

St James School Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Rationale

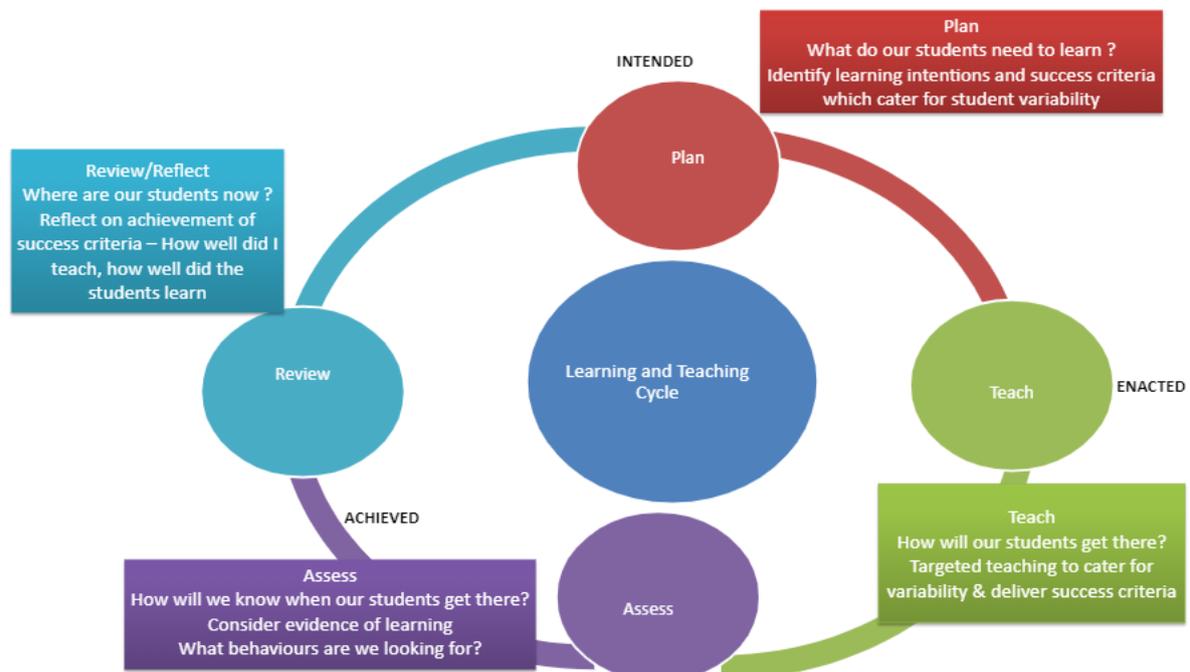
The challenge of schooling in the 21st century is to equip students with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to prosper in our modern and ever-changing world. In the setting of a Catholic School the challenge is also to instil in children the skills and confidence to use their talents gifted to them by God, to make a difference in their world.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our school supports all of its students in progressing towards and achieving appropriate learning outcomes.

Definition

Teaching and **Assessment** are inseparable actions of the educator that, when purposefully planned and acted on, produce Learning. **Teaching** is the act, whilst assessment is the intrinsic measure of the **Learning** that results. The staff do this by following the Teaching and Learning cycle:



Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student **learning**.

- **Assessment for learning** occurs when teachers use data about student progress to inform their **teaching**.
- **Assessment as learning** occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future **learning** goals.
- **Assessment of learning** occurs when teachers use evidence of student **learning** to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.

Implementation

- In order to engage with the challenges identified the staff have developed an agreed set of beliefs that our practice in the area of Teaching, Learning and Assessment is based upon. These beliefs are the drivers of our practice.

These practices, defined in the school's instructional vision and design principles, are adopted by all educators at the school.

- The school will track student achievement each year through the monitoring of student assessments against school trends, paying particular attention to the development of Literacy and Numeracy. This is done through the use of the Tier assessments including NAPLAN, PAT and classroom assessments.

- Assessment for, as and of learning, the ongoing processes of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence, will be used to make informed and consistent judgements to improve student learning.

