

Curriculum Matters

Volume 1 Number 3 2002



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Curriculum Matters

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Editorial

The September October break is almost here. I am looking forward to the Brisbane Catholic Education *Literacy and Numeracy Conference – Planning for Diversity* which will be held at the Father Bernard O'Shea Centre at Wilston. The conference runs from Monday September 23 to Wednesday September 25. Those who attended the 1999 conference will remember excellent presenters, prominent in the Australian arena of literacy and numeracy who gave inspiring and thought provoking presentations. Once again, we can look forward to a great range of presenters from our local schools as well as those from the national sphere. This year, in addition to the three days of the conference, a series of post conference workshops will be held on September 26. There are also two evening lectures for parents who are interested in literacy and numeracy issues which have been provided free of charge.

In this issue of *Curriculum Matters*, three articles relate to the literacy and numeracy conference. Melissa Spiteri, from St Eugene's, Burpengary, describes how she organises the Literacy Block in her classroom. Many teachers are finding a literacy block a useful way for learners to focus on literacy skills and Melissa gives a practical example of how she organises the literacy block in her classroom. Pauline Chester, Project Officer, CTP/Literacy/Numeracy, discusses the reviewed Archdiocesan Literacy and Numeracy Plan which offers a framework around which schools can implement a plan to enhance the literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. In the photo feature, Terry Wally and Lynne Madden of Mater Dei, Ashgrove, share how their students have set up a free market economy. The students have had to use a variety of skills in literacy and numeracy to set up and problem solve in this real life situation.

May 2002 saw the launch of the *Learning Framework for Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane* to school principals at the leadership forum. Damien Brennan, Director, Religious Education and Curriculum, has provided us with a background history of the Learning Framework as well as explaining the guiding ethos supporting the framework's development. His discussion outlining the relationships between outcomes based education, the roles, values and beliefs underpinning the learning framework, the learners and their communities, offers schools across the archdiocese the challenge to, "Take, play with and adapt this framework."

Paul Mackay reports on an innovative, learner centred approach to LOTE and SOSE studies at St Thomas More. Collaborative programming at St Thomas More has resulted in great success in the areas of student motivation and student learning outcomes. Another network of professional collegiality has been created in an East Brisbane cluster of schools. Catherine Cushing, Curriculum Support Teacher describes how this group plans for, and develops, consistency of teacher judgement strategies at an intraschool and interschool level.



Bernadette Barker

the Literacy Block

by Melissa Spiteri, Year 1 Teacher: St Eugene School Burpengary

As Early Years Teachers we work closely with groups of young children to develop their skills so that they become confident language users and language learners. To achieve this, it is important to immerse young learners in language by providing a classroom environment that is visually rich in language. The classroom should be non-threatening and encouraging of risk-taking in learning. The day should have a clear routine to provide stability so that children understand clearly what is expected of them. Most importantly, work should be interconnected, purposeful and matched to students' varying levels of development.

For many years the Literacy Block Approach has provided me with a framework that enables me to best manage the classroom environment and to maintain optimal use of learning time whilst targeting the needs of all language learners at their varying levels of development. A Literacy Block Approach requires a daily two hour continuous block of literacy time. It provides a routine for literacy learning that takes the 'mystery' away from what is going to occur in the classroom. This approach is particularly useful for younger learners. It incorporates whole group, small group and independent learning experiences. A variety of meaningful activities within an integrated linked approach provides purpose for learning.

Establishing a daily routine for literacy learning provides the students with an environment which allows them to take risks within

a setting that provides a sense of purpose for their learning. The Literacy Block Approach also assists with maintaining optimal use of time.

Even the youngest of children can learn the Literacy Block routine and take responsibility for their literacy learning. During language groups the children quite happily go from one activity to the next with minimal instruction from the teacher. This greatly assists with the flow of a Literacy Block. Of course the children need to be explicitly taught how to work co-operatively in the initial stages of setting up the Literacy Block. The students learn to work together quite quickly, supporting each other as learners to complete tasks as a group without close adult help. This allows the teacher to work uninterrupted during Guided Reading lessons.

Components of a Literacy Block

There are various components of a Literacy Block. They are: Speaking and Listening - oral presentation, language experience, social and active construction of knowledge; Reading - reading to/modeled/ shared reading, language groups, guided reading and independent reading; Writing - modeled/shared/ interactive, guided writing and independent writing

The Literacy Block components allow the teacher to target students' differing developmental needs with appropriate focused instruction. The students experience a strategic balance of activities in which the teacher is able to: provide a model

of effective literacy skills during whole group Shared Reading and Modeled Writing; support learners through the challenges of exploring new skills during Guided Reading and Guided Writing; and provide opportunities for all children to practice and extend their learning during independent tasks.

Framework for Literacy Block

Table A on page 4 shows the group structures and components selected to create core blocks of reading and writing within my Literacy Block. A core block of reading tasks, then a core block of writing tasks can assist young learners in gaining a connected understanding of literacy learning.

The Literacy Block components can be used in connected units with a variety of Key Learning Areas. However, it also provides opportunities for literacy skills to be explicitly taught and practised.



