

St Columba's Memorial School

Draft Educational Vision



Our School

Some key belief statements about how children learn shape our Education Plan at St Columba's Memorial School.

We believe that students can and do learn from each other.

We believe that all students can learn.

We believe students need to be happy to learn.

We believe that students learn effectively when they integrate experience, imagination, information and application.

We believe that regular feedback is vital for teachers, students and parents.

The below vision encapsulates these belief statements and offers the practical implementation of these.

Our Context

Our Vision

At St Columba's Memorial School, we share the belief that Catholic values shape the students of today to become future leaders.

We endeavour to provide a safe and supportive learning environment where children feel confident to take risks and achieve excellence.

Our community embraces the Josephite tradition of love, understanding and acceptance of others. We aspire to shape an inclusive and just, Christ-centred community, who through engaging and relevant learning, inspires a hope filled future.

Our Mission

St Columba's Memorial School will provide students with a broad range of learning experiences that enables them to develop to their full potential, in an environment that is safe, orderly and contemporary.

Students will have opportunities to develop their relationship with God and others in an environment where core Christian values are evident.

They will develop personal responsibility that encompasses care for self, others and environment and a love of learning for life.

Values

Love

Respect

Justice

Honesty

Gratitude

Empathy

Resilience

Our System

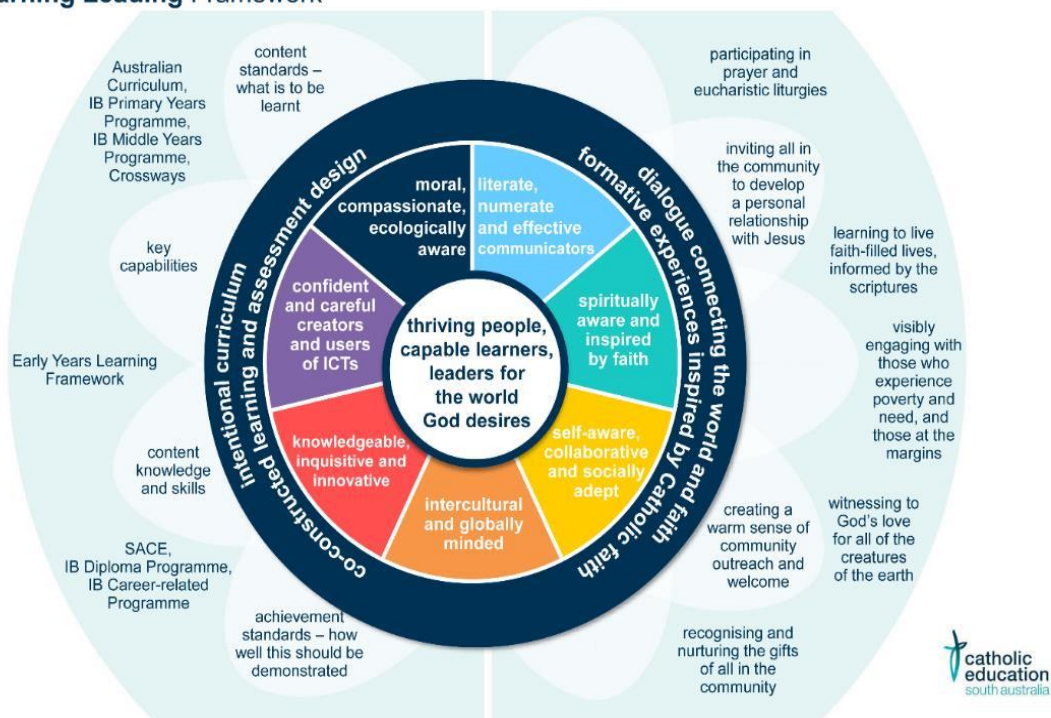
Where every child matters

Our aim at St Columba's, a place where every child matters is to generate learning that allows young people to follow their innate curiosity, talent and passion. We want all young people to be agents of change, influencing and leading their own learning.

We aim to create a kindness filled environment which places families in partnership with the school to help create literate, numerate, curious and lifelong learners.

St Columba's is committed to helping every learner develop as a whole person, fulfil his or her potential and help shape a shared future built on the well-being of individuals and communities.

Living Learning Leading Framework



The key capabilities are the competencies people need to have in place in order to live, learn, lead and excel as active lifelong learning community members. The Living, Learning Leading Framework developed by CESA is our commitment to students, teachers and families. It outlines the CESA key capabilities, skills, knowledge and dispositions that enable young people to contribute to society and enjoy meaningful and spiritually enriched lives.

