The Teacher in the Catholic School

Attentiveness to the Life Giving Presence of God

Ministry within the Church

Place of Learning

Community of Care

Inclusive & Outreaching Culture

Continuous Improvement through Renewal

Micah 6:8

The symbol of Toowoomba Catholic Education is the gold layered cross with the red flame superimposed on the lower section. The cross, the age-old Christian symbol, is shown as layered to embrace all who would follow Christ. In gold, it indicates the transcendence and centrality of Christ. The flame represents the Holy Spirit who guides us. It is coloured red to illustrate the western geographical context of the ministry undertaken by staff.
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE
DIOCESE OF TOOWOOMBA

THE TEACHER
IN THE
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

PROVIDING A MINISTRY OF QUALITY SERVICE
FOR DEVELOPMENTAL EXCELLENCE
WITHIN A CATHOLIC FAITH TRADITION
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Called to Teach

Dear Teachers

I commend this revised edition of “The Teacher in the Catholic School” to you as a guide in your role. Your contribution to the ministry of education in the Diocese of Toowoomba is a significant one as you will be the face of the Church to many in your care.

In our Catholic schools the responsibility for creating a Christian climate and culture, both individually and as community, is in your hands. Teachers do not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings. A synthesis of faith and culture is reached as you integrate the different aspects of human knowledge through the light of the Gospel. The educational commitment of teachers in a Catholic school is, ultimately, the consequence of a faith which is active through love.

At the World Youth Day Mass in 2008, Pope Benedict urged the assembly of young people to become prophets of a new age and bring faith to a “spiritually barren” world. Together with members of our diocesan Church, you, as teachers, can help students in our schools to answer this call through “your faith, your idealism and your generosity, so that our Church can always be young in spirit”.

I pray for you as I commission you to undertake your vocation, a service to society grounded in a work of love. My hope is that you will see the blessings and rewards in each day, following in the footsteps of Jesus as a bearer of light and meaning for all in your care.

May you, and all you walk with, be truly blessed in your ministry.

Yours in Christ

William Morris DD
Bishop of Toowoomba
Dear Teachers

Welcome to your ministry of service in the educational agency of our Church called the school. Together, we undertake an important role, in developing in our young people an awareness of and a relationship with God as part of their everyday lives. School life and home life today is a very different experience from what might have been true for previous generations. Therefore, I encourage you to read this document to become aware of the ways in which you can support parents and the wider Church community in modeling and witnessing to our faith.

This booklet is a combination of the previous document “The Teacher in the Catholic School” and our Diocesan vision for Catholic Education called “Voices”. It attempts to bring together key result areas for the role of teacher with indicators that can be used by teachers to demonstrate the ways in which they are fulfilling the key result areas. Of course, there is no requirement to demonstrate all indicators all of the time. They are examples only. You will note some overlap in the indicators listed for key result areas. This overlap is to ensure that indicators do not become forgotten if key result areas are studied separately.

“The Teacher in the Catholic School” is a renewable resource. It will change and develop as our response to the call to be co-creators of the Kingdom changes. It should be read in conjunction with other publications such as The Statement of Principles, Integrity in Relationships, Queensland College of Teachers Standards for Teachers and other diocesan policy statements and teacher appraisal documentation.

I hope you will find it helpful in informing the Catholic community of the teaching ministry within the Catholic School, and that it will assist you in understanding expectations of your role.

God bless

John Borserio
Director, Catholic Education Office
Introduction

This is the second edition of The Teacher in the Catholic School for the Toowoomba Catholic Education Office. It replaces the 1998 publication. It has been produced to inform the Catholic community of the teaching ministry within the Catholic school and it identifies the Key Result Areas for those who desire to undertake a teaching ministry in the Diocese. This document is aligned with the “Voices” document, which explains the diocesan vision for defining features of Catholic schools. “The Teacher in the Catholic School” needs to be read in conjunction with “Voices”. Alignment of the documents is through the defining features. These features constitute the Key Result Areas for teachers.

