



Religious Education Policy

RATIONALE

“Religious Education is the first Learning Area in the Catholic school curriculum. This is so because, though a classroom activity, Religious Education is a form of the Ministry of the Word. Unlike the other Learning Areas, it is an activity of Evangelisation in its own right.” (Mandate Letter,43)

“The Religious Education program to be taught in the Catholic school is that promulgated by the diocesan Bishop. Like Christian witness and catechesis, Religious Education expresses ‘the divine power of the Message’.” (Mandate Letter, 43). The Religious Education program aims to help students learn the teachings of the Gospel as proclaimed by the Catholic Church and to develop a sense of the nature of Christianity and of how Christians are trying to live within the traditions of the Catholic Church. It seeks to educate non-Christians in the knowledge of the Christian message.

Definition

Religious Education is a learning area which focuses on the knowledge and understanding of the Gospel as it is handed on by the Catholic Church to those who follow Christ in today’s world.

PRINCIPLES

1. Religious Education complements Catechesis offered in the family, school and parish.
2. The Religious Education program to be taught in Catholic schools is that promulgated by the diocesan Bishop.
3. Religious Education in the school shall always respect parents as the prime educators of their children, particularly in the area of faith education.
4. Religious Education outcomes shall be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as all other learning areas.
5. Religious Education shall acknowledge the stages of faith development of students.
6. Religious Education shall relate the knowledge and understandings of the Catholic faith to students’ real life situations and experiences.
7. Religious Education shall always present Catholic beliefs and practices in the context of the Christian Promise of Salvation and the questions and aspirations of the human heart that God alone can satisfy completely.
8. Teachers of Religious Education shall be committed Catholics and shall give active Christian witness to Catholic beliefs.

PROCEDURES

- Religious Education shall have priority in all planning, including the development of the school's timetable.
- Within the normal hours of instruction the minimum time allocation for the Religious Education Learning Area shall be:

Pre-Primary to Year One	15 minutes per day
Years Two – Six	30 minutes per day.

- Liturgies and other catechesis activities including Masses, Prayer Gatherings and special Liturgical celebrations are essential for the effective evangelisation of students but are separate from the Religious Education program and not part of the time allocation.
- The Religious Education program, as promulgated by the diocesan Bishop, shall be implemented with reference to the principles and procedures of the CECWA Policy Statement *Curriculum*.
- Teachers of Religious Education shall have the necessary accreditation stipulated by the CECWA Policy Statement *Accreditation* and work towards keeping this Accreditation up-to-date.
- Classroom teachers shall keep parents/guardians informed on an ongoing basis as to the content of their child's Religious Education program.
- Classroom teachers shall work closely with parents/guardians and parishes to support the sacramental programs of the parish.
- Professional development shall be available for teachers of Religious Education.
- Resources shall be made available for the Religious Education Learning Area.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE SANTA CLARA

The Sacrament of Reconciliation at Santa Clara will take place with the Year Three class in Term Two each year.

Procedure

Preparation

- Dates and times for the Sacramental Program are organised in consultation with the Parish Priest and Catechist Coordinator.
- Notification of the Sacramental Program details will be published in the school newsletter and parish bulletin.
- An information letter regarding the details of the sacramental program and inviting parents to enrol their child for reception of the sacrament will be sent out by the Parish Priest in Term One.
- A list of interested students is compiled in Term One.
- Baptismal Certificates are verified.
- An Enrolment Mass for parents to enrol their child in the preparation for the sacrament will take place prior to the commencement of the program. Parents and candidates are expected to attend. If this is not possible they are to make an appointment to speak to the Parish Priest to make alternative arrangements.

Program

- **All** students in Year Three will take part in the class preparation as they follow the Penance unit of work titled *Christian Conscience* in the class Religious Education Program.
- Year Three children will participate in a retreat/prayer day prior to the reception of the sacrament e.g. at Schoenstatt Shrine in Armadale.

Parent Meetings

- Families from the school and parish will be invited to attend a parent/child workshop, ran by the Parish/CEO catechists.
- The RE unit of work titled *Christian Conscience* contains support material for parent meetings.
- The Catechist Program Parent Meeting package may be used as resource.
- Notes are also available from the Catechist Service who have prepared a process for Sacramental meetings.

Reception of the Sacrament

- Consultation with the Parish and school is required regarding the reception of the Sacrament.
- The reception of the Sacrament of Penance takes place through the First Rite of Reconciliation.
- Two Saturday mornings will be allocated for the First Rite of Reconciliation.
- Parents choose which date is suitable for their family.

THE SACRAMENT OF EUCHARIST SANTA CLARA

The Sacrament of Eucharist at Santa Clara will take place with the Year Four class in Term Two each year.

Procedure

Preparation

- Dates and times for the Sacramental Program are organised in consultation with the Parish Priest and Catechist Coordinator.
- Notification of the Sacramental Program details will be published in the school newsletter and parish bulletin.
- An information letter regarding the details of the sacramental program and inviting parents to enrol their child for reception of the sacrament will be sent out by the Parish Priest in Term One.
- A list of interested students is compiled in Term One.
- Baptismal Certificates are verified.
- An Enrolment Mass for parents to enrol their child in the preparation for the sacrament will take place prior to the commencement of the program. Parents and candidates are expected to attend. If this is not possible they are to make an appointment to speak to the Parish Priest to make alternative arrangements.

