

Our Lady Help of Christians School
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www.olhwendouree.catholic.edu.au
 Respectful Responsible Resilient



Our Lady
 Help of Christians
 Primary School
 WENDOUREE

School, Family and Community Partnerships Policy

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| Created: 1995 | Ratified: School Advisory Council February 2020 Meeting |
| This Review: February 2020 | Future Review: February 2023 |

REFLECTIVE MATERIAL:

Transforming Catholic Schools - Kevin Trest
Parent involvement: A key to student achievement. Luneburg, F. C. & Irby, B. J. (2002).
Beyond the Bake Sale - Anne Henderson et al
 PROTECT - Child Safe Standards

RATIONALE:

The student's learning journey is enriched through positive and reciprocal relationships. *Kidsmatter* teaches us "Every face has a place". Through our living of the 3Rs Respectful, Responsible and Resilient behaviours we demonstrate our community working in partnership.

Learning is enhanced when carers and teachers are recognised as equal partners in education, exercising different roles and responsibilities in pursuit of a common vision, which build strong communities and a sense of belonging to school. This partnership:

- *enhances social, emotional and educational outcomes for children, and communication between classrooms and homes*
- *allows schools to benefit from the diversity that children and parents bring to schools*
- *enhances understanding of parents/carers and the general public of school activities*
- *provides schools with a broader resource base from which to draw on providing learning opportunities and services to children and families*
- *develops a shared understanding of the vision of the school and how the school is meeting the needs of its students*
- *increases participation in decision-making in the community, and*
- *enhances community spirit and cohesion.*

Source: <http://www.cbsp.catholic.edu.au/media-app/pope-catholic-schools-support-parents-in-children-s-education>

POLICY

Parenting Support - To empower and support families in the education of their children.

- The school will establish a school environment that welcomes and encourages all parents to raise questions, participate in school activities and volunteer their services in a variety of ways
- The school will support programs and activities designed to develop parenting skills. The school will facilitate access to information for schools and parents about the benefits of parent participation and programs to support parent participation *eg Centacare workshops, training courses eg "1-2-3 Magic"*
- The school will connect children and families with community and support services *eg Centacare, Children and Family Services, ChildFirst-Department of Human Services, St Vincent de Paul, Exodus*
- The school will create a profile, through research and by collecting information of the families that make up the school community
- The school will create an environment in which the participation of all parents/carers in schools and student learning is welcomed, where teachers and parents treat each other with mutual respect and where differing views and opinions are considered and discussed with a view to finding solutions
- The school will build a greater sense of community and social capital through regular social gatherings *e.g. Celebration of Learning Nights, Father's Day and Mother's Day breakfasts, Grandparents and Special Friends days, School Masses, Family Fun Nights, Trivia Night.*

Learning at Home

To improve learning experiences between school and home, ensuring that parents are partners in children's learning.

- Teachers will encourage parent involvement in their children's learning and provide advice and strategies to support that environment. This includes establishing and maintaining regular learning experiences for children
- Teachers will provide overviews of topics and term dates/ timetables etc so that parents are aware of what their child is learning each term. Timetables and the school calendar can also be accessed electronically through the Parent Access Module (PAM) and *Simon Everywhere*.
- The school will develop school programs and strategies that encourage and assist parents/carers to actively participate in their children's education both at school and at home; *eg Parent Information Session Peaceful Kids, Celebration of Learning Nights, Parent Child Teacher Interviews and the Foundation Orientation program.*
- The school will provide a systematic framework for the development of effective home-school partnerships and encouragement of parent participation in schools and students' learning, with explicit links to learning experiences *eg Visual Arts Festivals, Graduation Ceremony, School Performances, Talent Shows, Athletics Carnival, camps, excursions.*

Communication:

To communicate effectively between home and school about school programs, activities and student progress. Communication is a two way process and is one of the most basic elements of supporting home-school partnerships.

- The school will ensure a school wide approach to communication with parents about school policies, programs, activities and reporting on students that is frequent, clear and two way; *eg diaries, parent meetings, information sessions, letters, reports, Parent Access Module (PAM), Simon Everywhere.*

- Teachers will provide clear and timely information to parents about the achievements and progress of their children and provide regular opportunities for two way dialogue about progress. This includes formal and informal methods such as Parent-Teacher-Child Interviews

- The school will promote relevant, accurate and timely communication between schools and families about student progress, all aspects of school programs and policies with respect for the diversity and differing needs of families, using a variety of methods *eg newsletter, web page, SMS messaging, meetings, Parent Access Module (PAM), Simon Everywhere.*

- The school will conduct regular surveys of parents/carers (minimum once per year) to assess their satisfaction with, and ideas on, parent/carer involvement

- Parents/Carers are expected to comply with all relevant policies, procedures and guidelines, and the Principal's directives that pertain to visitors when they enter a school. These will be openly communicated to parents

- Parents/Carers who have issues with decisions taken by class teachers or Principal should attempt to resolve these at the school level in the first instance. Should resolution be unachievable, the issue(s) should be resolved according to the Communicating Grievances and Complaints Policy (see website)

[Complaints and Grievances Policy](#)

Volunteering: To promote and support parental volunteers

- The school will encourage parent/carer participation as volunteers in a range of activities to support schools and classroom activities, by providing Induction courses and access to current Working with Children checks and relevant information concerning Child Safety Standards

- The school will recruit and support other volunteer initiatives, which involve families and community groups in school life *eg fundraising, family fun nights, Parish groups,*

Decision Making: To develop and improve the involvement of parents/carers in decision-making at various levels.

- The school will involve parents/carers in decision-making at the school and system levels, by consulting with parent/carer representatives on education policy, school development issues, including parent/carer representation on committees and advisory groups

- The school will ensure that parent views are sought in developing policies and addressing school wide issues and that parents and their representatives are involved in decision making processes about school policies, programs and finances; eg School Advisory Council

- The school will consult with the representatives of parents on system policies and initiatives and include representatives on review committees and working groups at the Catholic Education Office level or Parish level

Community:

To connect families and schools with community organisations,

- Supporting teachers to attend professional development on parent/carer participation

- The school will connect children and families with community groups *eg RSL, OLHC Parish, Ballarat Diocese, Exodus, sporting organisations, service clubs, YMCA after school care and integrated support services for families*