

CATHOLIC SCHOOL CULTURE

Purpose

Damascus College is a Catholic Co-educational Secondary College that fosters and celebrates young women and men learning together within the educational mission of the Church. The College motto is 'To Live by the Light of Christ'. Damascus College, which is co-sponsored by the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea and the parishes of Greater Ballarat, aims to ensure that the life of the College articulates, expresses and celebrates this particular Catholic identity so that all members of the College community may flourish.

Scope

The policy encompasses all members of the College community, all College activities in which they are engaged and the environment in which those activities take place.

"The membership of Catholic school communities is diverse. Some are conscious and active members for their Catholic community, some belong actively to other Christian traditions or religious faiths. Some are not explicitly Christian, but nevertheless seek enrolment for their children in a Catholic school. ... Catholic schools are challenged to find appropriate ways to engage all members of their community in conversation about the habits of thinking and acting that flow from Christian identity. They seek ways to communicate both who they are and why they do what they do". (Awakenings Core Document p. 36-7)

Policy Statement

Damascus College will:

- provide a Catholic religious education curriculum to awaken the students intellectually, ethically and spiritually in accordance with diocesan guidelines;
- provide opportunities for staff, students and parents to develop their understanding of the Catholic faith tradition and the culture of the College. promote and foster the Gospel values of justice, compassion, respect, service, hospitality and courage in relation to all members of the community and to the whole of creation;
- encourage active participation in the sacramental life, prayer and ritual of the Catholic Church;
- provide opportunities for the Damascus community to grow in their understanding of the College's heritage and to embrace it through active participation;
- ensure that policies and programs reflect Gospel values; and
- encourage connection and participation between parish communities and the College.

Consequences

The following consequences will apply:

- The teachings and actions of Jesus Christ will be reflected in all aspects of the life of the College. Opportunities to deepen relationships between Damascus College and parish communities will be promoted;
- each member of the Damascus College community will be encouraged to explore and deepen relationships with God, with the community, and with the whole of creation;



- inspired by the Catholic tradition, the Damascus community will be in dialogue with those who have different philosophies of life;
- the Religious Education Curriculum will be well resourced and Religious Education staff will be expected to participate in ongoing professional development;
- participation in the Religious Education curriculum is compulsory for all students;
- the College will provide opportunities for professional development that will enrich and enhance the Catholic culture of the College;
- the Catholic nature of the College will be evident in engagement with the wider community;
- Colleget community members are expected to uphold and respect the Catholic culture of the College; and
- policies and procedures will affirm the Catholic culture of the College.

Responsibilities

While the Principal and the Leadership Team has overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy, all members of the College community are expected to support and uphold the Catholic culture of Damascus College.

Associated Documents

Catholic Diocese of Ballarat. Awakenings Core Document (2005)

Congregation for Catholic Education (For Seminaries and Educational Institutions). The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (1997)

CECV Policy: Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School (1997)

CECV Policy: Accreditation to Teach Religious Education in a Catholic School (1997)

Sharkey, Paul. Educators Guide to Catholic Identity (2015)

Pollefeyt, Didier and Bouwens Jan, Identity in Dialogue (2014)