



Religious Education Policy

Policy Code: CI - REP
To be Reviewed: 2018
Ratified: April 2015

Identity Statement

To provide a school community that draws on the traditions of the Brigidine Order, that celebrates life, reaches out to others and actively cares for our world.

Vision Statements

St Patrick's Primary School strives to:

- Guide and support students on their faith journey through experiences of the Catholic tradition, building a strong sense of belonging, responsibility and wonder within our school, church and global communities.
- Develop an environment that builds on student resilience, self - respect, confidence and empathy – in partnership with families.
- Foster a learning environment that provides a holistic education that nurtures all learners in order for them to realise their full potential.
- Model and foster a safe and supportive environment for students and their families within the school community.
- Provide learning and teaching experiences that promote decision making.
- Conserve God's creation and recognise the traditional owners of the land.

Graduate Outcomes

We endeavour to create graduates who will:

- Have a dynamic faith
- Be committed to social justice
- Be environmentally aware
- Develop and sustain loving relationships
- Be life-long learners
- Realise their potential
- Be creative problem-solvers
- Be resilient, confident and independent
- Be respectful
- Have courage and integrity
- Be self-aware
- Enjoy their experiences

Basic Beliefs

We believe Religious Education in a Catholic School:

- Is a process of searching which engages the whole person, giving meaning to and purpose for our human existence.
- Links our Catholic Christian story to our personal story, connecting life to faith, faith to life.
- Calls us to be stewards to God's creation and responsibly exercise our creative spirit.
- Fosters a love of and care for the environment through both curriculum units and care for the school environment.

Therefore, we aim to provide experiences which will allow participants the opportunity to:

- Continually rediscover God through Scripture, relationships with others, the world around us, liturgy and the Tradition of our Catholic faith.
- Share personal stories within the context of faith and culture and to understand the connectedness between our faith and our life stories.
- Share, discuss, understand, know, apply, make connections, incorporate, be involved, reflect, celebrate, discover.
- Love and care for the environment.

Prayer



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We believe:

- Religious Education and prayer invites us to meet, experience and develop a relationship with our loving God in the journey of life.
- Religious Education and prayer urges us to reflect upon and celebrate our beliefs within a Spirit-filled Community.
- Religious Education and prayer invites us to discover the many rich symbols of our Church and to participate in meaningful liturgical experiences.

Therefore, we aim to:

- Model a variety of methods for individual and communal prayer.
- Enable children to experience a variety of prayer forms with self, others and through song, movement, dance, listening, scripture, silence, reflection, meditation music, and recorded work.
- Assist the children in recognizing the importance of prayer in their daily lives and provide them with the opportunity to respond in prayer to events in their lives.
- Introduce age appropriate formal prayers and explore their origin and meaning.
- Create opportunities to engage in a range of faith sharing experiences and celebrations within community through:
 - assemblies
 - Whole school or individual class Masses and Prayer celebrations
 - Other Sacramental celebrations, Yrs 3 – 4 as part of a Parish Sacramental program.
 - Other celebrations of faith within the faith community
- Develop the children’s awareness of the relationship liturgy has with our own daily living.
- Assist children in their understanding of the different features and parts of liturgical celebrations so they can more fully participate in them.
- Foster in children an enjoyment and love of liturgy.

Organisation

- Each classroom teacher will be responsible for organising daily prayer and for maintaining a prayer focus/table which reflect the liturgical seasons. Some daily prayer will include Christian Meditation.
- Both traditional and spontaneous prayer should be included in daily prayers.
- All RE units taught should include an element of prayer.
- The school prays together at Friday assembly.
- We gather as a school to pray in celebration, times of crisis or when serious incidents have occurred.
- Prayers are included regularly in the school newsletter especially in relation to special events, celebrations, commemorations, crisis or incidents.

