



St Vincent's School

Religious Education Policy

SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

In a happy, supportive environment each person is encouraged to nurture Gospel values as a responsible member of a faith sharing community.

GOALS

At St Vincent's School we strive to;

- Provide a happy, trusting and secure environment, which is above all Christian, so that the children can develop as confident and independent learners.
- Accept the individuality of each person.
- Encourage each person to reflect Christian values in his or her daily life and activities.
- Develop the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of each child.
- Provide the child with the life skills necessary to approach the future with confidence.
- Encourage an open and positive relationship with the wider community.
- Develop in each person a respect for the dignity of self and others.
- Foster an awareness of the need to respect our world.
- Achieve each of these goals because Jesus is our model.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is the first learning area in the Catholic school curriculum. Religious Education is a learning area, which focuses on the knowledge and understanding of the Gospel. 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 endeavour to live their lives.

Religious Education lessons are taught daily. The Religious Education curriculum is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as all other learning areas. Religious Education needs to relate the knowledge and understandings of the Catholic faith to students' real life situations and experiences. Religious Education should 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.

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

At all Catholic Schools in Western Australia, it is mandatory to teach the content of the Religious Education Units provided by Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA). Teachers of Religious Education must be in the process of or have completed Accreditation to Teach Religious Education.

The Units of Work for each year level may be taught in any order, although it is preferred to teach the Units which align to the Sacramental Program at the time the Sacramental preparation is occurring. Teachers have flexibility to choose the content/delivery of their lesson based upon the Units of Work.

Below are the set requirements for the number of Units taught in each year level.

PRE-PRIMARY – YEAR 1

- 12 units per year (three units per Term)

YEAR 2 – YEAR 6

- 8 units per year (two units per Term)

Kindy teachers are able to follow the Kindergarten RE Guidelines, however, the content is not formalised or reported upon. In three-year and four-year old programs, teachers are required to plan and provide quality programs, environments and pedagogical practices to raise the religious awareness of children.

TIME REQUIREMENTS

Religious Education must be taught each day. Liturgies and other activities of catechesis including Christian service are essential for the effective evangelisation of students but are separate from the Religious Education Program and are not a part of the time allocation.

The following time requirements are necessary for Religious Education;

- Pre-Primary - Year 1 - 15 minutes per day
- Year 2 - Year 6 - 30 minutes per day

THE SACRAMENTS

At St Vincent's School we believe parents are the first educators of their children, particularly in the area of faith education. At St Vincent's School we follow the Family-Focused, Parish-Based and School-Supported Approach to the preparation and celebration of the Sacraments.

To be involved in the Sacramental Program, parents are required to enrol their child/ren in the St Vincent's Parish Sacramental Program for preparation to receive the Sacrament of Penance, the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- Children in Year 3 and above, who have been baptised, may enrol for preparation for the Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation).
- Children in Year 4 and above, who have been baptised and have received the Sacrament of Penance, may enrol for preparation for Eucharist (Holy Communion).
- Children in Year 6, who have been baptised and have received the Sacrament of Penance and Eucharist, may enrol for preparation for Confirmation.

Sacramental preparation classes are held after school from 3:30 - 4:15pm. The lessons are led by the Parish Catechist and are supported by the Parish Coordinator, the class teachers of the Sacramental years, the schools Leadership Team and the Parish Priest.

The Sacramental Program begins with an Enrolment Meeting, which all parents are expected to attend. In preparation for receiving the Sacrament, children involved in the Sacramental Program participate in a Retreat Day as well as a Family Faith Formation Workshop with their parents.

Teachers at St Vincent's School also cover the Sacramental content in class during Religious Education lessons. It is important to teach lessons on the Sacraments during the same period the children attend the Parish Sacramental Program.

- Year 3 prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance)
- Year 4 prepare for the Sacrament of Holy Communion (Eucharist)
- Year 6 prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation

ASSEMBLIES

At St Vincent's School, whole school assemblies are held for children from Pre-Primary to Year 6. The assemblies occur on a Monday and Friday each week and begin with prayer. Twice a year, classes are involved in leading the school community in prayer at the commencement of a whole school assembly.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

Once a Term, classroom teachers are involved in preparing liturgical celebrations with their students, such as a class Mass, Liturgy of the Word and/or a Prayer Service. Liturgical celebrations are held to celebrate important times in the liturgical calendar, such as Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Advent, Christmas and special Feast Days. Parents and members of the Parish and school community are always welcome to attend these celebrations. Each class is also encouraged to visit the Church and are welcome to attend Parish Masses.

Masses are held at the St Vincent's Church at 9am on weekdays. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also held in the Church for students in Years 4 – 6 in preparation for Sacraments, Easter and Christmas and sometimes at other times throughout the year. Year 3 students participate in Reconciliation in preparation for Christmas after receiving the Sacrament of First Reconciliation.

LITURGICAL SINGING

Liturgical singing practise occurs in the School Hall or in classrooms in preparation for upcoming Masses and Liturgical celebrations. New songs and hymns are also introduced and practised during Music lessons.

PRAYER

Prayer is a personal response to God's presence and a form of communicating with God. Prayer involves the whole person and cannot be merely an intellectual exercise using thoughts and words. Students participate during times of prayer throughout the day and when the whole school gathers together.

There are many ways of communicating with God. All students need opportunities to experience prayer situations, which are:

- **FORMAL** - to learn words, songs and gestures that will help students to pray.
- **PUBLIC** - to share aloud a prayer or prayer intention.
- **PRIVATE** - to listen as well as speak to God personally.
- **SILENT** - to engage in reflection, meditation or times of silence.

CLASS PRAYER

At St Vincent's School, each class takes time out of the day to pray. Classes begin the day with a morning prayer, students pray before lunch and at the end of the school day. Prayer may also occur at other times throughout the day.

The following prayers and Mass responses are taught in the year levels below:

KINDY

- Introduction to The Sign of the Cross
 - God is in my head,
God is in my heart,
God is looking over my shoulders,
Amen.

PRE-PRIMARY

- The Sign of the Cross
- Introduction to the Our Father and the Hail Mary

YEAR ONE

The above, as well as:

- The Our Father
- The Hail Mary
- The Glory be

YEAR TWO

The above, as well as:

- Introduction to the Rosary
- Responses at Mass
 - The Lord be with you
R: And with your spirit
 - Lord, have mercy
R: Lord, have mercy
 - Christ, have mercy
R: Christ, have mercy
 - The word of the Lord
R: Thanks be to God

YEAR THREE

The above, as well as:

- Introduction to praying the Rosary
- Act of Sorrow
- The Mystery of Faith
- Responses at Mass
 - The Gospel of the Lord
R: Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ
 - A reading from the holy Gospel...
R: Glory to you, O Lord

YEAR FOUR

The above, as well as:

- The Rosary
- Responses at Mass
 - Holy, Holy
 - Lamb of God

YEAR FIVE

The above, as well as:

- The Apostles Creed
- All Mass Responses

YEAR SIX

The above, as well as:

- The Nicene Creed
- The Gloria

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Appropriate professional development is available for teachers of Religious Education. Each year, all staff participate in Professional Learning in either the faith or knowledge component and such learning contributes to the ongoing renewal of Accreditation.

REVIEW HISTORY

Originally Released - April 1996

Revised - June 1998

Revised - February 2003

Revised - November 2008

Revised - 2012

Revised and reformatted - 2016

To be reviewed: 2020