

DOMINIC COLLEGE



PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK



1. THE CONTEXT

Improving the quality of teaching and learning is the most effective way to improve student achievement in schools.¹

At Dominic College, our shared challenge is to continually focus on and refine what constitutes best practice in teaching and learning in order to create a school environment that ensures teachers have ‘powerful and sensationally positive effects on the learner’.² The College acknowledges and celebrates the positive impact teachers can and do have on student learning and achievement.

Our commitment to excellence in teaching and learning is continually shaped by contemporary research on effective pedagogy to inform improved outcomes for all students. The College has adopted Australia’s National School Improvement Tool (NSIT) to guide this important work. The NSIT synthesises findings from international research to identify nine inter-related domains to assist schools to review the quality of teaching and learning in terms of strengths and areas for improvement.

These nine domains are intended to identify the extent to which every school:

1. *Has a clear and shared focus of improvement.*
2. *Applies data to inform teaching and school-wide actions.*
3. *Possesses a culture that supports both student and staff learning.*
4. *Aligns its resourcing to student needs.*
5. *Has a coherent and systematic approach to curriculum.*
6. *Has a deliberate approach to building staff expertise and teamwork.*
7. *Offers a differentiated approach to teaching and learning.*
8. *Has an evidence-based approach to teaching practices.*
9. *Relates and applies its community context in the provision of learning.*³

Dominic College’s Pedagogical Framework is informed by the NSIT and is used to:

- Strengthen the impact that school teams have when working together to create a culture of high expectations (Domains 1 and 3);
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning (Domains 7 and 8);
- Provide clarity about what teachers are to teach and students are to learn (Domain 5);
- Establish strong professional learning communities and lead ongoing efforts to improve teaching practices (Domains 2, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9).



The College acknowledges the central role of families in being actively involved in their children's education by supporting and shaping their future aspirations and success.

¹ Masters, G. (2012). Continual improvement through aligned effort. Retrieved from <https://research.acer.edu.au>
² Hattie, J. (2003). Teachers make a difference, What is the research evidence? Retrieved from https://research.acer.edu.au/research_conference_p.3.
³ Australian Council for Education Research. (2012). National School Improvement Tool

2. DEFINING PEDAGOGY

Fundamentally, pedagogy refers to the ‘practice of teaching’ that teachers use to assist students in achieving curriculum expectations.⁴

‘Pedagogy’ includes all activities, methods and strategies applied by teachers through their expertise to:

- *Implement curriculum,*
- *Maximise student engagement with curriculum, and*
- *Ensure successful achievement of the expected learning outcomes.*

Teacher expertise can be described through three elements comprising science (research-informed decision making), art (responsive, creative and intuitive capacities) and craft (mastery of a full repertoire of skills and practices).⁵

3. PURPOSE OF OUR PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Dominic College’s Pedagogical Framework offers a set of guidelines that represent a shared understanding of effective teaching and engaged learning. It provides a platform to inform reflections on teaching practice, opportunities for professional learning, and the collaborative design of meaningful and relevant learning experiences to support and enhance student engagement and learning.

The Framework builds on and enacts the College’s Philosophy of Teaching and Learning, founded in the Catholic Church’s vision of human formation and the transmission of Christian values for living, as a Catholic school’s central activity.⁶

Teaching and learning at Dominic College is based on St John Bosco’s Preventive System which calls for an environment that encourages expression by students and requires pedagogies that facilitate and enable a rich diversity of student expression.

Learning at Dominic College centres on ‘expressive’ methods that support student engagement through:

- *Collaborative teamwork*
- *Problem-solving*
- *Communicating*
- *Making connections and*
- *Creating and expressing themselves in a variety of ways.*⁷

The College’s aspiration is for all students to achieve and grow as learners, and to generate their pathways for success and lifelong learning. Teachers at the College strive to teach in ways that empower students to take ownership of their learning, to make purposeful contributions to their learning environments, and to tackle issues arising in the world around them.



⁴ Pollard, A. (2010) Professionalism and Pedagogy: a contemporary opportunity. Retrieved from [https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Professionalism-and-Pedagogy_\(p.4\)](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Professionalism-and-Pedagogy_(p.4))

⁵ Pollard, A. (2010) Professionalism and Pedagogy: a contemporary opportunity. Retrieved from [https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Professionalism-and-Pedagogy_\(p.4\)](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Professionalism-and-Pedagogy_(p.4))

⁶ Dominic College. (2013). Teaching and Learning Philosophy.

