

- the needs and the aspirations of students, their families and the local community
- the knowledge and skills of teachers and others
- the requirements of Government educational policies and directions.

CONSEQUENCES

In enacting this policy our community of schools in partnership with families and others will promote:

LEARNING characterised by

- active engagement of teachers and students
- students demonstrating what they know and can do
- frequent and explicit feedback on progress
- high aspirations, personal discipline and intellectual rigor
- individual and collaborative activities
- reflection and self direction.

TEACHING characterised by

- a response to the diverse range of learners and learning styles
- practice that is contemporary, innovative and well informed

- respect for the Catholic Christian tradition
- catering for diverse range of learners and learning
- explicit, focused instruction
- collaborative professional learning.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS characterised by

- the Catholic Christian identity of the school
- quality facilities and resources
- aesthetics that encourage prayer, reflection and creativity
- responsiveness to the needs of students and teachers
- a safe, supporting and nurturing educational environment.

COLLABORATION characterised by

- strong partnerships between parents, teachers and students
- key partnerships both within and beyond the school
- interactive and quality engagement with the local church and wider community
- quality interactive processes.

GLOSSARY

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is the reciprocal, interactive, and dynamic process between teaching and learning. It is what goes on everyday in great classrooms.

Wink, J. (2008). *Joan Wink Web Site/Frequently Asked Questions*. [On-line] (Retrieved June 5, 2008), Available:<http://www.joanwink.com/faqans.html>.

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Archdiocese of Brisbane
 Catholic Education Council

Learning and Teaching

JUNE 2008

Policy Statement FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS





LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

POLICY

Learning and teaching in Catholic¹ schools empowers all learners in our community to understand, shape and enrich our changing world, by living the Gospel of Jesus Christ.²

FOREWORD

This policy statement on learning and teaching reflects the ongoing commitment of Catholic Education in furthering our Archdiocesan Vision of Jesus Communion Mission through the education ministry of the Church.

In our Catholic tradition the desire for knowledge is a lifelong endeavour. Catholic schools provide a curriculum that nurtures 'a love of learning and inquiry, offers a multiplicity of learning experiences, promotes ethical and lifelong learning, and above all fosters learning that leads to wisdom'. (Queensland Catholic Schools and Curriculum, 2008, pg 10)

The policy reminds us that learning and teaching are not simply for individuals but for the common good as well. They promote interaction that empowers members of our community each day to bear witness to God's presence.

A Catholic school is not simply a place where lessons are taught; it is a centre that has an operative educational philosophy, attentive to the needs of today's youth, and illuminated by the gospel message. (The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School n.22)

This policy is directed at all who work for Catholic Education and provides a clear reminder that we value learning and teaching because of their transformative, purposeful, holistic, creative and engaging power. Quality learning and teaching leads our students to hope in God and to offer committed service to others.

I commend this policy statement to those involved in Catholic schooling in this Archdiocese. I offer my heartfelt thanks for this important, life-giving ministry of the Church.

Sincerely in Christ

Most Rev John Bathersby DD
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE
June 2008

INTRODUCTION

All in Catholic schools are invited to engage in the mission of the Church in the world through daily active living of the Gospel. This encourages learning that is transformative, within personal, communal and societal contexts.

Learners bring with them rich life experiences and diverse religious, social and cultural backgrounds. Our schools offer a vibrant and relevant curriculum which respects this life experience and diversity, recognising that "every learner is in some respect like all others, like some others and like no other"³. Schools assist learners to make meaning of their world.

Teachers assist students to learn by providing creative and engaging opportunities for all. They nurture constructive partnerships with parents and others⁴ to provide high quality learning within a safe and supportive educational environment.

RATIONALE

Church documentation reminds us that the Catholic school's task

is fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life; the first is reached by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught, in the light of the Gospel; the second in the growth of the virtues characteristic of the Christian. (CS n 37)⁵

Within a Catholic school the cultural and religious dimensions of learning are interrelated. This relationship between contemporary culture

and the Catholic Christian tradition can be both harmonious and in productive tension. Collectively they promote in students the bringing together of culture, faith and life.

This approach to learning and teaching fosters coherence and a connected, meaningful understanding of reality. Students are formed and informed in the light of the Catholic Christian tradition. They will be taught by knowledgeable, skilful and caring⁶ teachers who facilitate quality learning. Students are challenged to become lifelong learners and active, engaged and ethical citizens.

Learning and teaching in Catholic schools relies on teachers who are:

- well formed in their vocation as a Christian and in their ministry of teaching
- growing and maturing, personally, professionally and religiously
- positive in their disposition towards young people and their families
- continually reflecting upon and enhancing their pedagogy.

Learning and teaching in Catholic schools is informed by:

- the educational vision, mission and policies of the Archdiocese and of the school
- contemporary educational research and practices

¹ The term *Catholic* in this policy is also inclusive of the three Ecumenical schools supported and administered through Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane to which this policy also applies.

² Adapted from the Overarching Goal for Learning, Brisbane Catholic Education *Learning Framework*, Brisbane 2002.

³ Rakoczy, Susan. (1992). *Common Journey, Different Paths Spiritual Direction in Cross Cultural Perspective*. Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, p.10.

⁴ The term *others* is inclusive of support staff within the school, community agencies and other educational providers which support the student.

⁵ Congregation for Catholic Education. (1977). *The Catholic School* (Australian Edition), Homebush NSW, St Paul Publications.

⁶ Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (On Christian Love). (2006). Strathfield NSW, St Paul's Publications, N 25, elaborates upon Christian love and care.