



St John's Primary School is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

## Curriculum and learning policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for teaching practices to intentionally create child initiated and adult initiated learning experiences at St. John's school. These include:

- Discovery (Years Prep to Two)
- Discovery Projects (Years Three to Six).
- Group Inquiry (Years Prep to Six)

The policy will provide guidance surrounding responsibilities and expectations of all stakeholders.

## Vision

Learning and Teaching Vision:

*"At St. John's, we strongly believe that children are at the centre when given authentic and meaningful experiences. They flourish when their passions and interests are acknowledged and valued. Children are empowered when they take ownership for their learning. They have a right to develop autonomy through play and investigation"* (St. John's Staff, 2018).

## Purpose

At St. John's school, we aim to ensure a consistent understanding of the expectations of relevant stakeholders involved with child and adult initiated learning experiences (children, educators, leaders, parents).

The Victorian Curriculum is the Foundation to Year 10 curriculum for Victorian government and Catholic schools for implementation from 2017. The Victorian Curriculum reflects Victorian priorities and standards for F–10 and incorporates the Australian Curriculum. It defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling, set out as a series of learning progressions. See <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/foundation-10/Pages/default.aspx>.

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 recognises that increasingly, in a world where knowledge itself is constantly growing and evolving, students need to develop, in addition to discrete discipline knowledge and understanding, a set of skills, behaviours and dispositions, or general capabilities, that apply across discipline content and equip them to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich, globalised world.

The St John's Primary School Curriculum Plan has been developed in light of the directions for Catholic education and principles of curriculum from the *Horizons of Hope* education framework: Catholic schools provide an excellent holistic education centred on the students and engaging them in authentic, purposeful learning; and incorporating the philosophy of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 and the Religious Education Curriculum Framework.

The curriculum is a statement of the purpose of schooling and defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling.

## Scope

Our school curriculum defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling at St John's Primary School.

At St John's Primary School, curriculum is enriched by the values, beliefs, perspectives and experiences of each member of the learning community when they engage actively with Catholic understandings of the human person. This orientation towards the person means that the process of curriculum design is shared with students, creating within them a sense of ownership and self-efficacy as learners. Our learning community fosters the conditions for students to have a voice in the design process, allowing them to make decisions about what they need to know and when.

## Implementation

St John's Primary School will implement the curriculum by:

### DISCOVERY - Years P-2

- A team of educators are responsible for creating spaces across their level that are welcoming, responsive to our world and engaging for children.
- Spaces include a variety of different elements to ensure children can express themselves through many different *languages* (see Appendix 1: [The Hundred Languages of Children](#)). These spaces include the language of marking/drawing, sculpting, dramatic play/imitation, tinkering, construction, painting, cooking and many more.
- Provocations are included in each space. These items are intentionally planned for and placed to provoke thinking of children in the space.
- Each space is arranged to have endless possibilities for children to depict their understandings of the world through various representations.
- Tuning in to spaces is essential to intentionally teach through provocations, however children may use materials from spaces in other ways in which they were intended.
- Children are encouraged to revisit representations of their ideas throughout the day and beyond to make changes as their thinking changes. These materials should also be used for explicit teaching of core skills (numeracy and literacy development).
- Some children with a greater 'discovery stamina', may naturally undertake their own personal investigation that may continue over multiple sessions. Educators are required to conference with these children (see Discovery Projects - Years 3-6 for further information).
- Creativity and open-ended materials are encouraged.
- Spaces should be planned from data/evidence collected, starting from a point of children's interest.

### DISCOVERY PROJECTS - Years 3-6

- Educators are responsible for sparking children's interest through providing a range of make, act, do and know 'stations', or experiences (incursions/excursions). Children may be inspired to enter their discovery project through this avenue or already have their own ideas.
- Educators conference individually with children or groups of children and document on a communal Google Doc that is shared with the Learning & Teaching Leader to record project idea and direction. This will constantly be updated as children's projects change and develop over time.
- Educators will conference (through continuous conversation) with children about their personal projects at least once a week, using conferencing stems. Educators will assess the zone of challenge to ensure that children will achieve success within their project and ensure necessary support or direction is facilitated.

- If children require money for their project, it must be brought to team planning to consult the budget. Educators from the team decide whose project to invest in. These should be recorded in a communal document.
- The educator's role during Discovery projects is to continuously conference with children (alternating between target groups). The conditions are right if the educator is visiting the child (i.e. generally, if children are engaged in their project, they do not need to continuously approach an adult).
- Learning and Teaching Leader will be familiar with projects (weekly check in on communal document) and feedback to educators/children where necessary.
- Any activities that require children to leave their Hub area require supervision from an adult and must be organised in consultation with the adult at least one week in advance (e.g. cooking). This must be placed on Google calendar with specific date and time and include details of who is attending and where it will be.
- When cooking, children must have an adult present that holds their Victorian Government Food Handling Accreditation.
- All projects need to align with the criteria (see Appendix 2) and aim to have some kind of positive impact on someone else (an actioning of some kind).
- All projects that children are engaged in need to be suitable for their stage of development. Refer to conferencing stems. Consultation with the Wellbeing Leader/Principal is required for sensitive issues (e.g. project on eating disorders etc).
- Children are required to keep a reflection on the process and learnings throughout their project. This may look different for different children (e.g. some children may require heavy support/prompting questions).
- Some children require a differentiated approach to support their project (i.e. proforma to plan may be required if child keeps changing topics - breadth instead of depth).