Students participating in group activities during the Literacy Block

Core of block can be repeated.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Whole group	Oral Presentation Modelled Reading	Oral Presentation Shared Reading	Oral Presentation Reading to	Oral Presentation Shared Reading	Oral Presentation Reading to
Small group	Guided Reading / Language Groups	Guided Reading / Language Groups	Guided Reading / Language Groups	Guided Reading / Language Groups	Guided Reading / Language Groups
Independent	Independent Reading	Reading task	Independent Reading	Reading task	Independent Reading
Whole group	Modelled Writing	Handwriting instruction	Shared Writing	Handwriting instruction	Interactive Writing
Independent	Independent Writing	Handwriting task	Independent Writing	Handwriting task	Independent Writing
Whole group	Sharing	Interactive Writing	Sharing Joint Construction	Reading to	Independent Writing

Table A: Core blocks of reading and writing

Guided Reading is an integral part of the Literacy Block framework. The lessons occur in small groups of four to six students and the text is carefully selected by the teacher to challenge the group of students within their zone of proximal development. During the Guided Reading lesson each student receives reading instruction pertaining to their learning needs.

Whilst the Guided Reading lessons occur, the remaining students are working within small ability groups. The groups complete a variety of purposeful activities which encourage development of specific literacy skills linked to the needs of the students in the group.

Table B outlines some of the possible activities the groups can complete. The groups are completing tasks varying in difficulty. There is a selection of tasks from across Luke and Freebody's Four Literacy Practices; Code Breaker, Meaning Maker, Text User and Text Critic.

Structuring two Guided Reading lessons a day allows me to see the more needy groups more often in a week. This increases the amount of small group instruction and ultimately meets the needs of all students.

Table B: Group Activities in the Literacy Block

Resources

An effective Literacy Block includes a variety of resources such as posters, big books, spoken texts and listening posts, guided reading materials (multiple copies of a variety of levels), reading and writing software and much more as appropriate to your classroom and students.

Some resources that I have found useful are; *Learning Centres-Self Directed Language Activities (Lower)* RIC Publications; *Early Literacy Games (Lower)* Prim-Ed Publishing; *A Sound Way - Phonological Awareness Activities for Early Literacy*, Love & Reilly; *Listening Comprehension (Lower)* Prim-Ed Publishing; *Phonic Games (Lower)* Prim-Ed Publishing

Currently at St Eugene School we are undertaking a CTP Pilot Project to enhance the continuity of our reading instruction, within the Literacy Block framework, across all year levels. The project will serve to review our

approach to reading instruction with a focus on specific outcomes, whilst the whole school approach will offer consistency to all learners. It will also promote collegial support, offering teachers a common forum for discussion about reading instruction. A third focus is support for students with needs on a consistent basis from year to year, offering them support that acknowledges their progress and continuing needs. During this time I hope to further streamline my Language Group and Guided Reading session by continuing to establish language tasks matched to student needs.

Developing and refining a Literacy Block approach is neverending as there are so many possibilities and ways it can be adapted to best meet the needs of each individual literacy learner in the classroom. Remember - Start small and continue to build upon the framework to best suit your needs and the needs of your learners.

Group 1	Guided Reading	Guided Reading task related to text	Playdough forming clockwise letters n and m
Group 2	Memory - match M, m, & picture	Guided Reading	Guided Reading task related to text
Group 3	Listening Post	Task explaining favourite character & why	Letter formation practice using 'feely letter'
Group 4	Computer - living book	Computer - reading games	Sight word practice using 'feely sight word'
Group 5	Reconstructing text	Bingo - sight words	Guided writing - structuring sentences

OUR LEARNING FRAMEWORK

by Damien Brennan, *Director: Religious Education and Curriculum*

These are exciting times to be in education. Why do I say that? I say it simply because much of the focus is now upon learning. You might consider that a rather trite statement. You might consider that it is an unfair statement in relation to earlier times. There is no doubt that the emergence of the Queensland School Curriculum Council in the mid 90's led to a re-orientation of syllabuses. Now that it has been merged into the Queensland Studies Authority, I hope that the good work done thus far by the Council is not lost. For me, one of the biggest achievements of the former Queensland School Curriculum Council is the focus on student outcomes.

There are many critics of an outcomes approach. Some cynically make comments such as, "Death by a thousand outcomes". I wonder whether people who make such comments have a clue about how you implement curriculum change in a sustained and coordinated manner across schooling systems. My view is that we, in Brisbane Catholic Education, can point to some successes in having done this. We have provided in earlier documentation, such as *Curriculum Update 44, January 2001*, some of our background story in moving into an outcomes approach. We've been at this for some time in what I would argue has been a sustained and a coordinated approach. However, having said all of that there is no doubt that we have more to do in assisting teachers, parents and students understand better the full implications of learning outcomes. Hence, the recent launch of our Learning Framework.

Why a framework?

In our analysis of how our schools were attempting to implement an outcomes approach, particularly in the primary and junior secondary areas, we found that there was a need to have an overarching coordinating framework. We analysed the works of many people such as Bill Spady. On two occasions we brought Bill to Brisbane to "pick his brains". We looked at the approaches of many others. We observed the work of Education Queensland as it commenced its grappling with concepts such as New Basics. Overall, there appeared a clear need to develop a framework in which we could connect better the patterns of learning to suit our learners.