- Analysis of Tier 1 and 2 Assessments

(NAPLAN and PAT) will take place on a yearly basis with teaching staff. Regular analysis of other data e.g. MAI will also be a focus. This analysis through PLT's, staff meetings along with unit plan reviews is used to support the curriculum and teaching practice review.

- The area of Teaching, Learning and Assessment will be supported through specific Diocesan/School strategies in the Annual School Improvement Plan, as part of the school's management of its 4 year School Improvement Plan. The Annual School Improvement Plan will be responsive to the identified needs of learners in the school.

- The Victorian Curriculum is used to structure the learning progressions of all students at our school, as well as providing rigorous standards of achievement for all learners. Living in Christ Jesus, devised by DOSCEL, is the resource for teaching Religious Education in our school.

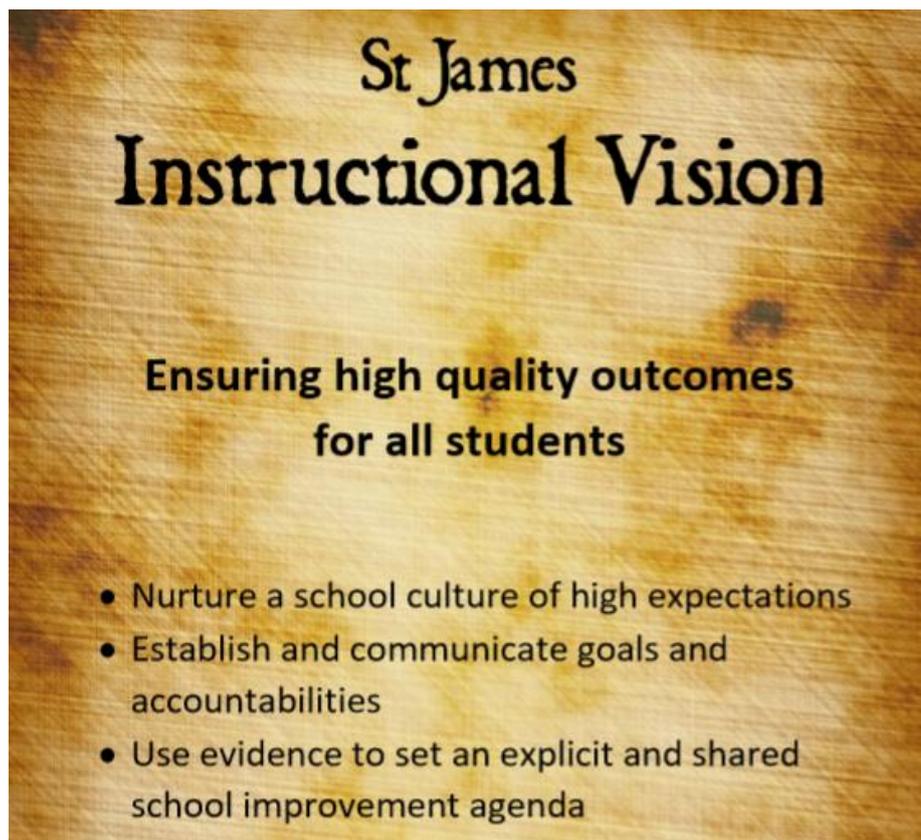
- Assessment is managed at whole school, team and individual classroom levels. All educators at our school will maintain the validity of all assessments.

- A balanced approach of assessment strategies is used across all curriculum areas with staff adhering to the school Assessment Schedule.

- The school Assessment Schedule can be accessed via the Staff Google Drive.

- The school uses an Integrated approach to teaching and learning. The content of the Learning Areas is specifically taught, while linking these with a unifying thread. The Capabilities are embedded in these teaching experiences.

- This policy is to be implemented in conjunction with the parallel policies of "Curriculum, Planning and Programming Policy" and "Reporting Student Achievement to Parents Policy".



CURRICULUM STATEMENTS

ENGLISH

The English curriculum aims to ensure that students:

- learn to listen to, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on increasingly complex and sophisticated spoken and written texts across a growing range of contexts with accuracy, fluency and purpose
- appreciate, enjoy and use the English language in all its variations and develop a sense of its richness and power to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interaction with others, entertain, persuade and argue
- understand how Standard Australian English works in its spoken and written forms and in combination with non-linguistic forms of communication to create meaning
- develop interest and skills in inquiring into the aesthetic aspects of texts, and develop an informed appreciation of literature.

