



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

Rationale

St Patrick's College finds its meaning and value in the person, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is no more evident than in the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church in education. In all its dimensions, Catholic schooling is an explicitly religious educational experience. At St Patrick's, this experience is shaped by ***Awakenings***, the Core Document for Religious Education in the Ballarat Diocese.

Fundamental to the religious dimension of Catholic schooling at St Patrick's is the recognition of parents as the primary educators of their children. Springing from the life of this role are the partnerships between parents/guardians, the College and local Catholic faith communities with each having its own distinct contribution to make. Parents seek the College's partnership of guidance and encouragement to assist them in the religious awakening and nurturing of their child. Religious Education is central to the curriculum and culture of St Patrick's. This policy will assist the College in its articulation, structuring, celebration and embedding of Religious Education within the life of the College.

Religious Education at St. Patrick's College contributes directly to student development in:

- The personal affirmation of a personal and loving God from whom all gifts come
- The affirmation of one's-self as a valuable person in a worthwhile community
- The development of a genuine freedom to examine critically and to promote the shared beliefs and values of the community
- The capacity to contribute to the ordering and sharing of the material goods of society
- Respect for all human life and the rest of God's creation

Scriptural Context

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the fully." (Jn 10:10).

Religious Education Policy

Religious Education is foundational to the curriculum and culture of St Patrick's College and will be honoured and resourced as such.

Principles

1. The person and Gospel of Jesus Christ are central to the culture of St Patrick's College and permeate the teaching and learning of Religious Education. Every student at St Patrick's has the right to appropriate learning experiences in Religious Education.
2. Religious Education opens the heart and the mind to the transcendent God in and through content-based personal encounters. These encounters may invite a personal faith response that affirms Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life. Religious Education at St Patrick's College is also informed by the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice.
3. Religious Education is a content area: a discrete discipline with its own integrity which seeks to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours which flow from the Catholic Tradition. The content of Religious Education is derived from expressions of God's revelation in Scripture, Tradition, liturgy and life.
4. This content area by its inner dynamic opens possibilities of personal meaning-making, the invitation to relationship with the Risen Lord in the context of community.
5. In Religious Education our rich curriculum offers reflective learning opportunities within a sequential P-12 course of study. These courses are supplemented by faith development opportunities in liturgy and prayer, social justice and community outreach, retreats, partnerships with families and local faith communities.
6. Quality learning and teaching principles based on sound educational research and practice are integral to Religious Education at St Patrick's. In accord with ***Awakenings***, the reference point for *methodology* is contemporary thinking on the interplay of evangelization, catechesis and Religious Education; a critical adaptation of Shared Christian Praxis to the compulsory classroom; and current research on creating rich learning experiences.
7. At St Patrick's there are teachers and students from diverse religious, faith and cultural backgrounds. Within this context it is the Catholic tradition which offers the framework for the respectful engagement of all in religious learning.
8. Qualified, motivated and professional religious educators are essential to the College's work of Religious Education.

Status of Policy: Ratified by the College Board, May 2011

Review: 2016