We believe that students can and do learn from each other.

The learning spaces are designed to be configured in different ways to suit the learning needs of the students. Flexible learning spaces enable social and collaborative learning, integrated curriculum delivery, a mix of teacher-directed and student-directed teaching and learning, independent learning, project work, direct instruction, innovative and creative thinking, relationship building, and problem-solving skills.

Innovative spaces are capable of evolving and adapting as educational practices evolve and change – thus remaining future focused. It offers students and teachers' flexibility and connectedness and the ability to learn in an environment that is collaborative, reflective and a place where inquiries are shared, and students engaged.

To succeed in the future, our students will require research, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. They will need to be able to work independently and together with groups of other students.

The spaces children learn in need to be flexible with the innovative integration of new technology and improved opportunities for student/teachers collaboration. From touch screens to breakout pods and new furniture designs, these flexible spaces are engaging students in ways that reflect 21st century learning.

Features of the learning spaces include: touch sensitive screens allowing students to engage with learning materials; Wi-Fi and software allowing all devices in a room, including tablets and laptops to interact; and lightweight, flexible furniture that can be easily moved around by teachers and students, creating functional spaces for individual and team work.

Other features to be included in future planning will allow for indoor/outdoor flexible learning spaces, enabling students to build a connection to ecology while at the same time maintaining line of sight with their teachers.

We believe that all students can learn.

A core belief that every child has the capacity to learn guides our practices at SCMS. Our classrooms can adapt and be configured to blend explicit teaching with collaborative learning. Breakout pods allow students to receive target instructions from teachers and ESO's.

This plan is enacted through our blended approach to pedagogy, heavily drawn from the Victorian High Impact Teaching Strategies.

Pedagogical Approach @ SCMS

Most lessons at SCMS should follow a similar structure which is detailed below:

The beginning of a lesson:

Learning Intentions ([WALT](#) - We are learning to)

Success Criteria (WILF - What I'm Looking For **or** I can...) should be established.

Ideally these can be co-constructed. They may be unit wide LI or SC, or they maybe specific to the lesson. All children should be aware of them.

The lesson itself:

Each lesson should use one or more of the following pedagogies:

Explicit Teaching and Worked Examples (I do, We do, You do or GRR)

Multiple Exposures (To ensure retention of a concept)

Collaborative Learning (Students ability to bring ideas to and work together in a learning task – Teacher role to structure and support with roles and responsibilities where necessary)

When teaching, teachers should be aware and include the following in their planning and instruction:

[Metacognitive strategies](#) can be used to enhance retention.

Questioning (To allow students to build on already existing understandings and apply learning to their own context)

Targeted [feedback](#) directly related to the learning intention and the success criteria should be used to ensure success and then to determine future directions.

Differentiation of worked examples and multiple exposures should occur to ensure students are able to access learning.

At the end of a lesson:

Teachers need to check understanding of the task to determine student progression moving forward.

This could take the form of exit slip, student journaling, class discussion, formative and summative assessment. This data is used to guide instruction the following lesson.

The plan at SCMS is based from the [Victorian High Impact Teaching](#) strategies guide as well as elements of Lyn Sharrat's book Clarity.

It's an interpretation of many of the elements of Catholic Education's Blue Print for Change document.

Literacy Program

Our Literacy program ensures that all students at St Columba's can become literate lifelong learners. Research has shown that a synthetic phonic approach to learning provides students the tools to decode text, understand text and create text. Our school uses a phonics approach to learning reading which is explored below.

Tier 1 Literacy Program Programs, Assessments and Teaching

Regular Literacy Assessment – At St Columba's children conduct various assessments predominantly through their early years of learning. These include Running Record Assessments which guide the level of reader they have read, Early Years Assessments, a variety of spelling and reading assessments through Initia-Lit as well . As students transition to become independent readers they conduct literacy interviews to assist them in developing an enduring love for reading. SCMS have a Key Literacy Teacher who helps conduct some assessments, as well as guide teachers on how to ensure literacy growth in their students.

Initia-Lit – We use a structured reading program that incorporates a synthetic approach to the teaching of phonics alongside a rich literature and vocabulary component. This program is taught to our Reception to Year 2 students which is a methodical approach to ensure they are independent readers by Year 3. It encompasses spelling, reading comprehension and fluency, vocabulary building and grammatical concepts. These lessons are conducted 4-5 times a week.