⁷ Dominic College. (2013). St John Bosco’s Preventive System in Teaching and Learning Philosophy,

4. THE PILLARS AND PRINCIPLES OF OUR PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Dominic College's Pedagogical Framework is organised around the following four pillars:

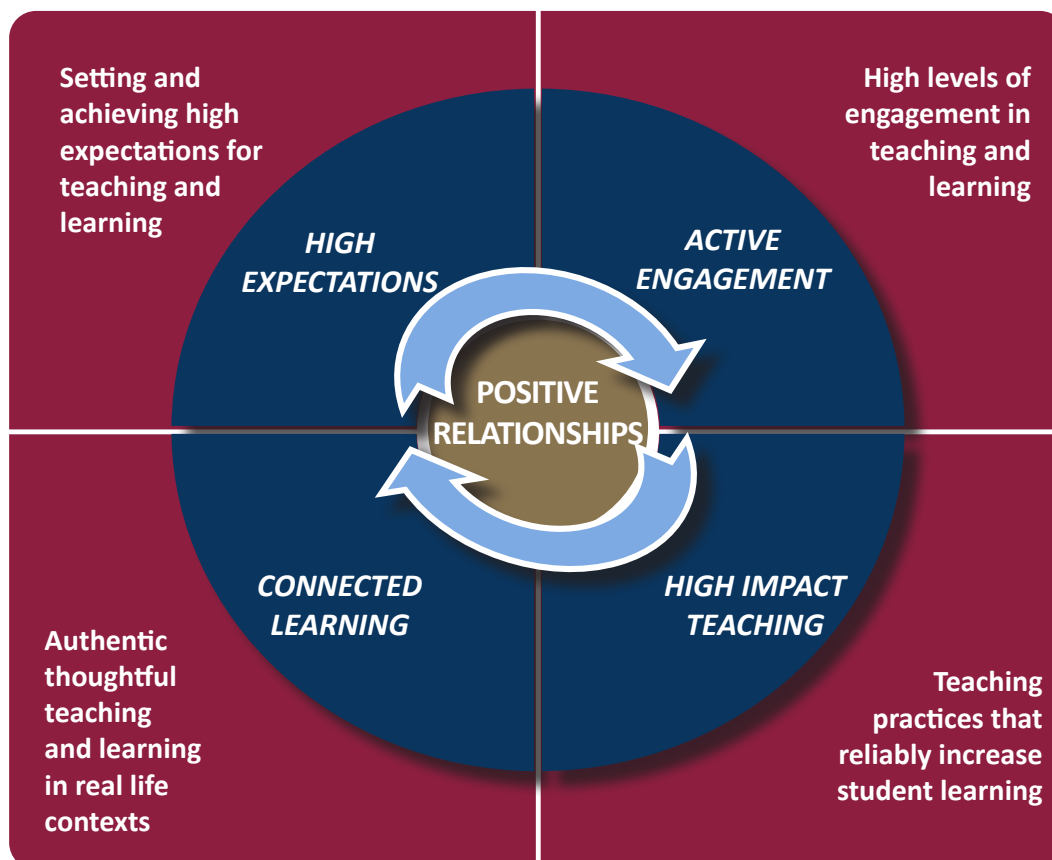
- **HIGH EXPECTATIONS** – *setting and achieving high expectations for teaching and learning.*
- **ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT** – *ensuring high levels of teacher and student engagement in teaching and learning.*
- **CONNECTED LEARNING** – *providing opportunities for authentic, thoughtful teaching and learning in real-life contexts.*
- **HIGH IMPACT TEACHING** – *selecting teaching practices that reliably increase student learning.*

Positive Relationships

These pillars are underpinned by the critical importance of developing and maintaining positive relationships with all students and members of the school community. The fundamental importance of the relational nature of learning is further strengthened through the College's belief that student learning is optimised when their physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs are met.

The relationship between the teacher and the student is pivotal in the learning process. Teachers must know and care for their students and demonstrate belief in their capacity to learn and to grow. The quality of the teacher-student relationship enables students to be challenged and for feedback to have meaningful and maximum impact.

Each pillar of the Framework is enacted through a set of principles that describe what each pillar includes for teachers and for students.



High Expectations

Setting and achieving high expectations for teaching and learning

Student learning and progress is significantly impacted by our beliefs, expectations and practices. Having high expectations for students and their learning means that we believe that students can make significant changes to their level of achievement over a year's learning. This means that we focus our attention on helping students to make accelerated or better than expected progress.⁹

At Dominic College, our focus is on helping students to reach their full potential, to be the best learner possible. Students who experience high expectations are more likely to have an increased interest and motivation in lessons and a greater sense of well-being. They demonstrate more positive school behaviours, and high levels of attendance.¹⁰

For teachers 'High Expectations' includes:

Ensuring all students are engaged, challenged and learning successfully.

