early years in order to provide a foundation for further learning
- use collaborative practices when compiling profiles and reporting on each child’s learning and development in the foundation learning areas and the key learning areas.

Environment
- locate, where possible, early years classes in close proximity to each other for multiple and flexible use of resources and facilities
- provide and maintain safe, flexible and developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor learning environments.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Active Learning
Active learning refers to the use of play and active participation as a relevant, powerful and effective medium for learning and understanding across the early years. These experiences and opportunities provide children with meaningful contexts which enable them to explore, use and develop spiritual, emotional, social, cognitive and physical skills and abilities, before these are applied in other situations.

Early Childhood
Early Childhood encompasses the development and learning of children within the age range, birth to eight years.

Early Years
The early years encompasses development and learning from preschool to Year Three. Preschool is the non-compulsory year prior to entry into Year One.

Learner-Centred Curriculum
Learner-centred curriculum in the early years is created and implemented to respond to the unique developmental needs, interests, learning styles and preferences of individual children. This requires educators to scaffold learning and to gradually reduce the level of support, thus facilitating and enabling children to demonstrate successful learning outcomes.

References
This policy statement reflects the Archdiocese of Brisbane’s commitment to the principles and practice of the early years of schooling within Brisbane Catholic Education. It has been developed through a consultative process involving classroom teachers, school principals, senior administration staff, parents and other stakeholders.

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium document highlights the need for ‘courageous renewal on the part of the Catholic School’. It states:

“...the scope of educational functions has broadened, becoming more complex, more specialised. The sciences of education, which concentrated in the past on the study of the child and teacher-training, have been widened to include the various stages of life, and the different spheres and situations beyond the school. New requirements have given force to the demand for new contents, new capabilities and new educational models besides those followed traditionally...”n.2

Brisbane Catholic Education accepts its obligations as an integral part of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The early years of schooling provide an important foundation for the future well being of every child. The Church recognizes the need to foster the spiritual development of each child through the role models of loving parents, caregivers, teachers and pastors.

The responsibility for implementing this policy will reside with Catholic school authorities and their qualified and dedicated staff who share in the overall mission of the Archdiocese.

I have no doubt that, through them, as they uphold the philosophy embedded in this policy, our commitment to the Catholic education of students, and especially to those in the early years of schooling, will be strengthened and renewed.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev John Bathersby DD
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

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