



# Stella Maris

## Catholic Primary School

113 OAK STREET, BEAUMARIS 3193 TELEPHONE 9589 2641 WWW.SMBEAUMARIS.CATHOLIC.EDU.AU

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### Religious Education Policy

#### Religious Education Rationale

Stella Maris works in partnership with parents to nurture the faith of the students. The teaching of Religious Education at Stella Maris Catholic Primary School will deepen students' relationship with God, develop strong relationships with others, and broaden their knowledge to create a just world. At Stella Maris students are invited to explore and celebrate the Catholic story in all its richness and diversity through reflection, prayer and action for the good of others and their world.

#### Belief Statements

In light of our overview statement we believe Religious Education should:

- make Jesus real, as God, for the children by teaching about Him and seeing Him as the central model for all we do;
- model the life and teachings of Jesus Christ as expressed in Scripture;
- assist the children in the formation of Christian values and attitudes and help them grow in knowledge and love of our Catholic tradition;
- provide opportunities for reflection on personal experiences, to enable all to grow in a developing awareness of God and faith;
- value the role of the school, family and parish which all play an important part in the Religious Education of the children;
- accept each child as a unique individual;
- encourage the children to actively share with the parish family all celebrations of the Church;
- provide opportunities for the children to celebrate Jesus in the Eucharist;
- accept the varying creeds of each family.

#### Aims of Religious Education

In the Religious Education of the children at Stella Maris we aim to:

- develop in the children a loving relationship with God;
- develop an appreciation of, and respect for God's gifts of the world to us;
- develop an appreciation of themselves as gifted, talented and valued;
- develop a sense of identity as a member of the Catholic Community, worshipping and celebrating our faith together;
- develop a realisation that our baptism calls us to an acceptance and tolerance of others;
- develop an awareness and knowledge of gospel values found in the exploration of Scripture;
- develop an understanding and knowledge of their faith with its sacraments, prayers and traditions;
- provide experience in the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church;
- provide opportunities for the children to be prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation;



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- complement the role of the parents, family and parish in the faith development of the children;
- provide faith education for our parents.

### Implementation

Religious Education is an area of the curriculum that calls for a blending of faith and life in order that the Christian message relates to the life situation of the children. At Stella Maris a life-centred process is used which facilitates by focusing on these sources for faith development:

- God
- People's faith
- Life
- Scripture
- Liturgy
- Tradition
- The world around us

### Organisation of the Religious Education Program

The Religious Education Curriculum describes learning and teaching for Stella Maris School Curriculum sits within the context of the Education Framework for the Archdiocese of Melbourne, *Horizons of Hope*.

It supports the full flourishing of all learners as spiritual and religious, physical and cognitive, social and emotional beings through Religious Education. It includes *Learning Progression* comprised of three strands of learning and five content areas, as well as content descriptors from Foundation to Year 12 and achievement standards from Pre-Foundation to post Year 12.

The content, as described in the *Learning Progression*, has its origins in the *To Know, Worship and Love* student texts

Teachers implement the *Learning Progression* and continue to use the *Teacher Dialogue Tool* and *Pedagogy of Encounter* as a resource for developing Learning programs.

### In order to achieve our aims and to help the children grow in faith, we focus on the following:

- Consulting with the Liturgical, Parish and Cultural Calendar to plan units of work and planned liturgical celebrations.

Each year staff members are given a yearly planner that details important secular and non secular events to assist with planning.

### Whole School Topics

- Lent and Easter
- Pentecost
- Advent and Christmas
- Reconciliation



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- Eucharist
- Confirmation
- Mary
- Feast Days and Festivals Eg. St. Patrick's Day, Feast of the Assumption
- Mission Week
- Family Week

### Unit Focus

- At Stella Maris Religious Education is part of an inquiry planning cycle. The units are covered according to the big picture goals, which need to be achieved. Units are taught within each Level to ensure a development of theology, knowledge and understanding of the Church's teaching.

### Liturgical Celebrations

At an R.E. Staff Meeting each term, staff members are reminded that they need to plan and prepare a liturgy. When planning these celebrations staff must refer to the liturgy and Mass Guidelines.

At the beginning of each year teachers are given a Prayer Box containing candles, bibles, prayer cloths etc. to enable all classrooms to have a prayer table.

Participation in liturgical celebrations form an important part of Religious Education. These include:

- Class masses/ paraliturgies once a term
- Whole school masses
- Sacramental preparation
- Church seasons or feasts celebrations
- Community celebrations
- Prayer times

### Sacramental Preparation

Class teachers and the Religious Education Coordinator meet to plan each Sacramental Program at a time convenient to all members. Class teachers incorporate into their program the preparation of the children for those sacraments. There is also an understanding that parents, as the first educators in Faith, should be involved in this preparation for sacrament. This is done through a family booklet to be completed at home plus Parent/ Family nights are held before the celebration of a sacrament. The aim of these nights is to involve and inform parents and to provide adult faith education.