#### GROUP INQUIRY - Years P-6

- Educators are responsible for leading children through an inquiry project related to an area of the curriculum (Humanities, Science, Technologies, Health etc). Concepts stemming from the curriculum area, connect to the whole school Throughline and are mapped within an Inquiry Scope and Sequence during the Yearly Sketching Meetings.
- Educators devise creative sessions for inquiry focus for children and carry out these within their level or class.
- Educators run inquiries, focused on teaching the key concepts/curriculum area. This is achieved through teaching of an inquiry process (mapped to Throughline through Yearly Sketching).
- Educators experienced within devising and executing whole group inquiries should focus on communicating their process through documentation.

The curriculum is designed and delivered from whole-school to level planning to individual teacher plans. These are created in a collaborative and supported environment. This ensures that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is driving student learning and lifting student outcomes.

### Curriculum content

The school implements the Victorian Curriculum in order to provide students with a comprehensive and cumulative curriculum from Foundation to Year 10.

The school's teaching and learning program is the school-based plan for delivering this common set of knowledge and skills in ways that best utilise local resources, expertise and contexts. Information technology is an integral part of our curriculum as a basic tool for learning. Supported by our governing body, St John's Primary School will develop strong processes for monitoring student progress and the application of appropriate explicit teaching and intervention strategies.

St John’s Primary School will also take inspiration from the *Horizons of Hope* education framework. This framework supports Catholic school communities to engage in dialogue about the distinctive nature of learning and teaching, leading learning and enhancing Catholic identity in our schools. The framework is a living document that has been added to over the years with examples of practice from schools, as well as additional strategy statements in the areas of Leadership, Wellbeing, Diversity and Religious Education.

Religious Education has a central place in the curriculum at St John’s Primary School, as it reflects our unique character of Catholic identity and focus as a Catholic school. The primary source for developing our Religious Education program is the Religious Education Curriculum Framework, developed by our governing body MACS.

### Whole-school curriculum plan and time allocation

The following provides an outline of the learning areas and recommended weekly time allocation across F–6. Multiple learning areas are often part of a unit and not always taught as separate subject areas. This is ensured through time allocations which are in line with recommendations of the educational authorities.

Learning Areas	Recommended Time Allocated
<b>English</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading &amp; Viewing</li> <li>• Speaking &amp; Listening</li> <li>• Grammar &amp; Spelling</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	2 hours daily (total time should not be less than 10 hours weekly on average over the course of a school year and may vary across year levels) 75 minutes per week (15 minutes daily)
<b>Mathematics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number &amp; Algebra</li> <li>• Measurement</li> <li>• Geometry</li> <li>• Statistics &amp; Probability</li> </ul>	1 hour daily (total time should not be less than 5 hours weekly on average over the course of a school year)
<b>Religious Education</b>	2.5 hours weekly
<b>Health &amp; Physical Education</b>	2.5 hours weekly
<b>Arts</b>	1 hour weekly
<b>Humanities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civics &amp; Citizenship</li> <li>• Economics</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• History</li> </ul> <b>Science</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science as a Human Endeavour</li> <li>• Earth Science</li> <li>• Biological Science</li> <li>• Chemical Science</li> <li>• Physical Science</li> </ul>	2 hours and 15 minutes weekly The learning areas of Humanities, Science, Health & Physical Education, and Technology will be taught, ensuring an average of 3 hours weekly over the course of a school year. This is through the focus of the integrated unit of work using an inquiry approach developed under the St John’s Primary School Conceptual Framework.

Learning Areas	Recommended Time Allocated
<b>Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design &amp; Technology</li> <li>Digital Technologies</li> </ul>	
TOTAL	<b>25 hours weekly</b>

## Capabilities

The Victorian Curriculum includes both knowledge and skills. It is expected that the skills and knowledge defined in the capabilities will be developed, practised, deployed and demonstrated by students in and through their learning across the curriculum:

- Critical & Creative Thinking
- Ethical
- Intercultural
- Personal & Social.

The skills and knowledge defined in the capabilities will be developed in student learning across the curriculum areas where it is relevant and authentic to do so.

## Curriculum organisation and implementation

The school's planning for curriculum draws on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) curriculum planning site for age-appropriate content, sequential learning patterns, and interrelated aspects of the content and skills and of the desired learning capabilities. Refer to the Pedagogical Framework.

All content is developed using the following documents:

- St John's Primary School policies for each of the learning areas
- St John's Primary School Religious Education Scope and Sequence: Religious Education Curriculum Framework
- Victorian Curriculum F–10
- Statement of Philosophy.

A variety of other resources, including online resources, will be available to support planning.

## Evaluation

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the staff, in accordance with the School Improvement Plan or as required.

## School policies/references

[Reading Philosophy at St. John's](#)

[Writing Philosophy at St. John's](#)

[Mathematics Philosophy at St. John's](#)

Appendix 1:

Appendix 2:

## WHAT MAKES AN AWESOME PROJECT?

### CRITERIA

When designing your discovery project you will need to choose something that:

- ★ **You really want to know about, take action on, make or do.**  
Why are you interested in this? Is this something you feel strongly about?
- ★ **Stretches your learning.**  
Will this project lead to new learning, or stretch you to go beyond what you already know and can do?
- ★ **You can manage independently.**  
Will you be able to manage this project with the resources and time you have available?
- ★ **Would be interesting, innovative and worthwhile.**  
Is this something that other people would be interested in when you share your learning? Is it worth knowing about? Is it different from something you have done or seen before?