



ST JOHN FISHER CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Religious Education Policy

INTRODUCTION

St John Fisher Catholic School is a K-6 learning environment in which the children are arranged according to multi-aged learning groups of K/1, 1/ 2, 3/ 4, Year 5 and Year 6. Children in Early Stage One/ Stage One will participate in a three-year learning cycle and students in Stage Two and Stage Three will participate in a two-year learning cycle (see appendix I of this policy). The modules of work within these cycles are organised according to the Liturgical Year, the Parish Sacramental Program and core topics to be covered as directed by the Catholic Schools Office. Modules of work will be designed so as to enable children to experience the outcomes through a variety of experiences appropriate to their level of Faith Development. Learning experiences will be planned and designed to provide opportunities for children to develop the outcomes encompassing knowledge and understanding, skills, and values and attitudes.

PURPOSE/RATIONALE

Through application of this policy, St John Fisher Catholic School aims to develop:

“A Christ-centred community in which Gospel values are evident, learned and lived. A place where the individuality of all is nurtured and respected.”

It also aims to ensure opportunities for children to:

- *respond personally to God’s unique love for each of us;*
- *celebrate and share our Catholic Faith and life experience;*
- *develop an understanding and knowledge of our Catholic Story, our beliefs and their implications, for our lives;*
- *live with each other in the love of Jesus.*

AIM

The teaching of the modules from the Religious Education Curriculum aims to:

- promote the development of a personal relationship with the risen Jesus;
- ensure each child has the opportunity to know our Catholic Traditions and beliefs;
- provide exposure to a wide variety of prayer experiences;
- facilitate regular reflection on the Scriptures;
- promote our call to Mission, Peace and Justice for all;
- develop Christian Values and Attitudes.

BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING

The teaching staff of Saint John Fisher Catholic School believes that:-

- Religious Education should be interesting and stimulating for students;
- learning activities should be hands-on whenever possible;
- tasks need to be open-ended to cater for the wide range of ability;
- students need to experience a combination of individual, small group and larger group activities;
- content needs to relate to the students own lived experience whilst challenging them to deepen their relationship with Jesus and live the Gospel values;

- opportunities for reflection need to be provided regularly;
- teaching/Learning experiences need to acknowledge prior learning;
- sensitivity to the fact that children come from a variety of Faith backgrounds and Parish involvement should be considered;
- all Teaching/Learning supports the achievement of outcomes.

RELIGIOUS DIMENSION

Within a Catholic School it is paramount that the Religious Dimension flows through to all Key Learning Areas. Students are therefore led to realise that faith and belief in Jesus are part of everyday life rather than a set of obligations and practices.

OUTCOMES

As a consequence of this policy it is envisaged that children demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of:

- Human beings as created in the image of God and called to membership of a Spirit-filled Church.
- The Church as a special community described as God's family.
- The many ways Biblical texts apply to their own experiences.

PROCEDURES

- the school scope and sequence is followed by teachers, determined by the Religious Education Officer and Religious Education Coordinator;
- Religious Education programming is carried out according to procedures indicated by the Religious Education Officer;
- time allocated to Religious Education is 2 hours per week, to be time-tabled preferably before lunch break;
- the Parish Sacramental program is supported by the school, by giving focus to the particular Sacraments at the appropriate time;
- whole School Masses are celebrated once a term. Stages attend Mass regularly each term. Opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation are provided during Lent and Advent;
- Liturgies are celebrated for Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, Lent, Advent and other appropriate events/memorials;
- each block displays a Religious Education focus - prayer table and notice board area, as well as Religious symbols;
- children pray together at the beginning of the day, before lunch and before going home at the end of the day. Other prayer times occur at assemblies and as the need arises;
- Religious Education has the same demands, depth and rigour as other Key Learning Areas;
- Religious Education resources are available in the Teachers' Library Resource section, Music is stored in the Religious Education Coordinator's office area available for staff to access;
- teachers are encouraged to borrow resources from the Catholic Resource Centre at Leichhardt. Forms are available for ordering purposes. Teachers may also hire Videos from the Cornerstone Christian Bookshop at Erina Heights;
- where Religious Education flows to other Key Learning areas, it will be indicated in the particular program with the appropriate coloured dot;

PLANNED EVALUATION

Class teachers will evaluate each module of work and list suggestions or comments for reflection. Any necessary adjustments will be discussed with the Religious Education Coordinator who will consult with the Religious Education Officer. Review of this policy will be due in 2004.

REFERENCES

- St John Fisher Catholic School Vision Statement;
- *Going Forward Together*, Diocese of Broken Bay;
- *Sharing Our Story*, Trial Religious Education Modules for 2002.