



Religious Education Learning Area Policy

Vision Statement

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a Christ-centred community, within the Bunbury Parish, which aspires to educate and develop the whole child in a caring, Catholic environment, recognising and respecting the uniqueness, dignity and the rights of others.

Rationale

'Religious Education is the first learning area in St Joseph's Catholic Primary School's curriculum. This is so because, though a classroom activity, Religious Education is a form of the Ministry of the Word. Unlike the other Learning Areas, it is an activity of Evangelisation in its own right' (Mandate, 62). The Bishop is responsible for handing on the faith in his diocese and has the right and duty to oversee the Religious Education program and those appointed to teach it. (CCC 803-806). 'The Religious Education program to be taught in the Catholic school is that promulgated by the diocesan Bishop. Like Christian witness and catechesis, Religious Education expresses 'the divine power of the Message' (Mandate, para 62). The Religious Education program aims to help students learn the teachings of the Gospel as proclaimed by the Catholic Church and to develop a sense of the nature of Christianity and of how Christians are trying to live their lives. It seeks to show non-Christians something of the mystery of Christ.

Definition

Religious Education is a learning area which focuses on the knowledge and understanding of the Gospel as it is handed on by the Catholic Church. Catechesis provides experiences which deepen faith; it is the lifelong apprenticeship in Christian formation. "The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ" (GDC 80).

Principles

- Religious Education complements Catechesis offered in family, school and parish.
- The Religious Education program to be taught in Catholic schools is that promulgated by the diocesan Bishop.
- Religious Education in the school shall always respect parents as the prime educators of their children, particularly in the area of faith education. Policy statement 2-B5 – Religious Education (Version 2 – 2008) Page 1 of 3 4.4 The Religious Education curriculum shall be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as all other learning areas.
- Religious Education shall serve the evangelisation process by taking the students and their needs as the starting point for teaching and learning.
- Religious Education shall relate the knowledge and understandings of the Catholic faith to students' real life situations and experiences.
- Religious Education shall always present Catholic beliefs and practices in the context of the Christian Promise of Salvation and the questions and aspirations of the human heart that God alone can satisfy completely.
- Teachers of Religious Education shall be committed Catholics and shall give active Christian witness to Catholic beliefs.

Procedures

- Religious Education complements Catechesis offered in family, school and parish.
- Within the normal hours of instruction the time allocation for teaching Religious Education Learning Area shall be:
 - In three year and four year old programs, teachers are required to plan and provide quality programs, environments and pedagogical practices to raise the religious awareness of children.
 - Primary schools (Minimum Time) PP – Year 1 15 Minutes per day

Years 2 – 6 30 Minutes per day

- Liturgies and other activities of catechesis including Christian service are essential for the effective evangelisation of students but are separate from the Religious Education program and are not part of the time allocation. There needs to be at least 60 minutes per week of such experiences averaged over the particular year level's academic year.
- The Religious Education program, as promulgated by the diocesan Bishop, shall be implemented with reference to the principles and procedures of the CECWA Policy statement 2-B2 'Curriculum'.
- Teachers of Religious Education shall have the necessary accreditation stipulated by the CECWA Policy statements 2-C1 'Accreditation'.
- Schools shall keep parents/guardians informed on an ongoing basis as to the content of their child's Religious Education program.
- Schools shall work closely with parents/guardians and parishes to support the sacramental programs of the parish.
- Appropriate professional development shall be available for teachers of Religious Education.
- Appropriate resources shall be made available for the Religious Education Learning Area.

Assessment

The Religious Education Learning Area Document is in the Progress Map Book and available to staff on the shared drive in the "Religion" folder.

The Five Religious Education Outcomes

1. Discovering God
2. Drawing on Human Experience
3. Knowing Jesus
4. Living Like Jesus
5. Catholic Practices

- The RE Learning Area Outcomes identify the outcomes students are expected to achieve as a result of learning and teaching programmes.
- Through ongoing assessment, student progress is monitored and plans made for further improvement.
- The RE outcomes, like the outcomes of other learning areas "promote equity and excellence in Western Australian schools. They ensure that schooling contributes to a cohesive society that respects and appreciates cultural, social and religious diversity and provides learning that meets the educational needs of young Western Australians.
- The RE outcomes are mandated by the Bishops.
- In Religious Education student achievement of the outcomes is levelled. The faith response of the students and their personal beliefs and values are not.
- Teachers will use the Religious Education Progress Maps and Key Performance Indicators to monitor the achievement of targets.
- Students need to exhibit their understanding by developing products which illustrate their learning and its applicability to a variety of contexts.
- Years Three and Five students will participate in the Bishops' Religious Literacy Assessment
- Each assessment method has its own inherent strengths and uses, and each assessment method must be matched to the criteria that it measures. It is important to utilise a variety of assessment methods and criteria throughout a unit of work or course of study.
- Use of Multiple Intelligences in Religious Education for teaching and assessing is essential