attendance analysis across meetings, members, attendance opportunities, attendance rate and below-70 percent group.

Appendix D: Detailed Findings and Evidence Matrix

Finding	Evidence across the Review	Response
Governance structure and accountability	Documents establish formal structures and delegations, but the Review found material weaknesses in their implementation, alignment and consistent application. Interviews repeatedly identified uncertainty at the interfaces between governance bodies and between governance and management.	Confirm the model and establish one practical accountability and interface framework.
Strategic direction	Documents demonstrate substantial planning, property and investment activity, but the evidence did not establish one shared long-term direction connecting College, property, infrastructure, hostel, financial and Special Character decisions. Interviews and site engagement reinforced the consequences of this fragmentation	Develop one long-term vision, integrated strategy, outcomes and monitoring.
Special Character and bicultural relationship	Documents place Special Character and bicultural partnership within the governance environment. Interviews confirmed strong commitment but differing views about how clearly each is governed and experienced.	Agree governance ownership, participation, monitoring and assurance with Te Taha Māori involved in design.
Capability capacity and composition	The documentary record shows capability and succession activity. Interviews repeatedly raised trustee skills, time, participation, induction, succession, continuity and institutional knowledge.	Establish a continuing capability system covering appointment, induction, development and succession.
Operational support and information	Reporting mechanisms exist, but participants described inconsistent information, reliance on individuals and governance compensating for operational or administrative gaps. These weaknesses contributed to key-person dependency, blurred governance-management boundaries and reduced governance resilience	Define information requirements and undertake a separate review of operational and secretariat support.
Safeguarding and assurance	Documents show increased safeguarding attention but gaps in consolidated governance risk and assurance. Interviews recognised progress and supported continuing ownership, escalation and independent assurance. Given Wesley's history, safeguarding requires explicit governance ownership, reliable reporting and ongoing independent assurance	Embed safeguarding in governance risk, reporting, capability and assurance across both Boards.

Appendix E Comparative Governance Practice

he Review considered selected comparable governance arrangements to identify practices relevant to Wesley College. The comparators are not presented as equivalent institutions or models to be replicated. Rather, they provide examples of how other faith-based, state-integrated and boarding environments address governance relationships, special character, boarding oversight, safeguarding and governance capability.

Kura	Relevant governance practice	Relevance for Wesley College
Hato Pāora College	A state-integrated Catholic Māori boarding school governed through a School Board alongside a proprietor Trust Board. Following historical governance disruption, ERO reported that constitutional issues between the two boards had been resolved, a comprehensive governance handbook was guiding practice, and relationships with leadership had strengthened. More recently, strategic leadership has been explicitly guided by both special character and kaupapa Māori. (Education Review Office)	Demonstrates that a two-board structure can operate coherently where interfaces, roles and relationships are deliberately designed. Particularly relevant to Wesley's bicultural responsibilities, special character, boarding and the proposed shift from structural complexity to governance clarity.

Kura	Relevant governance practice	Relevance for Wesley College
Rathkeale College / Trinity Schools Trust Board	The School Board governs the state-integrated school while the Trinity Schools Trust Board has oversight of Anglican special character, property and boarding houses. The proprietor operates across three schools, requiring explicit separation and coordination of governance responsibilities. (Education Review Office)	Provides a useful example of distinct but interconnected governance responsibilities rather than assuming integration requires a single board. Relevant to defining the WCTB-School Board interface and clarifying proprietor oversight of property, boarding and special character.
Dilworth School	Following its historical safeguarding failures and independent inquiry, Dilworth commissioned an external governance review, broadened trustee recruitment, introduced skills-matrix-informed appointments and strengthened Board expertise. Safeguarding is embedded structurally through a committee involving the Board Chair, a Board-appointed Safeguarding Trustee, senior management and safeguarding leadership, alongside external safeguarding accreditation and review. (Dilworth School)	Particularly relevant to Wesley's shifts from safeguarding response to enduring assurance and from goodwill to deliberate governance capability. It illustrates how historical safeguarding harm can drive permanent changes to governance architecture, recruitment and assurance rather than remain a time-limited response.

Kura	Relevant governance practice	Relevance for Wesley College
Catholic state-integrated	The Catholic system provides a mature framework distinguishing the roles of proprietor, proprietor appointees, School Board and principal. The Board governs; the principal manages day-to-day operations; proprietor appointees provide a formal communication and reporting channel; and special character is subject to explicit Board responsibilities, annual self-review and reporting to the proprietor. (<u>NZ CEO Handbook</u>)	Offers relevant practice for Wesley around governance–management boundaries, proprietor assurance and special character. Particularly useful is the principle that proprietor assurance can be strengthened through deliberate reporting and governance mechanisms without requiring the proprietor to assume operational management.