On 9 July, 2001, we gathered all of the workforce of Brisbane Catholic Education at the Boondall Entertainment Centre. This numbered around 7,000 people - teachers, school leadership, support staff in schools and all of the staff of the Brisbane Catholic Education Centre from payroll clerks through to senior educational leaders. The theme for the day was "On the Threshold of the Future". Our key aim was to have all of our staff members hear one simple message at one time, namely, that dynamic learning organisations are future focused, and outcomes orientated. We had many presenters during the day, but a key one was Bill Spady. Bill's message was quite simple. One of the key outcomes of education is that graduates ought to be able to perform in life.

Plateau or valley?

One aspect of moving towards an outcomes approach is that many teachers become confused or concerned about what outcome one needs to focus on at a particular time. We can call this the valley approach - the experience of being weighed down in the valley wondering which way to go. Our learning, from our experience of working with over 130 school communities, is that to work consistently, coherently, and meaningfully within an outcomes approach one needs to be on the plateau. In other words, what is the overarching goal for learning? What are the key roles for lifelong learners? How do we inspire our learners to achieve? What are our values and beliefs about learning, about learners, about learning communities? What is the glue that holds all of this together?

The process

From July until November 2001, a small group of Religious Education and Curriculum Officers worked together at developing a draft framework. We took this to our fourth term meeting of school principals and asked them whether they wanted us to keep working along this way. In November of 2001 we published *Curriculum Update 47*. That update provided our best thinking to that point of time and indicated the responses that we had received since the commencement of this concentrated work in July were very positive. We asked the principals whether they wanted us to keep working this way and we promised



that we would report back at the second term principals meeting in 2002.

Throughout the remainder of 2001 and during Term One of 2002 we consulted widely in workshop situations. The process was very much an action research process.

In early Term Two, 2002, we gathered and analysed all of the work that had come back. We focused and re-focused our energies and have thus developed the *Learning Framework for Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane*. The Learning Framework poster can be found on pages eight and nine of this edition of *Curriculum Matters*. This was presented to school principals at the Leadership Forum on Friday 31 May, 2002. They received a support package which consisted of a CD Rom, posters for school communities and elaborations in *Curriculum Update 51, June 2002*. The following quote is important from *Curriculum Update No 51*.

"What is the status of our Learning Framework?"

There is a clear expectation that curriculum leaders and teachers in Archdiocesan schools and colleges and Brisbane Catholic Education Centre staff will engage with this Learning Framework.

The framework is incorporated into the RM Curriculum Manager software that is being strategically rolled out into our schools. Our Learning Framework will position our schools as we manage any future changes in government education policies and procedures. Our Learning Framework will assist our school renewal and quality assurance processes so that we are able to provide quality and inclusive Catholic educational opportunities for all learners. Our Learning Framework will assist us to implement our strategic renewal priorities.

"Our Learning Framework will sustain us as schools with spirit."

Concepts within the Learning Framework

As you look at the Learning Framework poster you will notice that there are a number of concepts to it. Each of these concepts is unpacked further through supporting documentation. The concepts consist of a statement under an *Overarching Goal for Learning*. This overarching goal for learning relates to a subheading entitled *Roles for lifelong learners*. Under those roles for lifelong learners there are seven descriptors which are further unpacked through supporting documentation. There are two other concepts: "*values*" which relates to our *Strategic Renewal Framework 2002 – 2006*, and "*beliefs*". There are three

sub-groups entitled *learners, learning and learning communities* under this concept. Each of these elements is further unpacked in supporting documentation.

Overarching goal for learning

You will see under this heading that there is a powerful statement, "Empowering learners of all ages to shape and enrich our changing world, by living the Gospel of Jesus Christ." This goal indicates that the critical orientation for learning within schools associated with Brisbane Catholic Education is that learners of all ages are empowered to shape and enrich our changing world. Learners, be they students, teachers, school administrators or parents are not passive recipients of a body of knowledge. They empower themselves to shape and enrich our changing world. Therefore they are to be active players in the community. They are to enrich the community of the world and they are to take their rightful place in contributing to positive change. The way they do this is by living the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This latter phrase could easily be construed as pious. Note that the challenge is in living the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not some namby pamby aspect of life. Taken seriously the Gospel calls people to be on the side of the marginalised, the outcast, and to work to bring about incredibly powerful values for living. In theological language this is called the *reign of God*. It is not something to be taken lightly or to be dismissed as the pious sentiments of a religious community. It is the critical value-laden, explicit and implicit call to be active people in the world who bring about God's love and care for all creation. Christians are not to be pious spectators of life but active change agents who live life to the full.

Beliefs

Within this section of the Learning Framework there are important statements that are presented in rather simple ways. Each of these statements requires unpacking. Each of these beliefs is an essential element of the framework. Each has a sting in the tail. For example, move to the subheading of *learning communities* and examine the final dot point which states, "Learning communities are future focused, flexibly structured and outcomes oriented." I ask you to reflect upon your own learning community be it a school, or an educational support office. How future focused is your team? How flexibly structured are your arrangements? How outcomes oriented is your work? Some could observe that many of our school communities or office support structures are not flexibly structured but hierarchically structured. Some could observe that many of our learning communities are not future focused but are focused on the past or on prestige or on keeping current practices

in train. Some could observe that many of our learning communities are not outcomes oriented but input oriented. There is a huge amount of discussion that we can have about beliefs such as this.

