



St Mary's Myrtleford

Philosophy

This document outlines the philosophy of St Marys which underpin all that we offer at St Mary's.

St Mary's believes that a safe and nurturing environment is paramount in order to provide an environment for students to achieve at their best. We therefore commit to providing a safe environment for all who attend St Mary's, including a rigorous approach to any incidents of bullying or teasing. We take a pro-active approach, up skilling students with the social skills necessary to be successful. We acknowledge that at time students will need extra support, so we provide a Wellbeing Officer for whom students can ask for support when necessary. Processes, programs and extra support are put in place to assist students requiring extra assistance.

St Mary's believes in the evidence-based philosophy of Explicit Direct Instruction when teaching new concepts to students, in particular in Literacy and Numeracy lessons. Teachers have therefore committed to using strategies that are explicit and direct across the school. We believe the importance in collaboration and providing an equal education for all. While teachers can still provide individual flair in their teaching the fundamentals remain the same across the school, as this is what evidence claims to work best for students. The Inquiry Units of work allow students greater freedom in learning, as we believe it important that students have the opportunity to explore and be creative in response to activities, given they have been taught the skills in order to access new learnings.

The core purpose of St Mary's Primary School as defined in the School Improvement Plan is to provide an inclusive, rigorous learning environment that challenges and engages all students. Teachers are passionate with a strong belief that each and every child can be successful. Teachers work collaboratively, using data to develop lessons at the point of need for all students.

St Mary's provides a comprehensive curriculum with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. All staff have been trained using 'Explicit Direct Instruction' which is evidence based, using strategies to ensure all students are learning. These strategies are used across the school. In addition to the comprehensive classroom programs offered in literacy and numeracy, an integrated classroom program addresses the curriculum areas of Science, Humanities/History, Technologies/Design Technology, Civics and Citizenship, and Health. These curriculum areas are also cross referenced with the literacy program to ensure sufficient time is allocated to address the content. Specialist teachers provide instruction in Physical Education, Language (Italian), Visual Arts and Music. Interdisciplinary, personal and

social learning are addressed within these curriculum areas and supported by a range of camps and excursion activities. Students from Year 3 and up, have the opportunity to participate in the school choir and district sport competitions.

The Teaching and Learning Teams across all year levels ensure scope and sequence and curriculum coverage is monitored across the school. These Teaching and Learning Teams are responsible for core curriculum development and delivery in Literacy, Numeracy, integrated studies including Science, Humanities/History, Technologies/Design Technology, Civics and Citizenship, and Health. Specialist programs from Foundation to Year 6 are delivered in Physical Education, Visual Arts, Italian and Music. Supportive curriculum initiatives include the Tutoring Program and support in Literacy through the guidance of our Speech Therapist.

St Mary's has a strong and rigorous approach to identifying and supporting students with learning difficulties. Individual Learning Plans are developed, and these students are supported in a variety of ways within and outside the classroom.

St Mary's is dedicated to continually improving in Teaching and Learning and therefore commit to the School Improvement Plan developed from the most recent School Review. A continuous analysis of data around school improvement is used regularly. The data analysed regularly by teachers in their curriculum planning includes a suite of year level assessments including NAPLAN and an analysis of school performance data including student, staff and parent surveys. There is a high level of professional development to support the key initiatives of the School Improvement Plan.

St Mary's is dedicated to developing a structured approach to curriculum planning that ensures a shared vision within the school on curriculum development, common documentation and common understanding of the whole-school curriculum by teachers and parents.