



St. Martin de Porres School

Avondale Heights

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

RATIONALE

Religious Education is at the centre of both the formal and informal The values, ideals and challenges of the Gospel, embodied in the person of Jesus Christ, find explicit expression in the curriculum and ethos of St. Martin de Porres, as do the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.

An integral part of a primary school R.E. program is the encounter of the Word of God with the experience of the person. If catechesis (maturing in faith) is to occur there must be a meeting point between the Word of God and the experience of the person. God's Word as expressed in Scripture and Tradition, must touch a person's human experiences for the event of catechesis to take place. In this way a person is able to integrate the faith of the Catholic community with her/his human experience.

In conjunction with the Church, the Religious Education Framework for the Archdiocese of Melbourne is a guideline for our staff to continue in the ministry of Christ through Religious Education. In support of parents, who are the primary source of faith for their children, St. Martin de Porres parish and school will work in partnership to further enhance the catholic identity of all members within our community.

The Religious Education Policy is developed in light our Vision Statement:

St. Martin de Porres parish school community comprises a welcoming partnership of students, their families & school staff **seeking to faithfully live the teachings of Jesus Christ in the catholic tradition.**

We encourage each member to strive for excellence, celebrate the diversity of background, develop attitudes of life long learning & become active citizens responsive to the emerging challenges of our community, our nation & our planet.

AIMS

- ◆ To engage students in their learning to grow in their knowledge, worship and love of God through the person of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ To support families in faith formation of their child & assist in their preparation for the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- ◆ To explore the knowledge, understanding and respect for catholic traditions and those of other faiths.
- ◆ To nurture faith formation & to allow students to ask questions about their faith.
- ◆ To interpret scripture and its importance by making links to every day experience.
- ◆ To reflect on the meaning, purpose and structure of prayer as a means to encourage a deeper relationship with God.
- ◆ To nurture an awareness and understanding of social justice issues so that students may translate this into action in order 'to make a difference'.
- ◆ To develop a sense of belonging to our parish community through participation in the Church.

IMPLEMENTATION

Using the Learning and Teaching cycle we have adapted from Wiggins & McTighe's 'Backward Design Model' (2001), we intend to achieve the aims mentioned above by providing opportunities for the learning community to:

- participate in dialogue between catholic faith and the diverse cultures and lives of others;
- explore new ways to express the Gospel as alive and authentic;
- engage in rich and meaningful experiences of prayer.

This approach to R.E. places, "students' lives and questions at the centre of the learning, with dialogue as both the process and the valued outcome of Religious Education" (Catholic Education Melbourne, 2018, p. 3).

OVERALL ORGANISATION

- ◆ Religious Education is implemented by the classroom teachers, with the support of the Religious Education Leader (REL).
- ◆ Professional Learning Team (PLT) regularly and termly in P-2, 3/4 and 5/6 areas of the school.
- ◆ Under the Religious Education Framework the school is using a pedagogy of encounter to plan, teach and assess R.E.
- ◆ Major resources used are the '*To Know Worship and Love*' student books, Godly Play, REsource website and professional development and research findings.
- ◆ The structure of lessons usually follows a process which includes; 'Tuning In', 'Wondering', 'Telling / Viewing the story', 'Responding' and 'Conclusion' (with share time of children's learnings).
- ◆ Regular evaluation at PLT levels and keeping of records of on-going assessment.
- ◆ Support of the CEM Learning Consultant R.E.

COORDINATION

Allocation of a minimum one day per week of school staffing to fund the release of an REL to oversee program development, implementation, assessment, evaluation and reporting of student progress to the community.

The responsibility of the REL is to:

- ◆ facilitate and support planning of units of work with each PLT each term;
- ◆ assist teachers in the keeping of records of on-going assessment;
- ◆ form an agreed, uniform school planners for R.E. units of work;
- ◆ support the parish sacramental program alongside the Faith and Liturgy Leader;
- ◆ maintain and expand R.E. resources for the school;
- ◆ plan and implement staff professional development opportunities – whole school days and at PLT level.

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

- ◆ Anecdotal records
- ◆ Observation in small groups
- ◆ Evidence of each strand (Knowledge and Understand, Reasoning and Responding, Personal and Communal Engagement)
- ◆ Formal testing
- ◆ Work sample via 'Seesaw'
- ◆ Parent / Teacher interviews in February, June and September
- ◆ Formal written reports, including student progress towards standards in June and December

EVALUATION

Policy review on an annual basis.

Ratification in Dec. 2003, reviewed 2009, 2014, redeveloped 2019