The roles for the lifelong learners

This whole section is an important area for teachers and students to come to grips with. Some will see similarities to the attributes of the lifelong learner in the former Queensland School Curriculum Council syllabus documents. I argue what we have presented in our documents is far more rigorous. The roles for lifelong learners goes beyond schools. They are roles for people to take as shapers and enrichers of our changing world. There are enormous possibilities for using these roles to assist teachers in their planning, in their teaching and in their assessment, evaluation and reporting processes.

The challenge in this section of the framework is for teachers to explore how they are teaching and how that teaching contributes to their learners becoming reflective and self directed learners, quality producers, designers and creators, active investigators, effective communicators, leaders and collaborators, and community contributors. If our learning processes can assist the learners to demonstrate coherently that they understand these important roles then our broader Australian and world communities will be much better places. We add a caution to this, borne of our Catholic Christian attitude to life. Much of the above can suggest a view of life that implies we are only effective when we are doing things. A critical element for us, because of our understanding of human life in relation to the Divine, is that people need to develop that capacity to be reflective and self-directed. While life is about doing, one of our understandings is that our very being, through the giftedness of life, makes us intangibly important. It comes from that fundamental belief that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. If we truly believe this then we are being graced by God through the presence of people, not by what they do but by experiencing who they are.

Values

The values that appear under this subheading are extracted from our *Strategic Renewal Framework* which provides the cohesive priorities for all within the Brisbane Catholic Education network for the years 2002 – 2006. Our Learning Framework builds upon this *Strategic Renewal Framework* and assists us with the implementation of three of those priorities. As stated above, the values under this subheading are explored further within the *Strategic Renewal Framework* document. I would like to give one example here -

Stewardship. The *Strategic Renewal Framework* states under this subheading, "Education should view individuals as moral beings, accountable for their decisions and responsible for their actions, with an ability to seek what is true and to do what is right". This is worth reflecting upon. How do we as educators approach stewardship? Do we align with this value as it is stated or do we have a different view of humanity or our own place in interrelationship with humanity or with the environment? If we take this notion of stewardship seriously then we also understand mutuality and responsibility. The value also implies that each of us has an ability to seek what is true and to do what is right. Again, if we think about such statements it means that we assume good will about others and their actions in the first instance. It's worth reflecting upon how we relate that to behaviour management processes employed in schools or to performance appraisal processes used in the performance management cycle.

Conclusion

Our Learning Framework is an important development along the phase of implementing an outcomes approach to education. This framework has not been developed in isolation. It has been very much a collaborative process with our school communities. I believe it has taken the best of learning approaches that are around today. It also is fully placed within a Catholic Christian context of education.

The Learning Framework is supported by other elements such as our approaches to consistency of teacher judgement, the support that we have given in a consistent manner to the implementation of outcomes approaches to education since the mid 1990's, the reworking of support materials such as the current *Religious Education Outcomes* and the gradual implementation in a coordinated manner of the *RM Curriculum Manager* electronic planning, recording, assessment and reporting tool across our school communities.

The Learning Framework is what it is: a framework within which to approach planning, teaching, assessment, evaluation and reporting across schools within the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. It will be fascinating to observe and report on how school communities take, play with and adapt this framework. The early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. I wish to publicly acknowledge the work of our teachers, school leaders and Religious Education and Curriculum Education Officers who have worked on the development and refinement of our Learning Framework. My hope is that it truly empowers learners and learning.





Overarching Goal

Empowering learners of all ages to thrive in our changing world, by living and learning together.

Beliefs

Supportive learning communities plan from the Roles for Lifelong Learning based on these beliefs:

Learners

- Each person is created in the image and likeness of God.
- Every person is a lifelong learner
- Every learner is in some respect, like all others, like some others, like no other.

Learning

- The person of Jesus gives meaning to life and learning.
- Every person can achieve success in learning.
- Learning is the active, social construction of meaning.
- Opportunities for learning encompass the richly diverse aspects of all life experience.

Learning Communities

- The educational mission of Catholic Christian schools gives witness to the gospel and the integration of faith, life and culture.
- The core business of our learning communities is focused on learning.
- Learning communities are future focused, flexibly structured and outcomes orientated.

Roles for Lifelong Learning

Supportive learning communities plan from the Roles for Lifelong Learning, consistently, explicitly and intentionally.

Community Contributor

Leader & Collaborator

Effective Communicator

Reflector
Self Director
Leader



Goal for Learning

All ages to shape and enrich
the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Roles for Lifelong Learners

Plan from the Roles for Lifelong
Learners and creatively for every learner.

