



MaristCollege
Canberra

TEACHING IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS – A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Catholic Church has established schools to assist in presenting a vision of reality that is found in the Good News preached by Jesus Christ. Marist College Canberra serves a particular Catholic community, providing quality education in the Marist tradition for boys in an environment that reflects Gospel values.

Such an education involves a high level of interpersonal relationship between teacher and pupil.

“The Church looks upon you as co-workers with an important measure of shared responsibility ... To you it is given to create the future and give it direction by offering to your students a set of values with which to assess their newly discovered knowledge ... (The changing times) demand that educators be called to bring professional competence and a high standard of excellence to your teaching ... But your responsibilities make demands on you that go far beyond the need for professional skills and competence ... Through you, as through a clear window on a sunny day, students must come to see and know the richness and the joy of life lived in accordance with Christ’s teaching, in response to his challenging demands. To teach means not only to impart what we know, but also to reveal who we are by living what we believe. It is this latter lesson which tends to last the longest.” (Pope John Paul II)

The College is more than an educational institution: it is a key part of the Catholic Church’s mission. A teacher at the College is more than an employee: he or she ministers in the name of the Catholic Church. In addition, all teachers in a Marist school have inherited the traditions and charism of Marcellin Champagnat, the support and transmission of which are part of the apostolate in which all staff members participate.

The Marist Brothers are a worldwide congregation with schools and other educational and social agencies in some 60 countries. Founded in France in 1817 by Father Marcellin Champagnat, they arrived in Australia in 1872, and now conduct schools in all mainland states and territories. The Brothers and the lay staff working together seek to conduct an authentic Catholic school fully in accord with the tradition and practice of the Church. At the same time their schools have a distinctive ethos which may be briefly summarised as follows:

- *Emphasis on a family spirit, where each student is loved and valued.*
- *Inculcation of habits of hard work and unselfish sharing.*
- *A balance between the religious and the social – we aim to turn out good Christians and good citizens.*
- *An atmosphere of orderliness, cooperation and encouragement.*

One of the aims to be achieved within a reasonable and practicable period of time is that those appointed to positions where teaching of Religious Education is included will have Religious Education qualifications (or will have begun to acquire formal qualifications) and the necessary background, knowledge and professional commitment to the purposes of Catholic Religious Education and the Catholic ethos of the College. While it is acknowledged that teachers of other religious traditions will have a valuable contribution to make from time to time on a particular topic, it is expected that teachers given responsibility for Religious Education classes will be Catholics with a commitment to the practice of Catholicism.

Teachers in the College have an indispensable role to play in supporting and promoting the mission and goals of the College. It is expected, therefore, of all teachers employed in the College that they will:

1. *see themselves as being in cooperative partnership with parents, pastors and the Marist Catholic community generally, working towards the achievement of the College's aims;*
2. *strive, by their teaching and personal example, to develop in students an appreciation and acceptance of Catholic teaching and values, and help maintain an atmosphere of charity and justice;*
3. *avoid, whether by word, action or public lifestyle, any influence upon students that is contrary to the teaching and values of the Catholic Church in whose name they act;*
4. *accept, support and espouse the Catholic educational philosophy of the College;*
5. *develop and maintain an adequate understanding of those aspects of Catholic teaching that touch upon their subject areas;*
6. *be suitable, competent, trained teachers committed to the goals of Marist education in the Catholic tradition;*
7. *be committed to regular ongoing professional development;*
8. *actively contribute to the religious and liturgical life of the College and the spiritual formation of the students;*
9. *undertake the various duties normally rostered to school staff as specified in the Staff Handbook;*
10. *assist and participate, from time to time, in school programs outside school hours including parent/teacher interviews;*
11. *be available, from time to time, for professional meetings after school hours, and be committed to ongoing professional development;*
12. *participate, when it is appropriate, in the College's outdoor education and retreat programs and be involved in a substantive way in other co-curricular activities.*