Students who require further assistance to develop their Literacy skills have the opportunity to participate in the LLI (Levelled Literacy Intervention) program. LLI offers intensive learning opportunities for students who are experiencing difficulty in learning reading skills in the early years and beyond. Students may be offered access to the STA (Speech Therapy Assistance) program. STA responds to students who may be experiencing difficulty with language development.

Students at St James Primary School have the opportunity to participate in a range of English events, such as:

- Vic Spell
- Debating
- Public Speaking
- Poetry and short story competitions

Once a month, the Casey Cardinia Library brings their Mobile Library bus on site to St James for students to borrow. This supports the students by providing a greater range of literature from which they may choose to read.

HUMANITIES

The Humanities includes Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Geography and History.

The Humanities provide a framework for students to examine the complex processes that have shaped the modern world and to investigate responses to different challenges including people's interconnections with the environment.

In Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business, students explore the systems that shape society, with a specific focus on legal and economic systems. Students learn about Australia's role in global systems, and are encouraged to appreciate democratic principles and to contribute as active, informed and responsible citizens.

In History and Geography, students explore the processes that have shaped and which continue to shape different societies and cultures, to appreciate the common humanity shared across time and distance, and to evaluate the ways in which humans have faced and continue to face different challenges.

St James students engage in incursions, excursions and camps to make explicit links to the Humanities Curriculum where applicable.

LANGUAGES

Students at St James Primary School engage in weekly LOTE Spanish lessons taught by a specialist teacher.

The patron saint of our school is said to be buried in Santiago in the north of Spain. It is the source of inspiration for the famous ‘Camino’ pilgrimage. The teaching of Spanish helps with the links we make with our patron saint.

The Languages curriculum aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure that students:

- communicate in the language they are learning
- understand the relationship between language, culture and learning
- develop Intercultural Capabilities
- understand themselves as communicators
- celebrate Spanish culture on St James Feast Day

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics curriculum aims to ensure that students:

- develop useful mathematical and numeracy skills for everyday life, work and as active and critical citizens in a technological world
- see connections and apply mathematical concepts, skills and processes to pose and solve problems in mathematics and in other disciplines and contexts
- acquire specialist knowledge and skills in mathematics that provide for further study in the discipline
- appreciate mathematics as a discipline – its history, ideas, problems and applications, aesthetics and philosophy

These skills are embedded in the strands of Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry as well as Statistics and Probability.

Students at St James Primary School have the opportunity to participate in Mathematics to enhance their automatic recall of number facts and revise concepts taught in class. This is accessible both from home and at school.

Students who require further assistance to develop their Mathematical skills have the opportunity to participate in the EMU (Extending Mathematical Understanding) program. EMU offers intensive learning opportunities for students who are experiencing difficulty in learning mathematics in the early years and beyond.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Health and Physical Education aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable students to:

- access, evaluate and synthesise information to take positive action to protect, enhance and advocate for their own and others’ health, wellbeing, safety and physical activity participation across their lifespan
- develop and use personal, behavioural, social and cognitive skills and strategies to promote a sense of personal identity and wellbeing and to build and manage respectful relationships

- acquire, apply and evaluate movement skills, concepts and strategies to respond confidently, competently and creatively in a variety of physical activity contexts and settings
- engage in and enjoy regular movement-based learning experiences and understand and appreciate their significance to personal, social, cultural, environmental and health practices and outcomes
- analyse how varied and changing personal and contextual factors shape understanding of, and opportunities for, health and physical activity locally, regionally and globally.

At St James Catholic Primary School, students participate in Physical Education lessons once a week with a specialist teacher. During these lessons positive peer interactions are developed. Students also have a tennis lesson once a week, to develop hand eye coordination and physical endurance.

