



Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School

Religious Education Policy

Child Safety at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School - We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff, and volunteers. As part of this commitment we have implemented the Victorian Child Safe Standards to help protect children and young people under the age of 18 from child abuse and neglect, including cultural safety for Indigenous children and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

RATIONALE:

As Catholic educators, we are responsible for fostering and developing students' spiritual growth and faith in God through Christian values and Catholic traditions.

Being a Catholic school, our faith should be visible in actions and symbols throughout the school

We recognise that everyone at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic School, staff, children and parents, are on their own personal journey of faith.

AIMS:

- To enable staff and children to communicate with God through prayer and scripture.
- To enable staff and children to develop their spirituality.
- To help staff and children to explore and express their sense of awe and wonder at the world God has created.
- To encourage staff and children to respect those holding different beliefs.
- To help staff and children grow in awareness of themselves and to develop a positive attitude to their own emotions, life and learning.
- To enable staff and children to grow in their awareness of others and to develop relationships in a secure and supportive environment.
- To become aware of issues involving justice and the rights of the individual.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The Religious Education Program is planned each year on a term by term basis and underpinned by the core Horizons of Hope documents. We implement a Pedagogy of Encounter that engages students in an empirical model of learning that makes links to direct experiences and encounters on a global platform.

Religious Education lessons are taught for 2.5 hrs per week. The forward planning is done by

the classroom teacher at each year level. Units of work follow an odd/even Inquiry cycle map and are selected and integrated where possible according to liturgical year and school celebrations. An appropriate planning sheet is used which can be accessed from the server to record unit understandings, lesson plans and assessment plans.

The role of the Classroom teacher:

- To pass on the tradition of the Catholic Faith and to model Christian values.
- To show pastoral care to the children, staff and parents.
- To keep Jesus as a central focus of the program for the children.
- To facilitate the implementation of the school based P-6 program.
- To plan and participate in class Masses.
- To work with other staff when planning and implementing the program.
- To collect resources relevant to the program.
- To report to parents in an appropriate manner via the school report.

Community Involvement

The Parish Priest is the spiritual head of our parish, and our Parish School. He provides spiritual guidance and support to our Religious Education Program and in particular to Sacramental Programs.

The Religious Education Leader is instrumental in facilitating liaison between all groups and individuals in the school and wider Parish Community. The Religious Education Leader fosters links between the Parish Priest, Principal, school staff, parents and other parish members. The Religious Education Leader guides the learning and teaching practices for each level and plans with teachers in order to develop deep and engaging units of work.

Families and people from the wider parish community are invited and encouraged to participate in many areas of the Religious Education Program. This involvement promotes and fosters a supportive learning environment for the children at Our Lady Help of Christians.

Involvement can focus on the Sacramental Program where parents attend meetings, read at liturgies, take part in Masses and participate in workshops.

Parents are able to work hand in hand with the School and Parish Communities through their involvement in Sacraments or on a special event such as Grandparents' Day and the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians.

On a day-to-day basis, parents may participate by reading the Reflection articles in the School Newsletter, assisting children with Religious Education home activities, attending Class Masses and providing feedback, formally or informally.

Sacramental Practice

During their Primary School years, the children at Our Lady Help of Christians receive the following Sacraments:

Reconciliation: Year 3 (every year)

Eucharist: Year 4 (every year)

Confirmation Year 6 (every year)

As part of their preparation, children will complete a unit of work prior to participating in any of the Sacraments.

Professional Development / Faith Development

The opportunities offered to Staff to help their Faith Development are as follows:

Staff meetings dedicated to Religious Education.

Whole staff professional development opportunities related to teaching PD or spiritual development.

Teachers lead a staff reflection/prayer before each staff meeting.

Guest speakers at various times e.g., Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Religious Education Leaders.

Liturgies

At Our Lady Help of Christians School we celebrate liturgies for the following:

- Opening and closing of the Year whole school Masses
- Feast days
- Class Masses
- The Sacraments of Confirmation/ Eucharist
- Reconciliation
- Special events Masses
 - Grandparent's Day

Assessment & Evaluation

The Religious Education program is assessed and evaluated through the following ways:

- class participation in various discussions, role-plays, prayer sessions
- contributions made to the class discussions
- a report is given to the parents mid-year and at the end of the year
- conducting pre and post assessment tasks for each unit of work
- anecdotal notes of understanding of concepts taught
- evaluation of each unit will be completed by each teacher at the end of a unit.

EVALUATION:

This Policy will be evaluated in accordance with the School Improvement Plan under the sphere of Education in Faith.