Program

- **All** students in Year Four will take part in the class preparation as they follow the Eucharist unit of work titled *Coming to Your Table* in the class Religious Education Program.
- Year Four children will participate in a retreat/prayer day prior to the reception of the sacrament e.g. at Schoenstatt Shrine in Armadale.

Parent Meetings

- Families from the school and parish will be invited to attend the parent meetings.
- The RE unit of work titled *Coming to Your Table* contains support material for parent meetings.
- The Catechist Program Parent Meeting package may be used as resource.
- Notes are also available from the Catechist Service who have prepared a process for Sacramental meetings

Reception of the Sacrament

- Consultation with the Parish and school is required regarding the reception of the Sacrament.
- The reception of the Sacrament of Eucharist takes place at Parish Sunday Mass. (Preference is given to the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ at the 9.30 am Mass.)

- Parish and school children receiving the sacrament are involved in the appropriate parts of the liturgy.
- Children in Year Four of Santa Clara School who are not making this sacrament are invited to attend and given a role to play during the ceremony.
- Children will be presented with a Eucharist Certificate during the Mass. Year Four children who have supported the communicants will also be given a participation certificate.
- Morning Tea is provided for the communicants, their families and the parish community. Parents of Year Four students are asked to bring a plate.
- There is a First Communion cake that is cut usually by the Parish Priest.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION SANTA CLARA

The Sacrament of Confirmation at Santa Clara will take place with the Year Six class in Term Three each year (or as advised by the Archdiocesan Office).

Procedure

Preparation

- Dates and times for the Sacramental Program are organised in consultation with the Parish Priest and Catechist Coordinator.
- Notification of the Sacramental Program details will be published in the school newsletter and parish bulletin.
- An information letter regarding the details of the sacramental program and inviting parents to enrol their child for reception of the sacrament will be sent out by the Parish Priest in Term One.
- A list of interested students is compiled in Term One.
- Baptismal Certificates are verified.
- An Enrolment Mass for parents to enrol their child in the preparation for the sacrament will take place prior to the commencement of the program. Parents and candidates are expected to attend. If this is not possible they are to make an appointment to speak to the Parish Priest to make alternative arrangements.

Program

- **All** students in Year Six will take part in the class preparation as they follow the Confirmation unit of work titled *Gifted by the Spirit* in the class Religious Education Program.
- Year Six children will participate in a retreat/prayer day prior to the reception of the sacrament e.g. at Schoenstatt Shrine in Armadale.

Parent Meetings

- Families from the school and parish will be invited to attend parent meetings.
- The RE unit of work titled *Gifted by the Spirit* contains support material for parent meetings.
- The Catechist Program Parent Meeting package may be used as resource.
- Notes are also available from the Catechist Service who have prepared a process for Sacramental meetings

Reception of the Sacrament

- Consultation with the Parish and school is required regarding the reception of the Sacrament.

- The reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation takes place at Parish Sunday Mass. (Preference is given to the Feast of Pentecost at the 9.30 am Mass.)
- Parish and school children receiving the sacrament are involved in the appropriate parts of the liturgy.
- Children in Year Six of Santa Clara School who are not making this sacrament are invited to attend and given a role to play during the ceremony.
- Children will be presented with a Confirmation Certificate during the Mass.
- Morning Tea is provided for the children, their families and the parish community. Parents of Year Six students are asked to bring a plate.
- Year Six parents are invited to serve morning tea and bring a plate. There is a Confirmation cake that is cut usually by the Parish Priest.

Morning Tea for Eucharist/Confirmation (Organised by Parish Hospitality Committee)

Undercover area

NEEDS:

ice for cordial
tablecloths
coffee, tea, sugar
milk – 2 litres full cream, 1 litre HiLo
spoons (for coffee/tea), forks, cake server, knife (for cake)
serviettes,
paper plates
foam cups
plastic cups
flowers for center table
tea towels
Cordial and container
Containers for pouring boiling water
Urns (if using the hall)

- Parish Hospitality Committee to have all tables and chairs stacked on the verandah on the last evening before event.
- Set up tables & chairs (chairs in circular shape around outside area).
- One centre table for cake with vase of flowers, plates, forks, serviettes.
- Other tables in any arrangements.
- One table to be set up with cordial & cups.
- Serviettes on tables.
- Tea/coffee for adults served from the canteen.
- Small table outside the canteen with for sugar/milk/spoons.
- Put out minimal food as young children will be first to arrive.
- As families arrive put out other plates.
- Parent helper/s to help cut and distribute cake with staff after formal cutting of cake.

Packing away –

stack chairs
wipe down tables
stack trestles
wipe and put away plates/cups etc
dispose of rubbish in outside bins
stack tablecloths & tea towels to be washed.

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