

AIM

The aims of the Religious Education at St Mary's are to:

- Implement the Archdiocesan Religious Education document- "Treasures New and Old"
- Build an environment which nurtures and strengthens the faith formation process
- Assist and support the on-going development of the school faith community
- Support the parents in their role as the primary faith educators of their children
- Develop a moral and intellectual framework for making life decisions
- Inspire our students to live out the Gospel in their daily lives
- Plan and participate in school and parish celebrations of prayer and liturgy
- Support the parish in parish based sacramental programs

EXIT OUTCOMES

When the children leave St Mary's it is our intention that they will have developed in the knowledge of their faith, have had the opportunity to grow through the reception of the sacraments and will aspire to live out the Christian values that are inherent in the Gospels.

SCHOOL OUTCOMES

Knowledge and Understanding

The children whilst at St Mary's will develop knowledge in the following areas;

- Basic doctrine of the Catholic Church
- Parts of the Mass, the significance of the Sacraments and the Ten Commandments
- The four gospels that tell about the life of Jesus
- Parts of the Bible- new and old Testament
- The unconditional love that God has for each of us
- An understanding of what is right and wrong
- The role of the Pope, the bishops, the clergy and all who are called to religious life
- The role of the family in society and that each person is a valued member of the community
- The global nature of many current problems by supporting missions and the missions office

SKILLS

At St Mary's the children will develop skills in;

- Praying in silence, spontaneously, liturgically, formally and as a community
- Expressing Christian commitment in action by showing they are loving and caring people
- Singing and responding during mass and liturgies
- Behaving reverently in the Church; genuflecting, receiving the Eucharist and making the sign of the cross
- Visiting the Blessed Sacrament
- Proclaiming the word of God
- Leading community prayer
- Self-discipline and self-motivation
- Using one's gifts and talents to develop fully

VALUES AND ATTITUDES

At St Mary's the children will develop positive attitudes and values towards;

- Prayer in establishing a relationship with God
- The Mass and the Sacraments as signs of belonging to the Church
- The Commandments and Christ's law of love
- Church and civil law
- The family in all its forms, as being the fundamental unit in society
- The life of Christ and the values derived from Christian living
- Their uniqueness and that everyone has a special role in life
- Valuing everyone's strength and accepting everyone's weakness as part of our uniqueness

RATIONALE

Religious Education is seen by St Mary's School as a life-long process which enables the child to critically reflect upon him/herself, the world and God in the light of Personal Experience, Sacred Scripture and Tradition. This empowers the learner to make decisions and respond. This process is then built upon at St Mary's through considerable work with the children and their families in Sacramental preparation, enrolment and involvement. We look to develop the Children's connection with God through workshop days, prayers, liturgy and artistic expression

ACROSS CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVES

Across curriculum perspectives encompass educational and societal issues of such significance that they cross all curriculum boundaries. The perspectives assist all students to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours in areas that are important to their successful participation in Australian society and to society's development. The across curriculum perspectives that are highlighted in our RE policy are:

- Catholic Ethos and Religious Education
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Religious Education
- Australian Education and Religious Education
- Environment Education and Religious Education
- Gender Equity and Religious Education
- Information and Technology and Religious Education
- Literacy and Religious Education
- Multicultural Education and Religious Education
- Special Needs Education and Religious Education
- Global Perspectives and Religious Education
- Social Justice Perspectives and Religious Education
- Values Education and Religious Education

CATHOLIC ETHOS AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that our Catholic Ethos should permeate all that we do.

Therefore teachers:

- Reflect Gospel values through all facets of the classroom.
- Use Science and Technology to explore the Gospel message.
- Encourage the children to respect the work of others.
- Provide different opportunities for individual students to express their thoughts, feelings and spirituality.
- Emphasise a reverence of life in all of its forms.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that the inclusion of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective provides all students with an education about the histories, cultures, values, beliefs and languages that make up these societies. Therefore teachers:

- Should recognize the nature of the learner and the needs of the learner group.
- Provide opportunities to gain an appreciation and respect for the uniqueness of culture within Indigenous groups.
- When incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in units of work, should ensure that such perspectives are accurate and do not stereotype.

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that the students need to learn all that is necessary to be active and informed citizens in their own society and country.

Therefore teachers:

- Need to provide an environment where the students are able to value their own background and experiences.
- Explore natural and cultural influences on the development of investigating, designing and making processes and the use of technology.

ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that Science and Technology provide avenues for students to appreciate, understand and learn more about the environment.

Therefore teachers:

- Foster enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of the fragility, diversity and beauty of life on earth.
- Through programmes developed from the syllabus, enable students to engage in the processes of investigation and design and making with the intention to preserve our environment.
- By investigating different environments, encourage students to learn about the impact of human activity on environments and how environments affect human behaviour.

GENDER EQUITY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's Gender Education is about excellence in the schooling for all individual students.

Therefore teachers should:

- Establish a cooperative learning environment that allows all students to experience success
- Provide opportunities for active participation encouraging student's expression of individual thoughts, feelings and opinions.
- Recognise, value and address the differing interests and experiences of all students.
- Research and acknowledge the gender roles of both males and females throughout the history of Science and Technology, noting significant role models from both genders.

- Ensure that the needs, interests and experiences of all students are catered for when choosing curriculum content.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that ICT plays an important role in the acquisition of information for Science and Technology.

Therefore teachers:

- Provide opportunities for students to develop skills that enable them to acquire information.
- Provide opportunities for students to use technology for the purpose of collecting, storing and organizing data to assist in solving problems.
- Use a variety of sources such as the internet, e-mail, reference texts, artifacts, original sources, archives, computer technology, telecommunications, people and the media.
- Develop students' understanding of the interaction of technology in society.

LITERACY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that literacy plays an important part in obtaining and retaining information in Science and Technology.

Therefore teachers:

- Provide a variety of reading strategies to gather information for appropriate topics.
- Enable students to explore different text types through reading, viewing, writing, listening to and talking about a range of subject matter when investigating, designing and making.
- Engage in collaborative group work opportunities which will allow them to develop confidence and competence in using language.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we recognize that the fundamental aspects of culture can be explored through Science and Technology. Studies through Science and Technology enable students to appreciate how important features of their own culture and those of others are expressed.

Therefore teachers:

- Enable students to develop an understanding about themselves as both individuals and members of groups. Allowing them to identify and appreciate human similarities and differences.
- Develop the student's acceptance that culture is transmitted by the shared understandings and practices of various groups based on language, religion and beliefs system, education, moral and ethic codes, the arts, symbols, customs, rituals and practices.
- Encourage in students a tolerance of all cultures and to consider their differences, particularly, when resolving moral dilemmas associated with scientific and technological issues.

SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's the outcomes of special needs perspective emphasise the ability of students with a wide range of individual differences to participate and succeed in many aspects of learning.

Therefore teachers:

- Will build upon the students' experiences and skills.
- Enhance self esteem by enabling students to develop competencies.
- Vary assessment procedures in recognition of individual differences.
- Encourage independence in learning.
- Teach elementary organizational skills and processes.
- Are aware of the supplementary resources available for specific requirements.
- Will address all students' individuality catering for the multiple intelligences.
- Recognize that students' learn in different ways and at different rates.
- Engage in interactive 'hands-on' problem solving activities.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we believe that Global Perspectives play an important role in the understanding that we live in an inter-dependent world. Therefore teachers:

- Provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of Australia's links with the rest of the world and the role that it plays in the world.
- Provide opportunities to develop investigating, predicting and designing skills

SOCIAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVES AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we feel that social justice is very important in ensuring that the individuality of each student is recognized, valued, nurtured and respected. Therefore teachers:

- Develop knowledge that each individual has certain rights and responsibilities.
- Encourage collaborative teamwork within their classrooms.
- Offer positive role models of fairness and justice.
- Ensure that teaching and learning strategies provide equality for learners and are appropriate to their requirements.

VALUES EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At St. Mary's we foster the Gospel Values and the 9 Australian Values. These values are intertwined with all that we say and do. The values are reinforced through the peer support program and Religious Education. We are beginning to build up resources in this area so that it becomes a constant in our school environment.

FAITH IN ACTION is a Christian action based program where the Year 6 students visit the elderly residents of the Mt St Joseph's Nursing Home for two sessions per term and provide entertainment (singing) craft activities and discussion.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

EARLY STAGE 1

1. Loving God
2. Jesus' Family
3. Church as Family
4. Prayer with Jesus

Year 1

1. Community Prayer
2. Wondrous God
3. Jesus' Forgiveness
4. Faithful Church

Year 2

1. Creator God
2. Caring Jesus
3. Church as Community
4. Patterns of Prayer

Year 3

1. The Word of God
2. Jesus' Stories
3. Church of Service
4. Sacramental Prayer

Year 4

1. Jesus' Commandment
2. God's Earth
3. Church of the Spirit
4. Seasonal Prayer

Year 5

1. Reconciling God
2. Jesus in the Gospels
3. Church of the World

4. Prayer & Scripture

Year 6

1. God Revealed
2. Jesus' Mission
3. Living Church
4. Prayer & Action

TIME ALLOCATION

It is recommended that teachers allow the following suggested times to be set aside for formal religion lessons each week. This policy recognizes that Religious Education permeates all KLA's and is carried on throughout the day.