### Sacramental Program

At Stella Maris the Sacramental Programs are school based.

**Reconciliation:** The Year 3 children begin preparation at school and parents are encouraged to attend a Parent Information Night where they find out more about the Sacrament, ceremony outline and the class program.



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**Eucharist:** The Year 4 children begin preparation at school and the parents attend a Parent Information Session

**Confirmation:** The Year 6 children begin preparation at school and parents attend a Parent Information Night where they find out about the Sacrament, ceremony outline and class program. There is also a Family Night with the children and parents on activities and discussion to deepen their understanding of the Sacrament. Confirmation is celebrated on annual cycle. During this preparation time the children take part in a Reflection Day.

### **Sacramental Timetable**

The Sacramental timetable for 2020:

- Reconciliation: Year 3 first term
- Eucharist: Year 4 third term
- Confirmation: Grade 6 second term organised with the Bishop
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### **Prayer**

Prayer is an integral part of life at Stella Maris and students are involved in the planning and participation of class prayer. Students actively contribute in the liturgy, joining in class and special occasion masses in the parish. The school's spiritual life is enriched by Christian Meditation, which is practised at all levels within the school. Christian Meditation aims to teach students to find God in stillness, silence, and simplicity.

### **Gestures, Prayers and Devotions at Stella Maris Primary School**

Please refer to the **PRAYERS, RESPONSES & RITUAL ACTIONS scope and sequence**

### **Staff Faith Development**

At Stella Maris the staff make time for their own spiritual nourishment both personally and as a group.

### **Staff Reflection**

Each member is also part of a team that is responsible for preparing a staff reflection once a term. This reflection is appropriate to the liturgical and non-liturgical calendar and to the needs of the staff.

Teachers take part in Religious Education Professional Learning throughout the Year.

### **Parent, Community Faith Development**

There are many opportunities for parents, parishioners and the wider community to be involved in. These include:

- Parent Information Nights
- Sacrament Reflection Days
- School Mass Eg. Welcoming Mass



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- Class Masses/Para-liturgies

Parents from a Christian or Faith Tradition other than Catholic are invited to participate in the Family Nights and their children are encouraged to receive a blessing at our Sacramental Liturgies.

### **Assessment Procedure**

*'Assessment in Education is a process whereby information about a person's growth and achievements is gathered in a variety of ways for a number of educational purposes, including reporting to parents.'*

Students exhibit different capacities as they grow. Hence, there should be different assessment instruments used throughout the years of schooling which respect students' development at each stage. Teachers need to assess 'knowledge and skills' and 'values and attitudes'.

### **Assessing Knowledge and Skills**

A variety of assessment tools are available to teachers in assessing the growth of knowledge and skills in Religious Education. Some options include:

- reports and presentations, written and spoken;
- research and assignment work;
- demonstrations and/or performances;
- observations assisted by annotated class lists, checklists and/or anecdotal records;
- interviews;
- work sampling;
- labelling, categorising, concept mapping;
- journals.

### **Assessing Attitudes and Values**

*'Development in attitudes and values may be most appropriately assessed by the students themselves. While the refinement of a student's personal values can be observed and recorded, these values are essentially individual and subjective. Any matching against an appropriate standard would be inappropriate. Parents have the right to know of the development of their child.'* (Guidelines for Religious Education p. 41)

As the development of attitudes and values is an important area of Religious Education the following methods will be used to assess these areas.

- Oral and written presentations in which personal values are expressed and explored;
- Completing sentences before and after a unit to note refinement of values;
- Student and teacher discussions;
- Creative writing: letters to editor, poetry, diary entries;
- Art, drama and role plays;
- Self-assessment activities by students.



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### Reporting

In developing the Religious Education report each semester teachers should take into account the following factors.

Reporting practices should:

- state and affirm the achievements of students;
- make recommendations for the future;
- be appropriate to the age level of the students;
- reflect the objectives and goals undertaken in the units of work.

Reporting can take a number of forms. These include:

- written reports and appraisals- June and December;
- interviews/conferences- February and June
- range of work samples;
- newsletter/information sheets;
- information evenings;
- displays.

### Evaluation

*'Evaluation is a process concerned with making judgement about the worth of an activity, unit of work, or program in terms of its impact on student learning.'* (Guidelines for Religious Education p. 45)

### Unit Evaluation

In order to ensure effective programming occurs teachers will:

- maintain yearly overviews of the goals and core objectives;
- reflect on their teaching, the choice of appropriate activities, use of materials and range of teaching/learning strategies;
- submit their Religious Education programs to the principal when requested.

### Program Evaluation

- In order to maintain an effective program the teachers will:
- evaluate the program in light of the fourteen goals over a two-year cycle;
- request parent involvement in evaluating parts of the Religious Education program;
- review the development of Prep-Six topics on a yearly basis;
- evaluate the planning proceedings and associated sheets on a yearly basis.

This policy will be reviewed in Term 4 2021