

# ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT POLICY



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### 1. Rationale

Our parents and carers have the right to expect comprehensive, accessible and accurate information on the achievements of their child. Staff at Saint Michael's Primary School actively facilitate timely communication with parents throughout the school year through a range of appropriate assessment and reporting mechanisms. Our communication with parents and carers is professional, honest, accurate and timely.

Saint Michael's Primary School staff value the relationship between themselves and our parents and carers of our students and we believe that effective partnerships between parents, carers and staff enhance the opportunities to improve student outcomes.

### 2. Definitions

Assessment is the central process in instruction. It is the bridge between teaching and learning. Assessment refers to the stage of gathering data. Evaluation is the stage of making judgements about the information gathered. Teachers draw conclusions about the progress of students and the effectiveness of teaching plans from the assessment data. The analysis of the data is essential to ensure that the assessment data is evaluated to enable the teachers to plan future meaningful and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for the students.

### 3. Purpose

The purpose of assessment is to be able to make judgements regarding student progress and the effectiveness of teaching and learning programs and whole school initiatives. Schools are expected to seek continuous improvement of student achievement and are accountable for their effectiveness in doing so. We employ a range of strategies to gather information to determine the standard of student achievement. School-based and systemic assessment data are used to inform whole school planning. Staff investigate the data and determine the direction of learning programs in subsequent years. Strategies are put in place through the Business Plan and Operational Plans to address areas of concern and processes for monitoring the effectiveness of the approach undertaken are described.

### 4. Guiding Principles

#### 4.1 Assessment should be an integral part of Teaching and Learning

Assessment opportunities should arise naturally out of the teaching and intended learning of the curriculum. Assessments should be carefully constructed to enable judgements to be made about students' progress in ways that contribute to ongoing learning.

#### 4.2 Assessment should be educative

Assessment practices should be educationally sound and contribute to learning. Assessment activities should:

- Encourage in-depth and long-term learning;
- Provide feedback that assists students in learning and informs teachers' planning; and,
- Make explicit to students the assessment criteria to focus their attention on what they have to achieve and provide students with feedback about their progress.

Assessment needs to be comprehensive and balanced across various domains of learning. With support, students can learn to assess and evaluate their own learning in a way that further extends that learning.

#### **4.3 Assessment should be fair**

Assessment needs to take account of the diverse needs of students. They should provide valid information on the actual ideas, processes, products and values expected of students. A valid assessment is one that assesses what it is supposed to assess.

#### **4.4 Assessment should be designed to meet their specific purposes**

There are two purposes of assessment: summative assessment (assessment of learning) and formative assessment (assessment for learning). It is expected that teachers use a balance of summative and formative assessments to gather evidence of student achievement:

- *Summative assessment* involves assessment procedures that aim to determine students' learning at a particular time e.g. When reporting against the achievement standards, after completion of a unit of work, or at the end of a term or semester.
- *Formative assessment* involves a range of formal and informal assessment procedures used by teachers during the learning process to improve student achievement and to inform subsequent teaching. It often involves qualitative feedback (rather than scores) that focuses on the details of specific knowledge and skills that are being learnt.

#### **4.5 Assessment should lead to informative reporting**

Reporting should provide an accurate summary of formative and summative assessment information collected for each student. The purpose of reporting is to provide feedback to students, parents and teachers. The information is also valuable for school and system-wide planning.

#### **4.6 Assessment should lead to school-wide evaluation processes**

Highly effective schools pay particular attention to teachers' qualitative and quantitative data and standardised test data. Teachers and school leaders need to understand current and past student achievement levels, be explicit about targets for improvement and be explicit about how progress towards those targets will be monitored.

### **5. Procedures for Assessment and Reporting**

#### **5.1 Principles and Procedures**

- Staff will refer to the principles and procedures of the CECWA Religious Education Policy, the Western Australian Curriculum, Kindergarten Guidelines, Early Years Learning Framework. The School Curriculum Plan, intervention plans and overviews to guide teaching assessment and reporting in line with the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA).
- Staff will have evidence/work samples and student performance data to support on balance judgements which are consistent with this policy.
- Teachers will use the SEQTA learning management system to report on student achievement in all learning areas as prescribed by Saint Michael's Primary School.
- Teachers will use the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) which is completed in Year 3 and 5 in Term 2 each year, Student Achievement Information System (SAIS), Educational Assessment Reporting System (EARS), school focused assessment tools: ACER and teacher judgement to plan for improved learning, inclusive of

- all students.
  - Year level common assessment tasks are administered and teachers meet as a team to analyse and evaluate work samples. This ensures consistency in judging achievement and ensuring expected standards are maintained across the school.
  - Judgements regarding achievement of the expected standards are made through reference to SCSA Judging Standards and exemplars.
  - Teachers will engage in school-based data collection and moderation processes to ensure consistent judgements relating to student achievement. Teachers make comparisons of student work samples to the A-E exemplars across the various learning areas.
  - The reporting process will involve parents, students, teachers and Catholic Education Western Australia.
  - Parents and carers will be given opportunity to be involved and engaged in the reporting process.
- In addition to the two formal end of semester reports for Kindergarten to Year 6, there will be a range of other formal and informal assessment reporting that may include:

## 5.2 Assessment Strategies

The following strategies enable teachers to find out where students are in their learning:

- Observations
- Student work samples
- One-to-one conferencing
- Interviews
- Open-ended tasks
- Demonstrations by students
- Teacher-devised tests
- Standardised assessments
- Teacher – Parent / Carer Meetings
- Formal Interviews
- Communication books and diaries as required
- Phone calls and or email communication as needed
- Case conferences for students with learning disabilities or difficulties
- English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) Program: Students may receive specific EAL/D grades and comments;
- Informal reporting in the form of everyday evidence of student progress, which may include work samples, parent/teacher discussions, telephone calls or emails;
- Performance evenings;
- Parent Forums/Workshops to support Curriculum direction and implemented programs;
- NAPLAN reports in Years 3 and 5 sent home in September each year; and,
- Pre-Primary On-Entry Reports sent home at the end of Term 1.
- Staff will report to parents where it is identified that students are at risk and provide timely information regarding their learning program and progress. This will be attended to through the formal reporting process, Independent Educational Plans (IEP) using SEN planning for particular students if required and by teacher or parent request.
- A database of families that require two separate reports issued will be maintained at the school. The front office staff will facilitate emailing of the second report.
- Reports will not be issued prior to the due date of distribution.

All the information teachers collect about their students should become an integral part of the planning of instructional activities. Teachers meet regularly in team meetings to discuss student achievement to ensure consistency in judgements and that students are attaining expected standards.

A range of tools are used throughout the school to gather information regarding whole school achievement. ***An overview of the Assessment Schedule within the year levels can be seen at Appendix A***

## 6. References

Bishops of Western Australia 2009, *Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: 2009 – 2015*

Department of Education Services Western Australia, *Non-Government Schools in Western Australia Registration Standards*, 2013

Schools Curriculum and Standards Authority, *Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline from Kindergarten to Year 10*, 2013 SCSA

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, 2009.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *My Time. Our Place: The framework for School Age Care*, 2011

School Curriculum and Standards Authority, *The Western Australian Certificate of Education*, Western Australia, 2013