The Vision and Mission of the Diocese underpins the overarching philosophy of education for teachers in Catholic schools. Catholic education is an expression of the collaborative facilitation of individual and communal development based on Christian life expressed within a Catholic faith tradition. “It is a ministry centred on Christ’s dream for humanity – the kingdom – and finds its expression in authentic human growth ..... drawing from its overall faith story and belief system ....... Outcomes are seen in whole people, relationships, communities, processes and structures”(Voices, 2001, p.6) It is within this context that teachers in Catholic schools are called to ministry.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT
The Six Key Result Areas:

- constitute a role description for teachers in Catholic schools
- assist teachers to understand how they can demonstrate commitment to the role description
- offer examples of ways to demonstrate commitment with no expectation that teachers will demonstrate all these examples at any given time
- are avenues for staff professional development and annual goal setting
- may be used as a reference for staff review requirements
- offer opportunity to explore how you, as a teacher, continue your professional development in relation to each Key Result Area
- are references with a wealth of detail for personal reflection
Key Result Area 1

Attentiveness to the Life-Giving Presence of God

The Catholic School of the twenty-first century will be defined by its attentiveness to the life-giving presence of God. This entails the nurturing of a belief in God’s love and revelation. Catholic Schools strive to be vibrant, passionate, dynamic communities which embrace the on-going active presence of God in our world (Voices, 2001, p 9).

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate commitment to an “Attentiveness to the Life-Giving Presence of God” through:

• nurturing actively his/her own faith commitment and personal development
• contributing to the on-going formation of the school as a faith centred community with the Eucharist as its centre and Christ as its model
• helping students to integrate faith and culture in their daily lives in the light of the Gospel message
• accepting, supporting and promoting the philosophy of Catholic Education with the mission of the Church
• participating actively in the development and realization of the school’s own vision and mission
• presenting learning and growth in faith as a life-long and life-giving process
• being sensitive to each student’s religious, social and cultural background and affirming the richness of this diversity
• developing an awareness of the sacredness of all created life

Following are some examples of ways in which a teacher can demonstrate commitment to this Key Result Area:

• fostering positive inter-personal relationships which acknowledge our interconnectedness with all that exists
• building times for reflection and prayer into the school day
• participating in adult faith education and professional development in accordance with personal and professional goal setting

• developing and implementing curriculum units which reflect current theology and highlight the centrality of Jesus

• promoting and encouraging classroom practices and procedures which are inclusive and develop an awareness of God in each person

• integrating values consistent with Catholic teaching into all areas of the school curriculum

• supporting the development and implementation of behaviour management and pastoral care strategies that are consistent with diocesan and school policies

• supporting the involvement of the school in the sacramental life of the local faith community

• welcoming and supporting Clergy and Chaplaincy services within the school as integral to the holistic development of students and the school community

• respecting the uniqueness and value of each student’s family background

• creating a warm and welcoming climate for parents based on courtesy, mutual trust and open communication

• participating personally and actively in the faith life of the local parish community, especially through Eucharist on a regular basis
Ministry Within the Church

The Catholic School of the twenty-first century will be defined as being a ministry within the Church. This entails the school being integral to the missionary vision of the Catholic Church and being in constant interaction with the local faith community and other schools and services within the Diocesan and universal Church (Voices, 2001, p.10).

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate commitment to Ministry within the Church through:

- teaching the Word in scripture and tradition
- witnessing as part of a community of faith, hope and love
- worshipping through prayer and liturgy; and
- caring for human welfare

(Voices, 2001, p.11)

Following are some examples of ways in which a teacher can demonstrate commitment to this Key Result Area:

- accepting, supporting and promoting the philosophy of Catholic Education within the mission of the Church in an atmosphere of trust, mutual respect, loyalty, integrity and truthfulness
- recognising and celebrating the rich history and unfolding story of the Catholic Church and Catholic Education within the Diocese
- participating actively in the development and realization of the school’s own vision and mission
- promoting and celebrating life-giving liturgy
- striving, through teaching and example, to develop students’ understanding, acceptance of and adherence to, Catholic teachings, values and practices
- helping students to integrate faith and culture in their daily lives in the light of the Gospel message of love, truth and freedom, in the context of the Diocesan
vision of “acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8).

- developing and maintaining an adequate understanding of, and commitment to, those aspects of Catholic teaching that touch upon his/her life-style and subject area/s
- striving to live out his/her personal vocational commitment as teacher
- endeavouring to develop students’ understanding of social justice issues and encouraging students to embrace action for these issues
- developing and updating personal faith education and spirituality
- participating actively in the school’s role of evangelization
- supporting the involvement of the school in the sacramental life of the local faith community
- encouraging students to take their place in the life of the Church
- welcoming and supporting Clergy and Chaplaincy services within the school as integral to the holistic development of students, staff and community
- recognising the vital role of the parish and community in partnership with parents and school in achieving the student’s holistic growth
- being accredited to teach in a Catholic school and (where applicable) to teach Religious Education in a Catholic school
- participating personally and actively in the faith life of the local parish community especially through Eucharist on a regular basis
- being inclusive of those students and their families who are marginalised in our community
Key Result Area 3

Place of Learning

The Catholic school of the twenty-first century will be defined as a place of learning. The school will be shaped and nurtured by Catholic philosophy, will possess a clear educational vision and be manifested in values, goals and outcomes that are aligned (Voices, 2001, p.12).

