

## **LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY**

### **Rationale**

At St Robert's all teaching and learning is directed by The Victorian Curriculum F–10. Our curriculum covers eight learning areas and four capabilities. The learning areas of the Arts, Humanities and Technologies include distinct disciplines. The capabilities represent sets of knowledge and skills that are developed and applied across the curriculum.

At St Robert's our school vision reflects our desire to prepare children for life as it is now and for how it may be in the future. We strive to build a culture of low variance and to design learning that builds knowledge, deeply discusses progress, consistently builds on prior student knowledge and checks student understanding, so all students feel successful.

At St Robert's, following Jesus and enlightened by faith, we aspire to create a learning environment that respects the past, rises to the challenges of the present and inspires hope for the future.

### **Goals and Aims**

Learning and Teaching at St Robert's is purposefully designed to build knowledge, to deeply discuss progress, to identify factors that contribute to classroom success; to consistently build on prior student knowledge and check student understanding. So that teacher capacity is improved to effectively differentiate support, use evidence-informed strategies when in the act of teaching and unpack the how in place of the what when planning.

At all times valuing the power of connection to self, each other and our community.

Our goal at St Robert's is to deliver low variance across curriculum and behaviour expectations to all students. To ensure this goal is met curriculum programs have been put into place across the school

### **Professional Learning Teams and Staff Meetings**

Professional Learning Teams have been established and meet weekly. These meetings are used for professional reading, rehearsing of teaching techniques, to promote whole school routines and to discuss teaching strategies regarding the teaching of English. Data is also analysed to determine directions for individuals and groups. Our Annual Action Plan (AAP) details specific English priorities.

1. That teachers deliver a low variance spelling curriculum across all year levels.
2. That teachers know, understand and can follow LLLL and Spelling Mastery routines consistently.
3. That all students receive high quality, explicit instruction and have their progress monitored to ensure that students who are not progressing as anticipated can receive targeted support, early.

## Teaching and Learning Strategies

Staff at St Robert's build knowledge, skills and strategies to assist with:

- Development of instructional guides to conceptualise what high quality, tier 1 instruction looks like at St. Robert's.
- School/year level wide programs implemented in Spelling, English, Mathematics to ensure low variance.
- School wide classroom behaviour norms implemented.
- Coaching/mentoring- through teachers watching coach role models, team teaching, goal setting and feedback.
- Enacted scope and sequences with review built in.
- Teachers use teaching strategies from training that align with the implementation of the direction instruction program; hand gestures, signals, checking for understanding procedures.
- Daily lessons include the following components aligned to Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI), Daily Review, Activating Prior Knowledge, Concept and Skill Development and Independent Practice.

## Whole School Approaches to Explicit Direct Instruction

Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI), is an approach to learning based on the best research available. Our goal at St Robert's is to embed these practices into our daily scheduling to assist teachers to deliver effective lessons that can significantly improve achievement for all learners, including English language learners and students with special needs.

EDI was developed by founders, Dr. Silvia Ybarra and John Hollingsworth. EDI focuses on improving education at the lesson level, incorporating a strategic collection of instructional practices from the work of pedagogues and cognitive researchers such as Hattie, Rosenshine, Hunter, Sousa, and Marzano.

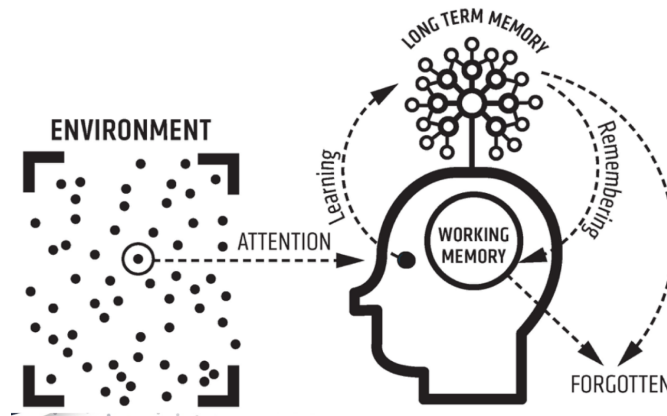
An Explicit Direct Instruction approach incorporates

- Engagement norms to build a culture of engagement and accountability
- Checking for understanding (formative assessment) techniques
- Gradual release of responsibility model

## School Wide Behaviour Norms and Cognitive Load Theory

At St Robert's we believe that Attention is the currency of the classroom. As a school we collectively follow a set of school wide behaviour norms and routines that:

- Redeploy attention
- Reduce behaviour management
- Increase student motivation, confidence and safety
- Free up of teacher mental capacity to monitor learning and be more responsive



**Core Knowledge Language Units** teach skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) also builds students' knowledge and vocabulary in literature, history, geography, and science. From Foundation to Year 6 students at St Robert's are exposed to language rich units beginning with Fables and Nursery Rhymes and then exploring Early World and Ancient Civilisation, Astronomy, Greek Myths and Australian History. Students have the opportunity to read classic stories including The Wind in the Willows, Treasure Island and Storm Boy during text based units.

### **Assessment**

Assessment and Reporting are both crucial elements of the Learning and Teaching Cycle at St Robert's. We are always seeking ways to further enhance these practices.

An Assessment Plan has been devised where all students are exposed to the same type of assessment tools at the beginning and towards the end of each year. This provides both the teachers and the school with evidence of the effectiveness of the programs being implemented. The initial testing influences the planning and the differentiation of instructional support that is offered to the students.

Throughout the year, teacher designed checklists, work samples, teacher designed tests and anecdotal information is used to determine the children's progress, assist in further planning and to report to parents.

For learning to be differentiated, relevant and engaging the school observes purposeful assessments throughout the year. These assessments assist teachers to make informed and accurate judgments about student learning - their progress and future learning needs.

Throughout the school year, a cycle of 'pre-testing' - to determine each student's starting point and 'post-testing' - to measure student growth and identify the next steps for learning is adopted.

### **Evaluation /Review**

Our Learning and Teaching program is continually evaluated through:

- monitoring of student progress and response and adjusting the curriculum as necessary
- development of appropriate attitudes such as interest and participation
- collaboratively reviewing topics and appropriate resources available
- monitoring staff needs in professional development and ensuring a common understanding of current teaching practices

This Policy aligns with our annual action plan (AAP) and will be reviewed as part of a cyclical process in accordance with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

This policy will be reviewed in 2027