The following will be used as a guide to teaching formal prayers in the classroom

P/1/2	3/4	5/6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sign of the Cross - Our Father - Prayer before Meals - Hail Mary - Morning Prayer - Response to Prayers of Intercession - Spontaneous Prayer 	<p><i>All of the above and...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eucharistic prayer for Children - Act of Contrition - Spontaneous Prayer - Rosary - Renewal of Baptismal Promises (Confirmation) 	<p><i>All of the above</i></p>

Sacraments



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Background: We work in accordance with the “Steps In Faith” Policy on Sacraments of Initiation, released by the Diocese of Sandhurst. St Patrick’s Parish and School conducts preparation programs for Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist in conjunction with Our Lady’s Parish and school and St Bernard’s School.

We believe:

- The role of parents is vitally important in the children’s sacramental preparation and therefore the emphasis and time commitment to the preparation needs to be directed towards them.
- That parents, as with Baptism preparation, will approach the Parish to enrol their children in sacramental preparation.
- That deepening our understanding of the sacraments is a life-long process which is primarily lived out in the context of family and Parish.

Therefore, our aims are:

- To initiate children into the liturgical life of the faith community by:
 - creatively using authentic and robust symbols and rites,
 - by inviting, welcoming, accepting and affirming families yet opening them to new challenges,
 - making a commitment to support families in the process,
 - simultaneously delivering a Prep – 6 program in the school to support the family Parish program.
- To provide catechesis that is appropriate to the age and ability of the children so that they develop:
 - a sense of wonder and awe of God through family and Parish celebrations,
 - an appreciation that God loves and forgives them,
 - an ability to distinguish between ordinary food and Eucharistic food,
 - familiarity with prayer and liturgy through regular experiences in the Parish, the home and the classroom.

Religious Education units are to be taught, at all levels of the school, to support the particular sacramental program conducted by the parish.

Information for Implementation of Religious Education

The specific areas of Scripture, Prayer, Liturgy, Sacraments, and Social Justice are taken into consideration simultaneously in the planning and delivery of Religious Education, so that the program is both comprehensive and holistic.

Issues of Social Justice are being addressed by aligning the Social Skills and Self Esteem Programs (in accordance with Personal and Interpersonal Learning strands of (AusVELS) to the Gospel Values and by placing Religious Education within the Integrated Curriculum when the focus is appropriate.

Agreed Major Teaching and Learning Strategies

The Shared Christian Praxis is our major strategy. The delivery of our Religious Education program incorporates teaching and learning strategies that are common to all Domains. (Refer to Sandhurst Teaching and Learning Module, St. Patrick’s Teaching and Learning Policy and The Source Of Life).

All Religious Education units will be based on our Diocesan Program – *Source Of Life*.

Teaching the Religious Education program includes:

- An Integrated Curriculum - The Inquiry Approach
- Sacramental Programs
- Liturgies
- Prayer
- The Church’s Liturgical year
- Drama, dance and music
- Life Relationships Program
- Godly play
- Making Jesus Real



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Organisation

- One Pupil Free Day (or equivalent) per year for whole staff Faith Development. These may involve other CREW schools.
- Religious Education curriculum will be planned, delivered and assessed (of knowledge only where appropriate) as in all other areas of the curriculum.
- That a daily allocation of time be given to Religious Education and where possible, integrated as part of the overall curriculum.
- That scripture, prayer and liturgy be included in the planning of all units as recommended in the Source of Life.
- That staff prayer be well planned and shared by all staff.
- Religious education Co-coordinator will brief staff on issues and developments in RE.
- All teachers are to be accredited to teach Religious Education. Opportunities to gain accreditation will be provided and support for ongoing professional development will be given.
- Teachers have the responsibility of organising the Religious Education program for their own class. It is expected that Religious Education is timetabled in each classroom.
- Daily prayer will be organised by the classroom teacher and Religious Education units should be integrated where possible.

Planning

Yearly overviews planned at annual whole staff planning day

- Term plans developed at Unit level meetings
- Individual weekly plans aligned to the term planner
- Sacramental Program Prep – 6
- Reconciliation
- Eucharist / Confirmation
- Parent meetings to coincide with whole school sacramental program
- Liturgical meeting to coincide with Celebration of Sacraments

Resources

All Religious Education resources are housed in the Resource Room on separate shelving.

