

School Philosophy Statement



Introduction

The constitution of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) contains a Statement of Mission, which provides the expectations of the sole member of MACS, the Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne (Member), for Catholic schooling and the identity and work of a Catholic school. The Statement of Mission positions MACS firmly in the reality of the Eucharistic character of the Catholic school, affirming that its enterprise is one that builds community and provides opportunity for personal transformation.

With parents and parishes, Catholic schooling seeks to fulfil this mission by providing an environment in which students are enabled to:

- *encounter God in Christ and deepen their relationship with him*
- *pursue wisdom and truth encouraged by a supportive academic culture*
- *grow in the practice of virtue, responsible freedom and serving the common good.*

A Catholic school:

- *is actively embedded in the life of the faith communities of the local Church, which in turn is tangibly manifested in the life of each school*
- *is an essential place for the evangelising of children and young people*
- *exists to assist students, and their families, to integrate faith, reason, life and culture*
- *is conspicuously Christian in outlook, explicitly Catholic in faith and practice, and intentionally missionary in orientation*
- *cultivates spiritual, social and emotional growth in a safe and protective environment*
- *provides a learning environment in which the whole educational community is formed to embrace life in all its fullness (Jn 10.10)*
- *offers a human formation that has the intellectual, practical and moral excellence of learners at its heart*
- *forms consciences, fosters peace and develops respectful dialogue, at the service of intellectual charity*
- *encourages the discovery of Catholic cultural heritage, especially in art, music, literature and architecture.*

Sacred Heart is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by MACS.

Sacred Heart is a Catholic primary school which has been established to provide quality education in the Catholic doctrine for families in the Newport area.

Vision

In the spirit of St Mary of the Cross and our Catholic faith, we promote in our students a profound sense of hope and joy in life, and challenge them to strive for excellence in their learning
“May the spirit of the Sacred Heart animate you.” Mary MacKillop (1906)



Our 'Living Vision' represents what our Vision looks like, sounds like and feels like each and every day at Sacred Heart. The educators and children reflect constantly on the true spirit of Sacred Heart as a Catholic faith community and how we are enacting this with one another each day. We label specific examples of each one to ensure that our Vision is truly alive and reflective of living our lives in the example of Jesus Christ.

Philosophy enactment

Through our Curriculum and modelling we will promote and develop respect, tolerance, compassion, equality, justice and joy in each other's presence. We will provide opportunities to develop and celebrate our gifts, talents, creativity and individuality. We will ensure that policies and programs nurture the whole person and cater for student needs.

We acknowledge the role of families and provide programs and services to support them.

We will promote a sense of family within the school providing opportunities for students to work in a harmonious environment, which is conducive to learning and reflection.

Faith

As we journey together in faith our aim is to be a community which, by naming Jesus as our model, promotes justice and opportunities to act justly at school, in the local community and globally. Through the teaching of gospel values and celebrating the sacraments as a community, we strive to nurture the spiritual development of each child.

Through sharing the word of God and learning and celebrating Jesus' love for each person, we strive to promote a sense of self, including a love of and pride in self. In doing this we celebrate our diversity through family and community.

Educational

As a school we will provide students with planned learning opportunities in which they experience success. Achievements will be celebrated and affirmed through school assemblies, concerts, newsletters, social media and news media. As staff we are committed to ongoing learning and formal study in the pursuit of excellence.

Our school will provide staff with informed practice to teach educational programs that will instil a love for learning and encourage students to respond to the best of their abilities.

By providing the children with an inclusive curriculum and teaching the necessary skills, we develop the children's sense of justice and empower them to become active and informed citizens with the values and philosophies to equip them in their world.

Sacred Heart School has high expectations of all students. We aim to provide a rich and broad spectrum of educational experiences that offer our students opportunities for learning and personal development. We want students to experience success in their learning and support them in aspiring to 'individual greatness'. We provide programs to further assist students with specific learning needs.

Maintaining a safe, harmonious place for our staff, students and families to learn and grow together is a priority.

Religious Education

Through our Religious Education program, children develop an understanding of what it means to be Catholic. We teach our Catholic traditions including an awareness of and respect for other faiths, cultures, traditions and the environment. Our classrooms contain visible signs of our faith and traditions. We view our role in the Catholic school as one of invitation. We invite our children and families to enter into a conversation about faith. We enable children to 'meet Jesus'. Most importantly is our belief in the goodness of all and in the potential of each child in our care.

We have close links with our Catholic parish community. Together with our parish community we provide a sacramental program which offers the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. We celebrate the Eucharist as a class, whole school and parish community.

Pastoral Care

At Sacred Heart we aim to live the example of Jesus Christ. Maintaining student and staff wellbeing is a key part of our mission. Social and emotional learning is regarded as an essential component to the education of the whole child. We work in partnership with community organisations working with students and families in a proactive approach, in order to address social learning needs and wellbeing for students and their families.

We believe that everyone has the right to feel and be safe at school.

We follow a 'Restorative' approach to discipline. Through this approach we view relationship-building and behaviour management as a means to strengthen community among students and between students, teachers and parents. Conflict is seen as causing harm to people and relationships, and there is an obligation first to repair this harm in order for the people involved to move forward. It is a way of educating students towards self-regulated right behaviour that is respectful of all concerned. In particular, it puts the onus back on the wrongdoer to be truly accountable for their behaviour and to repair any harm caused to others.

Reporting

The MACS Board will ensure schools have implemented a contextualised school philosophy using this template through the annual report to the school community and regular school review processes (at least once every four years).