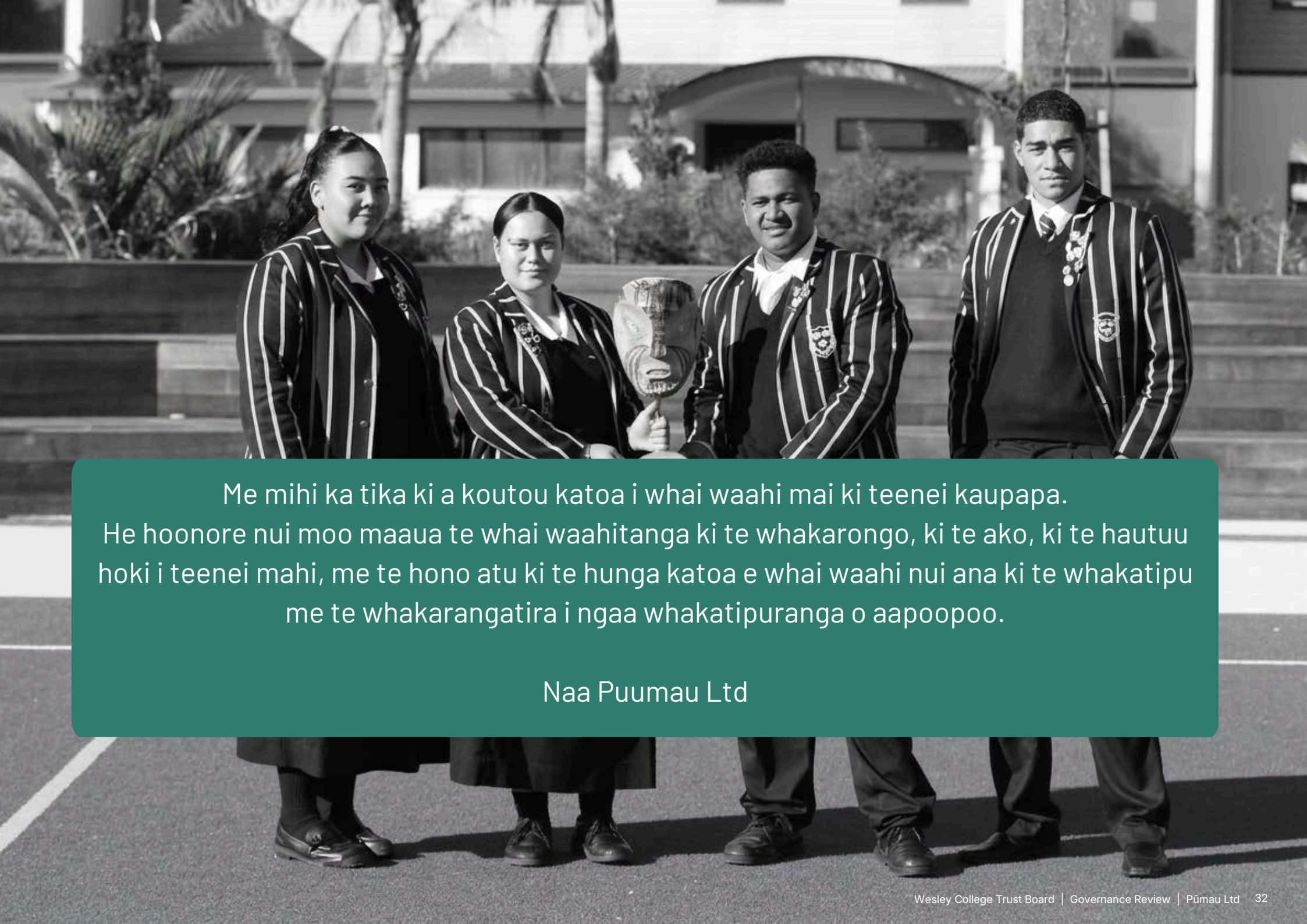
Appendix F: Governance Assessment

Criterion	Option A Maximum Integration	Option B Two Boards, One System	Option C Strengthened Status Quo
Legal feasibility	Legal advice required; greatest degree of legal testing	Distinct responsibilities retained; interface mechanisms require legal confirmation	Existing legal architecture largely retained; amendments may still be desirable
Accountability	Potentially strongest simplification, subject to legal responsibilities	Strong if decision rights and interfaces are explicit	Improved, but separate accountability pathways remain
Strategic alignment	Strong potential for one strategic direction	Strong - specifically designed around one shared strategic framework	Moderate; dependent on sustained coordination
Proprietor / School responsibilities	Requires careful legal design	Distinct responsibilities retained within integrated system	Existing responsibilities retained
Special Character / bicultural responsibilities	Potential for integrated oversight; legal and governance design required	Strong potential for shared framework with explicit accountability	Can be strengthened but remains across separate governance arrangements

Criterion	Option A Maximum Integration	Option B Two Boards, One System	Option C Strengthened Status Quo
Safeguarding assurance	Potential for streamlined assurance	Coordinated assurance while retaining clear accountability	Can be strengthened within current structure
Capability and composition	Potential for strongest combined capability	Allows deliberate capability across both Boards and shared governance activity	Capability strengthened separately
Operational support / information flow	Potentially simplified	Strong if common reporting and interface arrangements are established	Improved but multiple pathways remain
Efficiency	Potentially highest; transition costs/complexity greater	Reduced duplication while retaining necessary separation	Lowest structural disruption but greater ongoing duplication
Long-term sustainability	Potentially strong if legally achievable and well designed	Strong if integration is institutionalised rather than relationship-dependent	Greater risk of reverting to fragmented practice

The comparative assessment demonstrates that all three options can incorporate governance improvements identified through the Review. The distinction lies in the extent to which each option addresses the underlying governance system rather than individual governance practices.

Option A offers the greatest potential structural simplification but is subject to the greatest legal and transition uncertainty. Option C offers the least disruption but carries the greatest risk that fragmentation remains. Option B sits between these approaches: it retains distinct governance responsibilities while deliberately redesigning how the governance system operates as a whole.



Me mihi ka tika ki a koutou katoa i whai waahi mai ki teenei kaupapa.
He hoonore nui moo maaua te whai waahitanga ki te whakarongo, ki te ako, ki te hautuu
hoki i teenei mahi, me te hono atu ki te hunga katoa e whai waahi nui ana ki te whakatipu
me te whakarangatira i ngaa whakatipuranga o aapoopoo.

Naa Puumau Ltd