Early stage 1- Two hours Stage 1- Two hours

Stage 2- Two and a half hours Stage 3- Two and a half hours

AGREED PRACTICE

Curriculum

All teachers at St Mary's plan their Religious Education program using units from "Treasure's New and Old" and implement all 7 strands throughout the year. The strands are;

God: Communion of Love, Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ: Word made flesh, the wisdom, freedom and compassion of God.

Church: Body of Christ, communion in the Spirit, community of disciples, witness to unity and justice, pilgrims in service to the world.

Sacraments: ritual celebrations of the experience of God's Spirit in the midst of life.

Scripture: Word of God in inspired human words, interpreting the community's foundational experience.

Christian Life: growth in discernment and responsibility, gifted and challenged in the transforming presence of the Spirit.

Prayer: growing in faithful relationship, listening, trusting and celebrating the living God.

Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of co-operative and multiple learning strategies using the Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn Treasures New and Old Teaching Strategies Resource Book. The Religious Education curriculum supports the mission statement of the school. St Mary's is a faith community that upholds the values of equality, justice and compassion, that emphasizes the

uniqueness of each person, that endeavours to develop qualities of character and citizenship and also strives for the children to be spiritual by being like Christ in their daily lives.

The teachers of St Mary's use the Share Christian praxis. The praxis process is grounded in the understanding that God has been and continues to be present and active in the community of faith, in the Spirit.

The term 'praxis' refers to the process of thinking about life, where God is actively present and learning from it – reflecting on action. People engage in praxis whenever they reflect on what is going on around them, including those events that they have initiated.

The movements outlined under the praxis approach are as follows

(TN&O Core Document – pg 61.)

Movement One Naming Naming the life experience of self, others and world.

Movement Two Reflecting Critically reflecting on life experience

Movement Three Christian Story Scriptures, Tradition, Liturgical Experience

Movement Four Integrating Life experience with Christian Story

Movement Five Responding Authentically living out the Christian Story.

MISSIONS PERSPECTIVE

We are very conscious of the evangelical arm of the church and build it into our Mission Fundraising as a way of developing the children's awareness of the greater global context of the Church and our shared Faith journey.

For many years, St Mary's was run by the Presentation Sisters. Most of the funds raised at the school go towards assisting the Missionary activities of the Presentation Sisters in the Philippines. Apart from Project Compassion, our major fundraising activity is held on the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – November 21. On or near this day, each class is responsible for some form of stall for our "Mission Day".

All students engage in mission units from Treasures New and Old. Within these units students may be engaged in local community and cross curricula missionary events.

GRIEF AND LOSS

Strategies are implemented as the occasion arises to support staff, students and parents who are experiencing a loss in their families. Rites and rituals are considered to be important components of liturgies during which the school community gathers to support those who are grieving.

The School Counselor is an invaluable support to the parents and staff in this process. She visits the school once per week and is available to provide support for both students and staff.

PRAYER and LITURGY “Growing in Faithful Relationships, Listening, Trusting and Celebrating the Living God.”

Each class prays together at various times throughout the day – especially before and after meals. Children and staff prepare and participate in special liturgies and prayer focuses. The school meets together each morning for whole school prayer. The staff come together twice weekly for informal staff prayer and on Thursday mornings where prayer partners prepare and present formal prayer for the staff. Also, each term we come together for whole school liturgies/ masses. Our major liturgical celebrations are;

Opening Mass for School Year Term 1

Ash Wednesday Term 1

Holy Week ‘Way of the Cross’ Term 1 – Year 5 lead

ANZAC Day April 25th

Combined Catholic Schools’ Mass Term 2

Grandparents’ Day Term 2 – Infants lead

The Assumption August 15 – Stage 3 lead

Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary November 21 – Stage 2 lead (School Feast Day)

Graduation Mass Final Week – Stage 3 lead

The Seasons of the Church are embedded and integrated into our teaching and learning programs. Holy Week is a particularly strong focus and the Year 5 classes dramatically present ‘The Way of the Cross’ to the school and wider community on Holy Thursday. This is typically expressed as a play which focuses on the 14 Stations of the Cross in a flowing mime and musical sequence.

