

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY

### Purpose

The Religious Education Policy aims to articulate the content and the means by which the teaching of religious education is embraced in the College and to ensure opportunities for students to experience the presence and love of God as revealed in the Gospel, embracing the College motto, *To Live by the Light of Christ*.

### Scope

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

### Definitions

*Religious Education* is the sequenced learning process that “sets out to inform, form and transform learners and teachers by engaging them with the intellectual, ethical and spiritual richness of the Catholic tradition.” (Awakenings 2005, p. 55)

*Shared Christian Praxis* is a term describing the process of Religious Education in bringing life to faith and faith to life. (Groome, Thomas. *Sharing Our Story*. 1991)

### Policy Statement

Damascus College will:

1. Strive to live the spirit of Jesus Christ as reflected in the Gospel.
2. Provide a Religious Education curriculum that intends to awaken students and staff intellectually, ethically and spiritually in accordance with the Ballarat Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum – Awakenings. (Awakenings p.55)
3. Educate in the foundational and ongoing story of the College, drawing on the contribution and charism of the Sisters of Mercy and the priests and parishes of the Diocese of Ballarat.
4. Enrich the Religious Education Curriculum by drawing on diocesan and broader initiatives concerning the life and faith of the Catholic Church.
5. Develop a culture in which Religious Education is valued and central to the life of the College
6. Provide learning opportunities to promote justice, reconciliation and environmental responsibility locally and globally.
7. Provide an experience of Prayer and Liturgical Life that encourages students, staff and parents of the College to develop the prayer and celebratory dimensions of their lives.
8. Provide a curriculum in Religious Education using the methodology of Shared Christian Praxis. (Awakenings p.119)

### Consequences

The implementation of this Religious Education Policy for Damascus College will mean that:



1. The Religious Education curriculum will provide opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the Catholic faith tradition which is grounded in relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Damascus College will fully and effectively implement the current mandated Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum, Awakenings.
3. Students will be exposed to a variety of images of God and to language that is inclusive.
4. All students of the College will participate in a program of Religious Education.
5. Religious Education staff will be appropriately qualified and will undertake ongoing professional development in theological and religious education.
6. Opportunities will be provided to support families to contribute to the religious formation of their children.
7. There will be opportunities to learn about social justice issues and theory and to support social justice activities in a systematic way through programs such as the Christian Personal Development Award (CPDA).
8. Religious Education will be delivered and assessed in a manner that is educationally engaging and challenging.
9. Prayer will be part of the daily life of the College, and on significant occasions, specific groups or the whole school community will gather for religious ceremonies.
10. Students with a particular interest in the area of liturgy and prayer and youth ministry are to be invited to deepen their knowledge and share their talents in this field.
11. Reflection Days and Retreat Experiences will offer students the opportunity for more personal reflection on their lives.
12. The Religious Education program will continue to revisit our Mercy and diocesan heritage and traditions and celebrate these through College Houses, symbols and other expressions of the Catholic identity of the College.
13. The College will establish and consolidate relationships with Catholic parishes, the Ballarat Diocese, and the broader community.

### **Responsibilities**

The Principal, along with the Assistant Principal for Catholic School Culture, the Religious Education Coordinator and the Retreat and Liturgy Coordinator, under the authority of the Bishop, are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

### **Associated Documents**

Catholic Diocese of Ballarat *Awakenings: Core Document, Religious Education P-12 Curriculum 2005* (book)

Church Documents relating to Catholic Education:

- 1977 [\*The Catholic School\*](#)
- 1988 [\*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School\*](#)
- 1994 [\*Catechism of the Catholic Church\*](#)
- 1997 [\*The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium\*](#)
- 1999 *Australian Religious Education: Facing the Challenges* (book)