St. Joseph’s School
Rochester

~ Excellence in Education

Provided in a caring Catholic Community

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY
Rationale:

This policy provides the common foundation for our teaching here at St Joseph’s. It provides the belief framework by which we deliver the formal mandated curriculum requirements, Source of Life Religious Education Curriculum. It helps us to interpret and seek out current educational thinking to provide for the learning needs of the students in our school community.

Beliefs:

At St Joseph’s we believe:

- The curriculum is based on the belief that ALL students can learn.
- Engaged, self-motivated and independent learners take ownership and responsibility for their learning and can work with others in collaboration.
- Quality teaching & learning is fostered by flexible teaching approaches designed to respond to individual differences in student ability, interest & learning style.
- Students must learn essential skills for success in today’s world; critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration.
- Assessment practices are an integral part of teaching and learning.
- Christian values, where God is central to all things and faith nurtured is promoted through our teaching and learning practices.

Aims

We aim to:

- Nurture, support and build relationships between parents, students & families.
- Provide a positive & supportive environment for learning where students are free to experiment and make mistakes.
- Support students to set achievable goals for their learning.
- Develop within students a positive sense of self as a learner.
- Engage in learning experiences that are authentic and purposeful.
- Encourage the transfer and application of skills, understandings, processes or practices taught across other domains and situations.
- Develop an inquiring mind with the ability to question, argue rationally and actively engage in a co-operative learning environment.
- Use teaching and learning strategies that reflect current and relevant educational research into best practice especially in the areas of how children learn best.
- Continue to develop a relationship with God and others based on the teachings of the gospel through our teaching and learning experiences.

Implementation

Therefore we will:

- Determine students’ differing abilities and structure learning experiences accordingly.
- Provide time for students to practice and reflect on their learning.
• Include peer tutoring, multi-age grouping, individual and co-operative structures with the teacher as a facilitator, guiding children and learning from and with them.
• Give students responsibility and leadership roles both in class and beyond.
• Provide students with opportunities to express themselves and their understandings through a variety of forms and media.
• Support students in goal setting and self assessment
• Develop class norms and protocols for a safe and productive learning environment
• Provide stimulating and challenging activities and units of inquiry that allow the learner to develop to their full potential.
• Develop a balanced and comprehensive curriculum that reflects the development of the whole child
• Encourage students to be discoverers, explorers and creators in a variety of ways.
• Use information from a variety of assessments to inform planning and decision making around teaching and future learning.
• Gather data by a variety of strategies including self & peer assessment.
• Foster conversation around best practice in teaching and learning through professional learning teams.

Evaluation:
We will monitor the implementation of this policy by:

• Revisiting annually especially in the induction of new staff
• Reflecting on our policy in preparation for our Annual Review Meetings
• Undertaking a formal policy review in 5 years time

Reviewed August 2010
Ratified by School Board
Next review: 2015