The children learn and recite our school prayer. Formal church prayers are introduced and used in the following stages;

Early Stage 1

Sign of the Cross

Stage 1

As in ES1

Morning Offering

Act of Contrition

Grace before Meals

Hail Mary

School Prayer

Our Father

Stage 2

As in ES1 & S1

Stage 3

As in ES1,S1 & S2

Glory Be

Memorare

Thanksgiving after Communion

Hail Holy Queen

Responses for Mass

The Apostles Creed

Rosary

Angelus

SAINTS

As part of the RE program of our school the children will have the opportunity to study and/or celebrate the following saints and feast days;

Our Lady help of Christians - Parish patron

Assumption- Birthday of Mary

Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary- School Feast day

St Patrick, St Joseph, All Saints Day, All Souls Day

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

Note: Sacramental Programs are Parish Based. We liaise with the Sacramental Team coordinator(s) to provide assistance and support to the program. The program is delivered in Home Groups on a weekly basis during the term. Teachers of students in the sacramental programs identify support for the sacrament candidates alongside the units as defined in the Treasures Old and New syllabus.

Presently the order of preparation for the sacraments is:

Year 3 Reconciliation- Term Three.

Year 4 Eucharist – Term One

Year 6 Confirmation - Term Two

Just prior to each sacrament the Religious Education Coordinator plans and delivers a reflection day with the support of the Sacramental Team. This day is for further spiritual development of ALL students in the relevant classes as well as practical preparation for the ritual celebrations.

WEEKLY MASS:

Each class has the opportunity to lead and celebrate weekly mass (Wednesdays) in the school prayer room with members of the parish. A roster is allocated at the beginning of the year. Teachers are expected to plan each Mass with the assistance of the Religious Education Coordinator.

THE ROLE OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHER AND PARISH PRIEST (TN&O Core Document pp 16)

- Teachers are encouraged to take Jesus as their model
- Teachers foster an understanding of the teachings of the Gospel, the nature of Christianity and the way Catholics are called to live the lives within the Catholic tradition.
- Teachers use a wide range of educational strategies to encourage the learner to reflect on self, the world and God in the light of personal experience, Sacred Scripture and Tradition.
- The Parish Priest is an integral part of our school and an involved member of the Religious Education team.

SUPPORT

Religious education at St Mary's receives support from the following persons;

- Parish priest
- CEO Religious Education Consultant Team
- St Mary's REC, Principal and Class Teachers
- Parents
- Visiting Priests, Bishops and Catechists
- National Evangelisation Team (NET)

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

"The parents as first and principal educators," (Treasures New and Old- Parent Handout)

provide the initial education in faith for their children." The school compliments these endeavours by focusing on particular liturgies and prayer celebrations.

Parents are actively encouraged by, the school and parish to attend and participate with their children in all school and parish masses and liturgical celebrations. They can do this by coming to regular parish family masses and class liturgies.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As teachers of Religious Education we are entrusted with “ awesome responsibility and sacred privilege”(Treasures New and Old Core Document) of handing on the faith. As such the religion teachers have participated in several inservices familiarizing themselves with Treasures New and Old. They have also attended refresher courses on Shared Christian Praxis.

Teachers are also encouraged to update their RE qualifications through University courses. Teachers are encouraged to become accredited for teaching RE with the Archdiocesan of Canberra Goulburn Catholic Education Office. We are continuing to build and develop the RE resources including teacher texts for research and professional development.

Teachers are encouraged to attend special spiritual development days and whole school staff spiritual development days.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a vital part of any curriculum process. Within the stage-outcome structure adopted by Treasures, New and Old, planning, teaching and learning, assessing and reporting are closely linked. The assessment procedure follows the school’s assessment policy and guidelines but in particular reinforces creative and quality teaching approaches that cater to the various intelligences and learning preferred styles. Assessment as such needs to be rich and not just closed question answering. A student’s personal faith is not the subject of assessment or reporting within Religious Education.