Active,
Directed
Learner



Quality
Producer

Designer
& Creator

Active
Investigator



Values

Supportive learning communities plan
from the Roles for Lifelong Learners
based on these values:

- Catholic Christian Tradition
- Dignity and justice for each person
- Catholic Christian community
- High quality learning
- Collaboration and subsidiarity
- Creativity
- Stewardship
- Mutual accountability



A reflection on developing a consistency of teacher judgement process

by Catherine Cushing,
Curriculum Support Teacher

St Thomas, Camp Hill; St James, Coorparoo; Mt Carmel, Coorparoo; St Joachim's, Holland Park; and St Joseph's, Kangaroo Point work together as a cluster to provide support for principals and teachers in addressing the current challenges of curriculum change. The principals have provided leadership in, and networking opportunities for, the building of a climate of professional collegiality and trust over the past 2-3 years. Within this developed context for professional collegiality, teachers have been enabled to define and move towards agreement on the procedures and criteria that lead to consistent judgements being made about student demonstrations of core learning outcomes.

Like many other schools, the cluster is attempting to engage in a meaningful way with the development of consistency of teacher judgement in the outcomes context of the Queensland School Curriculum Council Syllabuses and, more recently, the *Learning Framework for Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane*.

Key Assumptions

Some key assumptions underlie the planning of appropriate consistency activities for the cluster:

- The development of consistency of teacher judgement is a continuous process we've undertaken throughout the year, not just an event in Term 4.
- The development of consistency processes will take time, as it entails developmental growth and change at the individual and institutional level.
- Each school's journey is both the same, and different - so flexibility is essential.
- Informed collaboration across the cluster enhances the development of consistency of teacher judgements.
- Current syllabus materials and system initiatives support the development of processes that enhance consistency of teacher judgements.
- Effective and equitable teaching leads to, and is based on, consistency of teacher judgements about learners' demonstrations of learning for a range of purposes.
- The thinking, planning and reflections of informed teachers engaged in the process at the whole school level provide the basis for our ongoing response to the question:

How can we plan to continue support for the development of consistency of teacher judgement at the intraschool and interschool level?

Getting Started on the Cycle: Reflecting

The 2001 Consistency of Teacher Judgement Information Kit (Brisbane Catholic Education) and the Consistency of Teacher Judgement

CD-ROM: A Training and Development Resource for Schools provided the critical understanding that the development of consistency is a process involving an ongoing cycle of thinking, acting and reflecting.

In October 2000, at the end of the Moderation/Consistency of Teacher Judgement Professional Development Day, we began to address the question:

How can we plan to support the development of consistency of teacher judgement at the intraschool and interschool level?

- An open evaluation format provided an opportunity for 'Teacher Voice' to be heard at the starting point of the cycle to inform future directions. Teachers reflected on:
 - ▶ what they valued about the moderation/consistency opportunities they'd been involved in;
 - ▶ what their professional needs, as classroom teachers with the greatest involvement in the process, were; and
 - ▶ suggestions for cluster development to support consistency.
- In so doing, they identified key aspects of their thinking about:
 - ▶ their confidence in sharing professional judgements with peers;
 - ▶ the value of an outcomes framework in teaching, assessing and monitoring practices;
 - ▶ an awareness of common errors in assessment (e.g. teacher subjectivity); and
 - ▶ the importance of confirming or moderating judgements.
- This teacher evaluation of their professional needs and

cluster development towards consistency suggested an intra- and interschool implementation strategy for 2001 and beyond in terms of:

- ▶ continued curriculum support for active engagement with outcomes-based planning – not just the theory behind it.
- ▶ teachers' need to develop competence and confidence in working with outcomes in each KLA, and to use the new syllabus documents to plan units.
- ▶ clustering with other teachers at the planning phase to develop a shared understanding.
- ▶ ongoing discussions about the different outcome levels within year levels.
- ▶ meetings held on a regular basis so that ideas and strategies can be shared, and collegiality developed, amongst the cluster group.
- ▶ the use of blocks of non-contact time for collaborative planning.

Thinking about, Planning for and Implementing Consistency Strategies

Reference to *Consistency of Teacher Judgement CD-ROM: A Training and Development Resource for Schools* provided an implementation framework for addressing these expressed teacher needs throughout 2001. They were:

Term 1: School Staff Meeting PD Elaboration of Outcomes

Developing and sharing understanding about the sequences and intentions of the core learning outcomes for each school's prioritised Key Learning Areas (where there is a QSCC Syllabus available).

Term 2: Teacher Release Day Collaborative planning of an outcomes-based unit of work by teachers in levels across the cluster
Using a BCE planning process to develop a unit using BCE's 'Roles

for lifelong learning' and an inquiry approach as common elements.

Term 3: Teacher implementation of the unit and assessment of student demonstrations of selected outcomes
Opportunity for personal networking within and across schools.

Term 4: Monday 22 October Moderation in RE; and professional sharing and evaluating collaboratively planned unit; sharing understandings about assessment opportunities and student demonstration of outcomes.

Continuing the Cycle: From Implementation to Reflection to Planning

In their reflection, teachers indicated a general awareness of shifts in their thinking about learners and learning, and some tensions they were facing about content, pedagogy, planning and assessing in an outcomes framework. The value of collaborating with others in the Implementation phase was again a focus.

At this stage in 2001, the schools had access to the draft of the Learning Framework. The principals had recognised that at this stage of systemic direction, The Learning Framework is integral to the process of developing consistency of teacher judgement. Teachers planning for student learning within a macro/trans-disciplinary context of life performance roles use a common design-down process that enhances the consistency of teacher judgement. This enhancement is a function of the alignment between the significant demonstration of learning and the contextualised life performance roles, and the teaching sequence, learning strategies and assessment criteria.