Understanding what we are teaching and how to teach this effectively.

Setting goals for learning with students and using these to inform teaching and learning.

Assisting students to make positive choices about their learning through constructive feedback.

Using assessment and monitoring to adjust teaching and learning programs.

Planning differentiated activities that allow learners to engage in learning that challenges them.

Valuing our profession and the positive difference we can make to student learning.

For students 'High Expectations' includes:

Being actively involved in the learning process, taking positive risks and being curious.

Linking personal achievement to motivation, effort and goal setting.

Taking advantage of available opportunities to learn and improve.

Understanding and discussing expectations for learning and reflecting on their progress.

Being prepared to learn and aspiring to do their best.

Seeking and using feedback for improvement and growth.



When teachers have high expectations for students and provide tasks that are engaging and of high interest, students build self-esteem, increase confidence and improve academic performance.¹¹

⁸The Education Hub. (2018). How to develop high expectations teaching. Retrieved from <https://www.theeducationhub.org.nz>

⁹The Education Hub. (2018). How to develop high expectations teaching. Retrieved from <https://www.theeducationhub.org.nz>

¹⁰Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation. (2020). Supporting high academic expectations – Every student is known, valued and cared for in our schools, NSW Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://cese.nsw.gov.au>

¹¹Brophy, J. (2008, 2010). Developing Students' Appreciation for What Is Taught in School in *Education Psychologist*, Volume 43, Issue 3

Active Engagement

High levels of engagement in teaching and learning

Student engagement is complex and influenced by multiple factors including: participation in academic, social and extracurricular activities (behavioural engagement); the sense of belonging or connectedness to the school (emotional engagement); investment in learning, motivation to learn and ability to self-regulate (cognitive engagement).¹²

For students, it is the daily experiences in classrooms that build their connection to school and education. These experiences include the opportunities and support they receive to actively participate in learning, to feel valued and to experience success in learning.¹³

Focusing on active engagement provides opportunities for teachers and students to develop a shared understanding of what engagement looks, sounds, and feels like.

For teachers 'Active Engagement' includes:

Developing positive relationships with students and the school community.

Planning and creating safe, positive, inviting and engaging spaces for learning.

Knowing each student, how they learn and where each student is at in their learning.

Offering students choice in their learning, to follow and build on their interests.

Providing a variety of ways for students to share and demonstrate their knowledge.

Reflecting on professional practice, engaging in learning and building expertise.

Designing meaningful teaching and learning programs in collaboration with colleagues.

For students 'Active Engagement' includes:

Having a positive and respectful attitude to school, teachers, peers, community and learning.

Regularly attending school, recognising and investing in the value of learning.

Participating actively in lessons, asking questions and completing tasks.

Engaging with and developing original work and valuing originality.

Taking pride in personal work, seeking help when needed and responding to feedback.

Persisting with learning that is challenging and may be outside of personal interest.

Valuing curiosity, talking about and sharing learning.

Engaging with peers and learning from each other.



A high level of teacher engagement in how and what we teach has a positive effect on student motivation, engagement and learning.¹⁴

¹²Fredericks, J., Blumenfeld, P., and Paris, F. (2004) in Goss, P., Sonnemann, J. (2017) Engaging students: creating classrooms that improve learning. Grattan Institute

¹³Munns, G., Martin, A. (2004) in Goss, P., Sonnemann, J. (2017) Engaging students: creating classrooms that improve learning. Grattan Institute

Connected Learning

Authentic, thoughtful teaching and learning in real-life contexts

Connected learning makes links between previous and new educational experiences across the curriculum. Authentic learning is designed to connect what students are taught to real-world issues, problems and contexts.

Connected, authentic teaching and learning provides students with opportunities to address three core goals: acquiring important knowledge and skills; making meaning by developing conceptual understanding and skills across learning areas; and transferring learning across new and meaningful contexts and situations.¹⁵

For teachers 'Connected Learning' includes:

Connecting to students through engaging and meaningful learning in real-life contexts.

Creating opportunities for students to learn through local, national and global contexts.

Strengthening learning partnerships within the school and the broader community.

Planning learning and assessment that includes student interests to increase motivation.

Designing tasks for the range of learners with scope for exploration, challenge and the transfer of knowledge.

Acknowledging and utilising Salesian presence and Salesian networks to enrich learning.