Students have the opportunity to participate in whole school activities such as:

- Swimming carnival
- Grandparents day - athletics
- Interschool sport (senior school)
- Life Ed Van

Students may participate in the following extra-curricular activities:

- Cross country
- District athletics
- District swimming

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Students from Foundation – 6 at St James Catholic Primary School engage in the Sale Dioceses' Curriculum 'To Live in Christ Jesus'. This is a progression of learning in Religious Education, based around the strands and lenses.

The curriculum draws from Scripture and the Catholic tradition of the Universal Church. It fosters an understanding of young people as they grow and mature in contemporary society. The content includes a strong social justice focus.

Prayer

Students are engaged in a range of both formal and informal prayer experiences as they seek to deepen their relationship with God. All classes begin the day with morning prayer, which the students are encouraged to lead.

Social Justice

We are committed to promoting socially just behaviours and outreach, and we participate in a range of student driven initiatives each term. School leaders organise fundraisers and actively advocate on issues relating to social justice, such as:

- Project Compassion
- St Vincent de Paul
- Catholic Mission

School Liturgies

Celebrating our faith through Mass is an important component of school life at St James. Each class is rostered on once a term to prepare and participate in the Mass at 9.30 am in the St James Church. Parents and families are invited to share in this celebration.

Students in Years 3-6 are offered the opportunity to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year. We celebrate Easter and Christmas as a school community and parents and families are welcome to join with us in these celebrations.

Sacraments

The rituals of the Sacraments are celebrated in the Iona-Maryknoll Parish Communities of St. James, Nar Nar Goon, Holy Family, Maryknoll, St Joseph's, Iona and St John the Baptist, Koo Wee Rup in the company of other children.

The Sacramental Program is family centred, parish based, school and catechist supported. The dates for the Sacramental program are added to the school calendar and advertised through the school newsletter.

Our education and faith development in the Sacraments is a Foundation to Grade Six program. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is received in Year 3, Eucharist is celebrated also in Year 3 and the Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in Year 6.

At St James students are able to participate in:

- Easter Journey celebration
- Christmas Eve Nativity Play
- Altar serving
- Reading at Mass and Prayer Services

SCIENCE

The Science curriculum aims to ensure that students develop:

- an interest in science as a means of expanding their curiosity and willingness to explore, ask questions about and speculate on the changing world in which they live
- an understanding of the vision that science provides of the nature of living things, of the Earth and its place in the cosmos, and of the physical and chemical processes that explain the behaviour of all material things
- an understanding of the nature of scientific inquiry and the ability to use a range of scientific inquiry methods, including questioning, planning and conducting experiments and investigations based on ethical principles, collecting and analysing data, evaluating results, and drawing critical, evidence-based conclusions
- an ability to communicate scientific understanding and findings to a range of audiences, to justify ideas on the basis of evidence, and to evaluate and debate scientific arguments and claims
- an ability to solve problems and make informed, evidence-based decisions about current and future applications of science while taking into account ethical and social implications of decisions
- an understanding of historical and cultural contributions to science as well as contemporary science issues and activities and an understanding of the diversity of careers related to science
- a solid foundation of knowledge of the biological, chemical, physical, Earth and space sciences, including being able to select and integrate the scientific knowledge and methods needed to explain and predict phenomena, to apply that understanding to new situations and events, and to appreciate the dynamic nature of scientific knowledge.

Where applicable, St James students engage in incursions, excursions and camps to make explicit links to the Science Curriculum.

TECHNOLOGIES

DESIGN TECHNOLOGIES

Design and Technologies aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure that students:

- become critical users of technologies, and designers and producers of designed solutions;
- can investigate, generate and critique designed solutions for sustainable futures
- use design and systems thinking to generate innovative and ethical design ideas, and communicate these to a range of audiences
- create designed solutions suitable for a range of contexts by creatively selecting and safely manipulating a range of materials, systems, components, tools and equipment;
- learn how to transfer the knowledge and skills from design and technologies to new situations
- understand the roles and responsibilities of people in design and technologies occupations, and how they contribute to society.