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate commitment to a “Place of Learning” through:

• educating the whole person
• recognising developmental stages and individual differences
• providing a relevant curriculum within a Catholic context
• nurturing life-long learning
• fostering links to the broader community and reinforcing positive partnerships

Following are some examples of ways in which a teacher can demonstrate commitment to this Key Result Area:

• undertaking professional development which supports:
  • growth in sacramental consciousness by the whole school community;
  • promotion of academic excellence;
  • growth of ecumenism within the school;
  • promotion of cross-cultural pedagogy; and
  • the recognition of the multiplicity of intelligences and the adoption of diverse teaching strategies.

• providing a diversity of creative and interesting learning experiences to enable all students to access the knowledge, skills and values required for participation in society
• recognising and supporting students’ spiritual, cognitive, affective, linguistic and motor needs

• encouraging the development of critical thought, reflection and community action consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church

• teaching in a way that is consistent with each student’s development and with understanding of the conditions and processes which facilitate learning for students

• leading students through facilitation, coordination, word and example towards greater responsibility for their own learning

• recognising and catering for different styles and different rates of learning across curriculum areas

• presenting learning and growth in faith as a life-long and life-giving process

• using appropriate student assessment procedures consistent with school and diocesan policy, and providing meaningful feedback to students and parents/guardians

• being sensitive and responsive to students with special needs and implementing effective strategies to cater for diversity

• nurturing the particular gifts and talents of all students

• valuing and promoting parents/guardians as their children’s first and foremost educators

• respecting the uniqueness and value of each student’s family background

• collaborating with other teachers/schools/organisations to form partnerships that provide support and advice
Community of Care

The Catholic School of the twenty-first century will be defined as a community of care, a place where individuals belong, are welcomed and nurtured. While reflecting respect and dignity for each person, the school will provide an inclusive and supportive environment in which each person can develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The experience of positive and caring relationships will provide members of the school community with a foundation for positive personal and relational growth both now and throughout life (Voices, 2001, p.15).

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate commitment to a “Community of Care” through:

- facilitating their personal growth within a holistic approach to education
- developing and promoting cross cultural awareness to improve educational outcomes for all students
- involving all members of the school community in educational decision making
- nurturing, through positive relationships, the values of compassion, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation
- fostering positive interpersonal relationships among students and teachers to create an environment which promotes self-esteem, belonging, trust and appropriate risk-taking
- building ecumenism as part of the life and work of the school

Following are some examples of ways in which a teacher can demonstrate commitment to this Key Result Area:

- participating actively in the development and realisation of the school’s own vision and mission
- acting in a professional manner among staff, students and the community
- assisting and supporting teaching colleagues, especially newcomers to the profession
- integrating values consistent with Catholic teaching into all areas of the school curriculum
• fulfilling a duty of care towards all students, consistent with school and diocesan policy as well as community expectations
• being sensitive to each student’s religious, social and cultural background and affirming the richness of diversity
• fostering the development of students’ self esteem and their ability to interact harmoniously and productively with others
• supporting the development and implementation of behaviour management strategies consistent with diocesan and school policies
• providing an environment which promotes the spiritual, physical, emotional, social, cultural and intellectual well-being of all students
• creating relationships with students, staff and parents which are based on trust, honesty and integrity
• being sensitive and responsive to the complexity and diversity of modern family life and to the many social, psychological, financial and other pressures faced by families
• demonstrate willingness to work in partnership with the parents of the children they teach
• establishing appropriate communication channels with parents
• creating a warm and welcoming climate for parents at classroom and school level
• participating in school initiatives to involve parents in genuine ways in the decision making process of the school
• involving the parish and community as appropriate to achieve the student’s growth in wholeness
• respecting family privacy and the confidential nature of family information
• respecting parents’ and guardians’ rights of inquiry, consultation and information with regard to their children
• co-operating with all agencies and professionals working in the best interests of students and families
• modelling in his/her public lifestyle that provides a positive role commensurate with Catholic teaching and practice
• complying with school and employing authority’s policies and regulations
Inclusive and Outreaching Culture

The Catholic School of the twenty-first century will be defined by an inclusive and outreaching culture (Voices, 2001, p.16). The Catholic School embraces the inclusive model of education by being an open, relation-centred community which respects all. It will be a place where quality teaching and learning occurs, shaped and directed by a philosophy based on Christian living. Catholic Education strives to ensure the participation and highest achievement of all groups within the school community. The inclusive school and community recognises and values the richness of student diversity and develops appropriate responses and strategies for achieving suitable outcomes through cooperation, participation and conversation.