Quality Differentiated Teaching – Using quality differentiated teaching allows our teachers to cater for all learners. This includes making explicit, minor adjustments to assessments and/or activities to ensure all students learn. Students who require extra support due to learning difficulties are placed on PPL's (A personalised plan for learning) which allows them to access Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

Tier 2

Literacy Interventions

Adaptive Technology and Applications

St Columba's uses a suite of learning apps called 'reading doctor' as a tier 2 literacy intervention. These applications are designed to teach students using phonics, linking to the Initialit teaching program. Reading doctor is used to strengthen skills that educational researches have identified as crucial for literacy learning such as phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, blending, segmentation, decoding and sight word recognition.

The school also provides each student with a Reading Egg account which is another piece of software that tracks their literacy development. Both these pieces of software are utilised as part of the learning program as well.

MiniLit

Minilit is an evidence-based, explicit and effective early literacy intervention program for teaching reading skills to children who are in the bottom 25% of the expected range for their age group in Year 1 or 2. MiniLit is a Tier 2 small group program (up to four students per group) within a Response to Intervention framework, but it can also be used on a one-to-one basis.

Education Support

Students who haven't reached literacy benchmarks will also receive in class support from an Educational Support Officer in small groups. This allows students to receive support and guidance to understand the tasks required, to stay on task throughout the lesson and to avoid distractions.

Tier 3

1 on 1 support

Students who have completed Tier 2 interventions and haven't made the required literacy process will receive 1 on 1 support from an ESO. Students may receive an abridged version of the Minilit program but with 1 on 1 support.

Students will be supported with a PPL (Personalised Plan for Learning) that allows Teachers, parents, Education Support Officers and the students to work together to achieve success.

We believe students need to be happy to learn.

Core to our work at St Columba's is student wellbeing. We believe in a whole school approach to both staff and student wellbeing that reflects contemporary research.

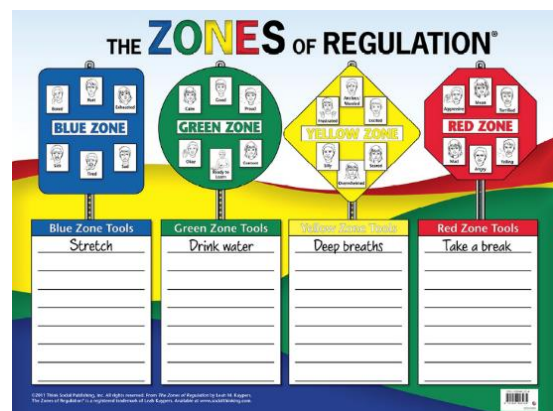
Raising Hearts and Minds – Whole School Approach to Wellbeing

At St Columba's Memorial School, we have in place a curriculum which focuses on student wellbeing and prioritised. Emphasis is placed on naming emotions and creating toolboxes that enable children to be successful. We employ a school chaplain which enables us to work with outside agencies to support student and family wellbeing.

Three clear foci

Zones of Regulation

The Zones of regulation is a systematic, cognitive behavioural approach to teach self-regulation at SCMS by categorising the ways we feel into four different zones. The framework provides strategies for students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, manage their sensory needs and improve their ability to problem solve conflicts.



Circle Time

Circle Time is an activity that's used weekly in all classes at SCMS to help develop positive relationships between children. It aims to give them tools to engage with and listen to each other. The school is currently developing a Circle Time zone in our School Fruit Orchard.

Growth Mindset Individuals who believe their talents can be developed (through hard work, good strategies, and input from others) have a growth mindset. They tend to achieve more than those with a more fixed mindset (those who believe their talents are innate gifts). This is because they worry less about looking smart and they put more energy into learning. At SCMS we teach the value of a growth mindset through our Raising Hearts and Minds.



We believe that students learn effectively when they integrate experience, imagination, information and application.

STEAM Approach

St Columba's Memorial School is committed to innovative, research-based practice to equip and inspire students to be the problem finders and solvers of the future. One of the many approaches to develop 21st century learner skills is science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) education.

STEAM is a pedagogical approach that uses science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and divergent thinking. By synergising interdisciplinary skills and perspectives, students can develop more meaningful, comprehensive and concrete understandings across the curriculum.

This skills-driven approach to reconceptualise learning to prepare students to be active, contributing citizens in a 21st Century society and economy.