Incursions and excursions are made available that make explicit links to the Design and Technologies Curriculum.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

The Digital Technologies curriculum aims to ensure that students can:

- design, create, manage and evaluate sustainable and innovative digital solutions to meet and redefine current and future needs
- use computational thinking and the key concepts of abstraction; data collection, representation and interpretation; specification, algorithms and development to create digital solutions
- apply systems thinking to monitor, analyse, predict and shape the interactions within and between information systems and the impact of these systems on individuals, societies, economies and environments
- confidently use digital systems to efficiently and effectively automate the transformation of data into information and to creatively communicate ideas in a range of settings
- apply protocols and legal practices that support safe, ethical and respectful communication and collaboration with known and unknown audiences.

At St James Catholic Primary school students have access to 21st century learning tools, such as iPads and Chromebooks from an early age. This ensures that students are able to use and understand the many applications that this technology can have. It also helps to prepare them for a future where knowledge of these technologies is critical for future employment.

St James students have access to:

- iPads
- Chromebooks
- Lego Mindstorms
- Lego Simple Machines
- Spheros (Robotics)

THE ARTS

The Arts includes Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts.

The Arts enable students to develop their creative and expressive capacities by learning about the different practices, disciplines and traditions that have shaped the expression of culture locally, nationally and globally. Through engaging in The Arts students are entertained, challenged and provoked to respond to questions and assumptions about individual and community identity, taking into account different

histories and cultures. Students are both artist and audience in the Arts. They make and respond and learn to appreciate the specific ways this occurs in different disciplines.

At St James, the students have two weekly specialist lessons in the Arts program; one of these being Visual Art and the other being Music, including elements of drama. Students participate in a biennial performing arts concert. On alternate years, the school hosts a Christmas concert.

Extracurricular opportunities include;

- School Choir
- participation in the Berwick/Pakenham Art Shows
- CEO Christmas Card Design

CAPABILITIES

The Victorian Curriculum includes capabilities, which are a set of discrete knowledge and skills that can and should be taught explicitly in and through the learning areas, but are not fully defined by any of the learning areas or disciplines.

The four capabilities in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 are the Critical and Creative Thinking, Ethical, Intercultural and Personal and Social Capabilities.

Critical and Creative Thinking Capability

Critical and creative thinking capability aims to ensure that students develop:

- understanding of thinking processes and an ability to manage and apply these intentionally
- skills and learning dispositions that support logical, strategic, flexible and adventurous thinking
- confidence in evaluating thinking and thinking processes across a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Ethical Capability

The Ethical Capability curriculum aims to develop knowledge, understandings and skills to enable students to:

- Analyse and evaluate ethical issues, recognising areas of contestability
- Identify the bases of ethical principles and ethical reasoning
- Engage with the challenges of managing ethical decision making and action for individuals and groups
- Cultivate open-mindedness and reasonableness.

Intercultural Capability

Intercultural capability aims to develop knowledge, understandings and skills to enable students to:

- demonstrate an awareness of and respect for cultural diversity within the community
- reflect on how intercultural experiences influence attitudes, values and beliefs
- recognise the importance of acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity for a cohesive community

Personal and Social Capability

The Personal and Social Capability curriculum aims to develop knowledge, understandings and skills to enable students to:

- recognise, understand and evaluate the expression of emotions
- demonstrate an awareness of their personal qualities and the factors that contribute to resilience
- develop empathy for and understanding of others and recognise the importance of supporting diversity for a cohesive community
- understand how relationships are developed and use interpersonal skills to establish and maintain respectful relationships
- work effectively in teams and develop strategies to manage challenging situations constructively.

The Review of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Teaching, learning and assessment is managed and monitored by the principal and curriculum leadership.
- The Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy is reviewed annually by the teaching staff and adjustments made to the plan as needed.
- The policy and school practices will be modified in response to new or revised curriculum requirements, in response to the changing needs of the students and in response to the regular analysis of student performance data.
- The Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy will be subject to a major review every four years to coincide with the Catholic School Renewal Review Year.
- The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy is an important part of the induction of new and existing teaching staff.

Resources

The Assessment Schedule is located on the Staff Google Drive.
Additional policies linking to this are the Curriculum Planning Policy, the Learning Entitlement Policy, and the Reporting Student Achievement to Parents Policy.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle or as required.

Ratification

This policy was last ratified by the St James Staff in November 2019.