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate commitment to an “Inclusive and Outreaching Culture” through:

- building partnerships with students, parents and the school community in an effort to enhance an inclusive, outreaching and multicultural community
- infusing multiculturalism, diversity and inclusiveness throughout the schools mission, values, goals and culture
- supporting students and their families in the creating of opportunities for cross cultural exchanges and expression
- modifying and implementing curriculum to maximise individual children’s potential and success in a supportive inclusive environment

Following are some examples of ways in which a teacher can demonstrate commitment to this Key Result Area:

- maintaining confidential records of student progress and achievement
- implementing inclusive assessment practices
- reporting regularly to the principal and parents with regards to student progress, behaviour and achievement
• working closely with school and parish staff as well as with parents to provide support and care to students

• interacting constructively with support staff and members of the community regarding current educational developments

• being mindful of and attentive to the effects that public perception has of the teaching profession

• participating in partnerships and reflecting critically and constructively upon teaching and learning practices to promote excellence in outcomes for students

• developing a range of program options and relevant curriculum practices that respond to individual learning needs and outcomes

• undertaking professional development and focusing on appropriate facilities and resources that allow for a more inclusive curriculum and pedagogy

• resisting and counteracting racism in any form within the school community

• valuing legitimate and meaningful differences in cultural thought and practice
Key Result Area 6

Continuous Improvement Through Renewal

The Catholic School of the twenty-first century will be defined by its practice of continuous improvement through renewal. The school will renew itself through action and reflection, which will inform educational priorities and processes. It is a place of education and learning for the community’s young and is a source of enrichment and development for adult members (Voices, 2001, p.17).

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate commitment to Continuous Improvement through:

- responding to the contemporary demands of a changing world
- participating in action and reflection to inform educational priorities and processes
- contributing to life-giving relationships
- aligning decision making by making the life of Jesus its touchstone
- fulfilling legislative and Diocesan accreditation requirements
- challenging that which undermines the radical stance of Jesus for the poor, weak and marginalised
- participating in professional development in relation to Student Protection and the National Safe Schools framework, complying with legislative and diocesan procedures issued by the Catholic Education Office

Following are some examples of ways in which a teacher can demonstrate commitment to this Key Result Area:

- participating in the cyclic process of School Renewal
- developing lesson planning which is culturally relevant to young people and empowers them for reflection and action
- interacting with staff, students, parent/guardians and the wider community in ways that affirm the sacredness of the human person
• making open and truthful statements about experience, qualifications and competencies

• accepting contractual and appraisal commitments

• promoting positive and active development and implementation of school and diocesan policies

• providing a high standard of professional service and appropriate personal presentation

• maintaining registration through the Queensland College of Teachers to teach in the State of Queensland

• completing accreditation to teach in the Catholic School in accordance with employing authority’s policies (refer to Toowoomba Catholic Education Office website)

• completing accreditation as required to teach Religious Education in the Catholic School

• complying with school and employing authority policies, procedures and regulations especially in the area of student protection

• aligning personal and professional goal setting with whole school development planning
Acknowledgement

The Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Toowoomba gratefully acknowledges the following personnel and publications in the compilation and formatting of this document:

The Working Party convened through the request of the Staff and School Development Committee of the Catholic Education Board:-

- Loretta McGill
- John Clark
- Julieanne Rasmussen
- Leigh Lucht
- Jodie Gleeson
- Paul Murphy
- Peter Lynam
- Margaret Hendriks

All those who have reviewed this document and provided their thoughts regarding content.
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July 2001

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Queensland College of Teachers
December 2006

Code of Conduct
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Toowoomba
April 2009
...act justly; love tenderly; walk humbly with your God
Micah 6:8

O U R  S Y M B O L

The symbol of Toowoomba Catholic Education is the gold layered cross with the red flame superimposed on the lower section.

The cross, the age-old Christian symbol, is shown as layered to embrace all who would follow Christ. In gold, it indicates the transcendence and centrality of Christ.

The flame represents the Holy Spirit who guides us. It is coloured red to illustrate the western geographical context of the ministry undertaken by staff.

The Micah theme provides a link to the Vision Statement for Catholic Education in the Diocese.