Embedding the General Capabilities and Cross-Curriculum Priorities in programs.

For students 'Connected Learning' includes:

Valuing opportunities to learn through real-life issues and problems.

Making connections between learning in the classroom and real-life contexts.

Collaborating with peers through inquiry and project/problem-based learning.

Seeing learning as connected, relevant and potentially impacting change in their community and the world.

Learning through practical application and developing personal insights to facilitate for transfer of knowledge.

Sharing Salesian values, intercultural connections and collaborations through the Salesian Family.

Participating in a range of opportunities within and outside school to support learning.

Relevant and authentic learning experiences equip and empower learners for the complex and challenging future they face.



¹⁴Lichtwarck-Aschoff, A., Denessen, E., Aelterman, N., Haerens, L. (2020). Fostering student engagement with motivating teaching: an observation study of teacher and student behaviours in Research Papers in Education

¹⁵Wiggins, G., McTighe, J. (2011). The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units. ASCD, Alexandria, Virginia

High Impact Teaching

Teaching practices that reliably increase student learning

High impact lessons are essential to the process of successful teaching and learning. They facilitate students thinking, encourage students to interact and ask questions. These lessons tap into their prior knowledge, and build new understanding and skills. Developing student higher-order thinking skills is central to learning. Student collaboration in their learning supports both a social and intellectual platform for the acquisition of new knowledge. Student confidence in using and applying knowledge and sense of efficacy are significantly boosted through the use of practice and repetition that enable mastery.

For teachers 'High Impact Teaching' includes:

Establishing learning intentions and success criteria to clarify what success looks like.

Connecting new learning to prior learning and knowledge.

Presenting new material in small steps, creating space for thinking and discussion.

Sequencing learning activities to maintain engagement and maximise learning success.

Modelling the steps required to complete a task or solve a problem.

Checking understanding throughout the lesson and adjusting teaching as needed.

Providing multiple opportunities for guided, collaborative and independent practice.

Planning purposeful learning to master new knowledge and skills.

Asking questions designed to stimulate interest and extend thinking.

Providing feedback to students in relation to learning intentions and success criteria.

Differentiating teaching to extend the knowledge and skills of every student.

Reviewing and reinforcing learning at the end of each lesson.

For students 'High Impact Teaching' includes:

Understanding the lesson focus and how to be successful in the lesson.

Making connections between new learning, prior knowledge and real-life contexts.

Understanding learning is a step-by-step process, tasks can be part of a whole.

Paying attention, focusing on the purpose of the lesson and their new learning.

Demonstrating task understanding and recalling the steps to completion.

Monitoring the progress of their learning and seeking assistance when required.

Practising and mastering new learning, striving to develop as independent learners.

Using allocated time to complete set tasks, persisting with challenging tasks.

Participating in class discussions, actively responding to questions.

Receiving and using feedback to meet task expectations and improve the quality of the response.

Reflecting on and explaining their learning, identifying strengths and developing goals for improvement and growth.

Six critical functions of effective lesson design have been identified through research in three areas- cognitive science, the classroom practices of effective teachers and cognitive supports that effectively help students learn complex tasks:¹⁷

- 1. Prepare students for learning.***
- 2. Present new content/skills.***
- 3. Guide initial student practice.***
- 4. Check for understanding, give feedback, correct misconceptions and address as necessary.***
- 5. Provide more practice (collaborative and independent).***
- 6. Review and reinforce learning from the lesson.***

¹⁷Rosenshine, B., (2012). Principles of Instruction, Research-based strategies that all teachers should know. American Education, Spring 2012.

It is how teachers teach the curriculum that makes all the difference in students learning and engagement.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK AT DOMINIC COLLEGE

Every teacher at Dominic College is responsible for ensuring that their teaching and their students' learning are designed around the College's Pedagogical Framework.

Individual and collaborative planning by teachers and teams must use the Framework to ensure a commitment to the pillars and principles within it.

Teacher Professional Learning Plans will reflect a focus on pillars of the Framework for ongoing development and improvement in teacher practice.

The College's Quality Teacher program of Classroom Observations by teacher peers and supervisors will focus on aspects of the pillars and principles of the Framework for teacher reflection and feedback.

Student feedback on their experiences of learning and their achievements are essential in gauging the success of the ongoing implementation of the College's Pedagogical Framework.

When teachers work together to improve their practice, students learn more.¹⁸



¹⁸Earp, J., (2018) Sharing good practice: Gonski and professional collaboration. Australian Council for Education Research, Teacher Magazine, August 17, 2018

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