Time for Action

In the first three terms of 2002, teachers in each school through the unit planning and reflective

implementation are engaged in implementing the consistency strategies relating to:

- deepening their understanding of the core learning outcomes and their developmental sequences
- using a common design-down process to plan for the successful demonstration of outcomes
- identifying main assessment tasks to enable students to demonstrate core learning outcomes within a significant demonstration
- developing criteria sheets for these demonstrations
- collecting evidence about student demonstrations of learning
- sharing understanding in the intraschool context.

The five schools are Phase 2 schools in the pilot of *RM Curriculum Manager* software. This provides a much-needed tool for planning for, and monitoring, student learning outcomes in a whole school context. It will provide a new dimension to the implementation of consistency strategies and the development of consistency of teacher judgement.

Conclusion

Further discussion and decision-making about Term 4, 2002 consistency activities were undertaken in Term 2. Staff changes in the cluster mean that the processes of the past years need to be shared and investments made to foster collegiality and a unified sense of direction. As the process of curriculum change gathers momentum we recognise that we are approaching a significant turning point in our understandings of and practices in outcome-based education. Like all schools we face a new set of challenges this year.

Whole School Planning for Improved Literacy and Numeracy Outcomes

by Pauline Chester, Project Officer: CTP/Literacy/Numeracy

The early years are critical but literacy and numeracy development is not just the responsibility of early years teachers. The *Archdiocesan Literacy and Numeracy Plan 1998-2000* was developed to ensure that there is a focus on literacy and numeracy at system, school and classroom levels. It reviewed research and made recommendations for Catholic schools, proposed appropriate literacy teaching practice and professional development for teachers and provided a framework for school planning and recording.

The key elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Plan, agreed to by all Education Ministers, are:

- i. the early identification of literacy needs through diagnostic assessment;
- ii. strategic intervention for students 'at risk' of achieving minimal literacy attainment;
- iii. assessment against agreed national benchmarks in Years 3, 5 and 7;
- iv. national reporting of attainment.

The *1998 Archdiocesan Literacy and Numeracy Plan* has been reviewed and rewritten to include contemporary understandings about numeracy and to offer a framework, based on research, around which schools can develop and co-ordinate the implementation of a plan to enhance the literacy and numeracy outcomes of all students.

The framework promotes:

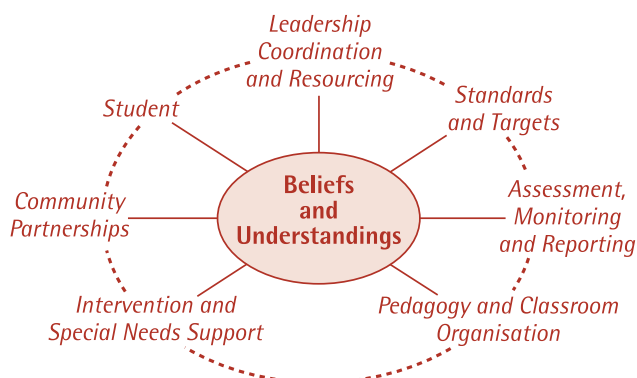
- A whole school approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy
- Literacy and numeracy as the key foundation of learning in KLAs
- A focus on effective pedagogy
- A focus on relevant futures perspectives and technologies
- Collaboration, co-ordination and cooperation between classroom teachers, specialist teachers, school administration teams and parents and the community

A school Literacy and Numeracy Plan will:

- Reflect a whole school approach to the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy
- Describe and value the literacy/numeracy practices of the home and school community
- Recognise students' primary discourses
- Ensure literacy and numeracy development of each student is continuous and cohesive
- Identify and plan for students requiring extra support with literacy and numeracy
- Co-ordinate programs, teaching and learning activities and planned strategies
- Identify appropriate professional development for teachers, focusing on literacy and numeracy as social practice

Design Elements of a General Model of School Improvement

Both the *1998-2000 Archdiocesan Literacy and Numeracy Plan* and the *2002-2005 Literacy and Numeracy Framework* draw from the work of Hill and Crevola (1998). Their research suggests that literacy and numeracy standards will not improve by merely finetuning existing teaching practices, nor will focusing on a set of intended outcomes necessarily lead to higher standards unless there is first attention to the quality of the literacy and numeracy experiences provided.



An adaptation of the Hill and Crevola model (1998) of design elements of a general model of school improvement

News Release

pak A Curriculum Linked Resource for Schools

These key characteristics of an effective literacy/numeracy strategy have been adapted to form the basis of the Archdiocesan Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the accompanying planning tool.

Any one of these elements can be considered as a focus for reflection, discussion and action, however the interconnectedness of the elements will require all to be eventually addressed. It is also important to recognise that schools already engage in planning, which relates to aspects of these elements so that planning for literacy/numeracy improvement is not a discrete process.

