



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
COMMISSION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Policy:	Catholic Identity
Committee:	Catholic Education Community Committee
Originally Released:	2019
Date for Review:	2024

1. Rationale

'The calling of a Catholic school today is to be prophetic and to keep before students the values of Jesus in the contemporary world' (Mandate 33). Catholic schools impact the broader society by fostering a Catholic worldview. They form young people who are committed "to the love, compassion and justice of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (Mandate 6).

In collaboration and partnership with Bishops, families and parishes, the school prepares young people to live as Christians in the world. Catholic schools are at the service of the Church and contribute to its mission.

Catholic schools are founded on the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus and his teachings are at the centre of the life of Catholic schools and are integral to their Catholic Identity.

The Catholic Identity of the school enables it to be an instrument of the evangelising mission of the Church.

2. Definitions

Evangelisation: The process by which the Church, moved by the Spirit, proclaims and spreads the Gospel.

To evangelise is, 'to carry forth the Good News to every member of the human race so that by its strength the Good News may enter into the hearts of human beings and renew the human race' (*General Directory for Catechesis 46*).

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Catholic schools and early learning and care centres in Western Australia. It seeks to help implement the three goals of a Catholic educational institution (*Declaration on Christian Education 8*):

- To help young people grow according to the new creations they were made through Baptism as they develop their personalities
- To create a special atmosphere animated by faith and a Gospel spirit of freedom and love
- To order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and the human person is illumined by faith.

4. Principles

- 4.1 Catholic education helps students to mature as Christian persons who share in God's own life.
- 4.2 Catholic education consciously promotes a Christian understanding of the human person who is loved by God and shares basic human dignity.
- 4.3 Catholic education teaches students to integrate faith, culture and life and so forms young people to be good citizens of the world, loving God and neighbour and enriching the world with the Gospel.
- 4.4 Catholic schools and early learning and care centres are educational communities of faith that bring staff, students, families and parishes into communion with the spiritual and pastoral life of the Church.
- 4.5 Catholic schools and early learning and care centres are founded and inspired by Jesus Christ; his Gospel is integral to all aspects of their life and curriculum.
- 4.6 Bishops have responsibility for Catholic education based on the office of teaching received at their ordination. They have particular responsibility in ensuring that educators are sound in doctrine and manner of life.
- 4.7 Those in leadership roles in Catholic education have responsibility for contributing to the life and mission of the Church by ensuring effective evangelisation planning in their schools and early learning and care centres.
- 4.8 Educators in Catholic schools and early learning and care centres witness to the presence of God through the daily living of the values of the Gospel and the moral and social teachings of the Church.

5. Procedures

Schools are required to:

- 5.1 Present the dignity of the human person in all areas of the school's life and curriculum.
- 5.2 Relate closely with families in the building of partnerships based on faith and mutual respect and which encourage family participation in the school's mission and life.
- 5.3 Cooperate with Bishops in fostering the Catholic Identity of schools, recognising their role in ensuring that Catholic education continues the mission of the Church.
- 5.4 Develop evangelisation plans that clearly outline achievable outcomes that are evaluated and reviewed through both formal and informal processes.
- 5.5 Provide comprehensive religious education programs which are mandated by the Bishops of Western Australia and teach the truths of the Catholic faith as a means of building religious knowledge.
- 5.6 Provide a comprehensive Catholic curriculum which fosters a love for wisdom and truth while integrating faith, culture and life.
- 5.7 Have prayer and the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation as a normal part of the life of the school.
- 5.8 Provide essential, systematic, intentional catechesis experiences of Christian service in order to put social justice into action.

- 5.9 Provide opportunities for students to know, experience and spend time with Jesus through personal prayer and reflection and as part of planned retreats and other activities of catechesis.
- 5.10 Promote the sacramental and religious nature of schools through physical and visible signs of Catholic culture with appropriate images, symbols, icons and other objects of traditional devotion.
- 5.11 Maintain the Catholic Identity of schools and early care centres by making use of specific staff and leadership formation programs which are approved by the Bishops.
- 5.12 Employ teaching staff as far as possible who are practising Catholics and who have a clear understanding and commitment to the Catholic ethos and are witnesses to the Gospel.
- 5.13 Build strong collaborative practices between school, parish and priest, and wherever possible provide resources and personnel to support parish-based celebrations.

6. References

Bishops of Western Australia 2009, Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: 2009-2015
The General Directory for Catechesis (Congregation for the Clergy 1997)

7. Related Documents

CECWA Justice Education Policy
CECWA Religious Education Policy
CECWA Curriculum Policy
CECWA Role of Schools in supporting Sacramental Preparation Policy
CECWA Christian Service Learning in Catholic Schools Policy
Catechism of the Catholic Church (Vatican City 1994)
The Catholic School (Congregation for Catholic Education 1977)
The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School (Congregation for Catholic Education 1988)
The Catholic School in the Third Millennium (Congregation for Catholic Education 1997)

8. Review History

Year of Review:	Reviewed by:	Amendments/Review
2019	Catholic Education Community Committee	Promulgated

9. Next Review

Year:	Committee Responsible:
2024	Catholic Education Community Committee