- **The Source Of Life – Core Document**
- **The Source Of Life – Framework**
- **The Source Of Life – Unit Outlines and Assessment Mats/Rubrics**
- **Charter Of Sandhurst School Improvement (COSSI)**
- **Diocese of Sandhurst Teaching and Learning Module**
- **CEO Resource Centre**
- **Steps In Faith**
- *Expressions* Maurice Ryan
- *Into The Deep* Maurice Ryan
- *Just Imagine* Series Rita Wintour
- *Teaching The Bible* Maurice Ryan
- Subscription to websites such as *liturgyplanning.com.au* and *liturgyplanning images.com*
- Liturgy and prayer websites such as *dailyonlineprayer.com*. *senseofsacred.com*
- Information Folders: Mission Week; Family Week; Caritas-Project Compassion
- Godly play
- Monthly/Periodical Publications: Sandpiper, Inform

Budget

- At annual program budget meeting.
- RE must maintain a significant budget priority.



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Evaluation

- As part of Term / Unit plans
- At end of Sacramental Program
- Cyclical audits and reviews.

Record Keeping

- REC Budget
- Sacramental records
- Children's assessments – Class teacher

Professional Development

- Annual Pupil Free Day
- Cluster and CREW meetings
- At staff meetings – professional reading/visiting facilitators
- Leadership Team share attendance at diocesan Professional Development meetings
- Through the Accreditation process and other individual formal study.

Links with Families and the Parish Community

Links with families and the parish community are an integral part of St Patrick's Primary School. Parent involvement is encouraged through: class masses, sacramental groups, information nights, Religious Education articles in the school newsletter, school masses and liturgies, supporting Caritas, Mission Week, and Family Week.

Monitoring Implementation Program & Policy Development

- RE policy will be part of a cyclical review of all policy documents.
- RE budget is reviewed at the end of each year.

Role Descriptions

Principal:

The principal has overall responsibility for the implementation and effectiveness of the Religious Education program in the school.

Parish Priest:

The Parish Priest exercises a pastoral care role of the parish community. He has the overall responsibility of the faith development in the school and parish community. He also develops and nurtures school/parish/community relations. The parish Priest celebrates liturgies, rituals and special events and works with the sacramental team in overseeing the implementation of the sacramental program.

Sacramental Team:

The CREW team work together in preparing, implementing and evaluating the Parish Sacramental Program. They assist the Parish Priest in providing opportunities for both child and adult faith development.

Religious Education Co-ordinator Role Description

Active involvement in personal expression of faith:

- Actively lead or participate in prayer and hymns at assembly, class and school gatherings.
- Assist with the preparation of RE gatherings.

Promote a climate which is faith centred:

- Be models at assembly and prayer.
- Align school and parish focus at special times eg Project Compassion

Contribute to practices that facilitate the Catholic Christian message:

- Adult faith development reading and sharing at staff meeting.



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- Discussion prior to developing class units of work.
- Promote and contribute to RE cluster or diocesan days.

Religious Education – Support for Staff

- Preview and disseminate mail
- Coordinate the purchase of resources for both staff and students
- Promote the use of resources from the diocesan resource centre
- Support staff in professional development in RE
- Encourage and celebrate formal study
- Ensure PD is part of staff meetings
- Take an active role in future planning for PD
- Contribute to the effectiveness and the efficiency of the RE program
- Use the CEO as support for review and development of RE areas of curriculum
- Know the diocesan policies and core resources for sacramental programs
- Participate in the RE budget preparation
- Demonstrate understanding of responsibility towards parish and diocese
- Facilitate the Parish Sacramental Program
- Share information from REC meetings.

This policy will be reviewed on a 3-year cycle in accordance with the COSSI.

Principal Signature: _____

School Board Chair Signature: _____