It should be noted that the major assessment items are indicated with an (A) placed beside the item in question. All other assessment items are conducted at the Teacher's discretion and include anecdotal records, bookwork, participation in class discussions, artistic presentations, etc

At St Mary’s we believe that assessment:

- Should be related to the syllabus content and be based on the syllabus outcomes and indicators, which specify what students know, understand and are able to do in Religious Education.
- Procedures should relate to the knowledge and skills that are taught within the Religious Education programme.
- Should accurately reflect the students’ capabilities.
- The attitudes and values being demonstrated.
- Should recognise and value the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the students.
- We also believe that:
 - All teaching and learning activities provide opportunities for assessment of student knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values
 - Assessment activities should be constructive; focus on what the children can do, look for strengths and encourage further learning.
 - Assessment will require systematic observation of student’s work, questioning and appraisal of the products of children's work.
 - Assessment will focus on proficiency in using the required skills of Religious Education over a period of time
 - Teacher’s observations will focus on positive achievements

- Teachers will use a range of Assessment strategies to ensure information is gathered and focuses on proficiency in using the required skills pertinent to this key learning area. They include strategies such as:

- observation
- listening
- student - teacher discussions
- student demonstrations and explanations
- anecdotal records of student's performance
- analysing samples of students work
- formalized testing where appropriate
- photographs and videos of activities.

- The Units of work selected across the K-6 classes are sequential and cover the content areas of the curriculum. They have been chosen so as to allow for identifying a student's current achievement and in planning future learning experiences.
- Integration with other KLA's is seen as an appropriate strategy.

REPORTING

Reporting is a communication of information about student progress. This reporting reflects the spirit of Treasures New and Old. At St. Mary's we use outcome based educational reporting to monitor and report the progress of students and how successful the student has been in meeting set targets of curriculum.

As a result of ongoing assessment, the progress of a student will be communicated to their parent/guardian in both written and verbal form over the course of the year. At St. Mary's we inform parents/guardians of student's progress in the following ways:

- Outcome and indicator based assessment.
- Parent/teacher/student conferences at the beginning of Term 2. The Term One work is shared at these interviews.
- Formal written report at the end of Term 2 and Term 4.
- An interview between parents/guardians and the teacher can be made at a mutually convenient time at any time throughout the year.
- Reporting at St. Mary's reflects the spirit of the school's mission statement. As such, it should be undertaken in the ways that:
 - acknowledge parents rights to be adequately informed of their child's progress.
 - are meaningful, appropriate and understandable to the audience;
 - are appropriate to the stage of student development;
 - seek to build on achievements;
 - demonstrate links to stage outcomes;

- foster productive school/home understanding and interaction.

Written Reports are completed at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. Written reports are designed to provide an overview of the child's achievement and efforts across all curriculum areas. The written report form is regularly evaluated to ensure that it is relevant to curriculum development, taking particular note of outcomes and student progress.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is the process of reflecting upon classroom practice, units and policy in Religious Education to support further planning. We follow the CEO guidelines given to the implementation of TN&O and have developed school based planning and sequence to implement these new units.

Our school based scope and sequence was previously designed using "Sharing Our Story" and we are currently implementing the new units given the TN&O. Once we have received all the new units we will use a whole school approach to TN&O exclusively.

Religious Education at St. Mary's is one of its most vital and vibrant curriculum areas. It is alive with the passion of committed and dedicated staff. It is witnessed and visible in all our day to day activities and rituals.

Teachers need to gather, organize and interpret information in order to make judgments about the effectiveness and appropriateness of:

- plans for the teaching of specific units
- teaching programmes
- teaching strategies and practices
- assessment strategies
- resources
- Staff development

RESOURCES

Resources for Religious Education are kept in the RE resource section in the Staff room. Access to all staff is available. There is also the opportunity to access the CEO library for loans that assist RE in the classroom.

Teachers always ensure that a balance of analytical and intuitive approaches is contained within units and a variety of resources are employed to achieve this aim. We are in the process of acquiring resources recommended in the TN&O units. The "Teaching Strategies Resources" book developed by the CEO is invaluable in providing a variety of teaching strategies that engage the students in their learning and interaction.

- Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Treasures New and Old Religious Education Syllabus
- Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Treasures New and Old Religious Education Curriculum Teaching Strategies Resource Book.
- Other suggested resources:
- Guest speakers

- Field trips or excursions
- Internet
- Computer programmes – Web Quests
- Commercially produced teaching kits
- Library – School and Local
- Vision Website (from CEO)
- Music Resources available from REC office and the library
- Set of Bible and other relevant resource materials available from Library

References:

Treasures New & Old Core Document

Treasures New & Old Syllabus

Treasures New & Old Primary