The work of Hill and Crevola in Victoria has also been adapted by the Literate Futures Review team for Education Queensland and forms the basis of the *Whole School Literacy Planning Guidelines*. These guidelines comprise a booklet with a CD Rom and poster. The poster summarises the issues that need to be addressed in eight key aspects of school planning to achieve improved outcomes. The CD contains resources and models developed by schools to assist with whole school planning, such as survey instruments, samples of plans and copies of presentations. A bulk order has been placed with Education Queensland and Catholic schools will soon receive information about ordering these.

References

Hill, P & Crevola, C (1998) *Characteristics of an Effective Literacy Strategy*, Unicorn, 24 (2) pp 74-85

Education Queensland (2000) *Literate Futures: Report of the Literacy Review for Queensland State Schools*

We have been advised of a new resource for use by teachers which has been developed by Queensland Transport, Queensland Health, Sport and Recreation Queensland, Queensland Police and Heart Foundation.

Programs for Active Kids (PAK) is a resource filled with programs from a range of organisations that focus on the theme of active kids- acting smart, taking action and being active. The aim of Programs for Active Kids was to package a number of programs to schools centred around the theme in a consistent and coordinated manner.

PAK provides teachers with a menu, which allows a cohesive set of programs to be constructed for students throughout the school year, across year levels. Each program is linked to the Queensland School Curriculum Council syllabus outcomes, thus targeting schools with students from years 1-10.

The PAK resource has been in development since March 2001 and underwent a series of trials in 2001. The resource is now ready for distribution to schools across Queensland. The PAK document is a free resource and free of copyright.

For more information or for a copy of the PAK resource, please contact the State Cycle Unit at Queensland Transport on (07) 3253 4437 or the Heart Foundation on (07) 3854 1696.

SOSE/LOTE

Happy Bedfellows at Tommy More

by Paul Mackay, Assistant Principal Curriculum (Acting): St Thomas More College, Sunnybank

In Year 8 at St Thomas More College Sunnybank, SOSE and LOTE are taught within a four-lesson block in the timetable. This has allowed differing groupings of students and some integration across the two KLAs.

Before this year, LOTE (Japanese) in Year 8 was merely a taste of the subject in which students had only 18 lessons in the entire year. Very few were choosing to continue with LOTE studies into Year 9. In SOSE, classes were based on the same core groupings used for four other KLAs. As the SOSE teachers only met with the students twice a week, it was often challenging establishing a learning environment.

This year SOSE and LOTE have been allocated a four-lesson block in the timetable with four teachers allocated to cover the 82 Year 8 students during this time. One of the immediate benefits of this structure was that we were freed from the class groupings used in the other KLAs. This meant that for the first time we were able to recognize prior learning in LOTE. At the start of the year, we surveyed all incoming students and established a class made up of those students who had studied Japanese in Years 6 and 7. The other students were split into two classes, but here we experimented by setting up a boys' class and a girls' class. Nataleen Nixon, who had done significant PD in the area of boys' education, teaches the boys class while Judy Hume teaches the girls class. Both teachers have noticed quite different learning styles between the classes and have

adapted elements of the learning activities to meet the specific requirements of their students.

Our LOTE teacher, Stephanie Mills, teaches each class for one lesson a week over the entire year. It is anticipated that this allocation will be increased in forthcoming years. In order to support LOTE learning a number of processes were introduced. Each class was given a Japanese name to recognize the importance of their LOTE learning. More importantly, the SOSE teacher accompanies students to their LOTE class each week. This recognizes that LOTE classes are now bigger than they were in past years. The SOSE teachers assist with group activities, help to manage student behavior and remind students of homework requirements and preparations needed for forthcoming LOTE classes.

To cement the importance of LOTE learning, all SOSE classes commenced the year with a unit on Modern Japan. SOSE has moved this year to the new QSCC syllabus so there is an emphasis on activities and measuring what students can actually do. Knowledge is important, but it is imbedded in activity rather than tested separately. In the Japanese unit, students produced a segment from a travel show where they introduced viewers to a region of Japan. The second part of our assessment has been more challenging. It was our plan for each student to have an e-mail pal in Japan and to communicate with this e-pal regularly throughout the year thereby demonstrating outcomes

in the Culture and Identity strand. Fortunately, we have had sufficient contacts in Japan to develop links with Japanese schools. One challenge has been the difference in term times with the Japanese school year commencing in April. Another problem has been the basic English of Japanese students and the limited Japanese of our students. To solve this problem we began with simple form letters where students just fill in the blanks. This was then easy for Japanese students to respond to. They also send a translation of their e-mails in Romaji (romanised version of Japanese). It has been important for teachers to monitor student's e-mail communication to ensure that the messages are appropriate, correct and free from slang.

At the end of the Japanese unit, the boys' class proposed and then planned a special morning rotation of Japanese activities. These included calligraphy, sushi making and aikido.

We are now studying a SOSE unit based on eras in Australian history and the contribution of significant Australians. This unit is complemented by an investigation into the contributions of significant Japanese in this country.

The combination of SOSE/LOTE appears to have generated significant interest among the Year 8 students. Many are keen to host a Japanese visitor in their homes later in the year. It is hoped that at least 25 percent of these students will choose to continue their LOTE studies into Year 9.

Integrating Cultures and Languages through Bilingual Education

Teaching for Global Citizenship in Thailand

by Adrian Jones

Next time you are in Bangkok, you may like to take time out to visit a remarkably successful education initiative in which Brisbane Catholic Education has played a significant role. This is the Sarasas Ektra Bilingual School (Ektra for short), the first school in Thailand to obtain Ministry of Education approval to conduct an entire K-12 program in two languages – English and Thai. In the years since the school began classes in 1993, dozens of bilingual schools based on the Sarasas model have been approved in both the private and government education sectors in Thailand. Also in that time Ektra's enrolment has grown from 90 students to 1,925 students.

Bilingual education in Thailand was the brainchild of Piboon Yongkamol, President of Sarasas Affiliated Schools. This is a system of fourteen large schools and colleges teaching from nursery (4 year-olds) to post-secondary and vocational students. Mr Piboon was raised and educated by an Italian priest in rural Thailand and went on to spend several years training for the priesthood before deciding to take on teaching in Catholic schools as a layman. Subsequently, he married and with his wife, Pensri, raised a family, all of whom are now involved with Sarasas schools. The first Sarasas school was established in 1964.

The Sarasas schools have always been very conscious of the importance of maintaining and articulating the Catholic ethos in education. One of Mr Piboon's sons was sent to Brisbane to study at ACU McAuley Campus.

In the years since the school was established there have been several BCE teachers employed at the school on leave arrangements for up to two years. At present the writer is on leave and filling an administrative position in the school.

There were three major reasons why bilingual schooling was initiated in Thailand. First, the need for more people with English proficiency became very clear as the Thai economy continued to grow in the 80's and 90's and international trade opportunities expanded.

Second, English language education had previously been largely restricted to the children of the well-to-do. International schools provided English-medium education following overseas curricula and these were (and still are) very expensive. English was provided by native speakers in some government secondary schools, but this provision was largely limited to more academically able students in elite schools.

Third, it was clear to many Thai parents that good English language education for their children was only available at some cost to retention of the child's Thai language and culture, both of which are highly valued. International Schools did not preserve Thai language and culture. The good quality government school English programs took place in the Thai cultural context, but did not provide sufficient exposure to the language and culture of English to achieve more than a passive competence in English. Students graduated with an extensive vocabulary and reading skills, but limited capacity for communication. The third option, overseas education, was a particularly expensive and unappealing option for Thai parents and children as it required extended periods of separation. Parents also feared that their children would lose their language and culture if they went abroad. What was required, therefore, was an approach that would maximise students' opportunities to hear and speak authentic English in daily school life. At the same time, it was imperative that students' Thai language and culture be maintained and developed at least equally with English.

The Sarasas bilingual model has been developed to satisfy the demand for concurrent development of students' English and Thai language and sociocultural competence while enabling them to remain with their families at home. Students entering the school in the nursery and

kindergarten years (4 and 5 year-olds) are taught English, Mathematics, Art and PE in English. Science is added in Year 1 and Social Studies in Year 2. As the students progress through the school, these subjects are taught in both English and Thai with some other subjects taught only in Thai (eg moral and personal development, religious studies). From a base of 75% of the timetable taught in English in nursery and kindergarten, the proportion of English medium teaching reduces to 50% in senior secondary. To do this with just under 2000 students about 110 Thai teachers and 57 foreign teachers are currently employed. There are two administration teams – Thai and foreign – under the leadership of the Director.

Graduates from Sarasas Ektra School sit the same tertiary entrance exam as all Year 12 students in Thailand in order to determine their eligibility for universities of their choice. In recent years, Ektra graduates have gained places in elite national universities as well as international (English medium) programs in private universities and the military university. Ektra students perform at a very advanced level in the English components of the General Ability Tests sat in Years 3 and 6 and the Scholastic Ability Tests administered in Years 10 and 12 throughout Thailand.

It is evident that this model of bilingual education is successful in regard to English language development and cultural integration without loss of Thai language skills or culturally valued behaviours and attitudes. A major reason for its success is that both of the languages and their cultures have high status in the school and in the wider community. There is no suggestion that one language or culture should take over from the other. Both are fostered and developed at all stages of schooling. Another factor contributing to the success and popularity of the model is that the school is fully owned and controlled by Thai citizens. Foreign participation in the form of management, teaching or professional support of the kind provided over the years by Brisbane Catholic Education is subject to the policy and practices of the Thai management and any services utilised from abroad by the Sarasas Schools are at no cost to foreign partners.

Brisbane Catholic Education can feel proud to have been an important participant in education for international citizenship and Sarasas Ektra has always valued its partnership with BCE. It is to be hoped that, as Australians develop closer relationships with the Asia-Pacific region, this partnership will continue to be mutually beneficial.

Photo Feature

Making Economic Sense



Year 6 and Year 7 students at Mater Dei School, Ashgrove West have tried their hand at setting up a free market economy. In this life like experience, students have invented currencies, selected jobs or businesses, paid expenses (including taxes) and learnt about market expectations. Students have also become acquainted with account books, invoicing, pricing and purchasing power. Teachers Terry Wally and Lynne Madden reported that there was some quelling of entrepreneurial spirit when one young student set up a very popular lotto operation. This photo feature shows three businesses that students set up: a bakery, newsagency and window cleaning operation.