



Policy On Learning

Policy Title	Policy on Learning
Approved by Council	October 2021
Next Review	2024
Responsible Officer	Principal through the Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning
Standing Committee	Education

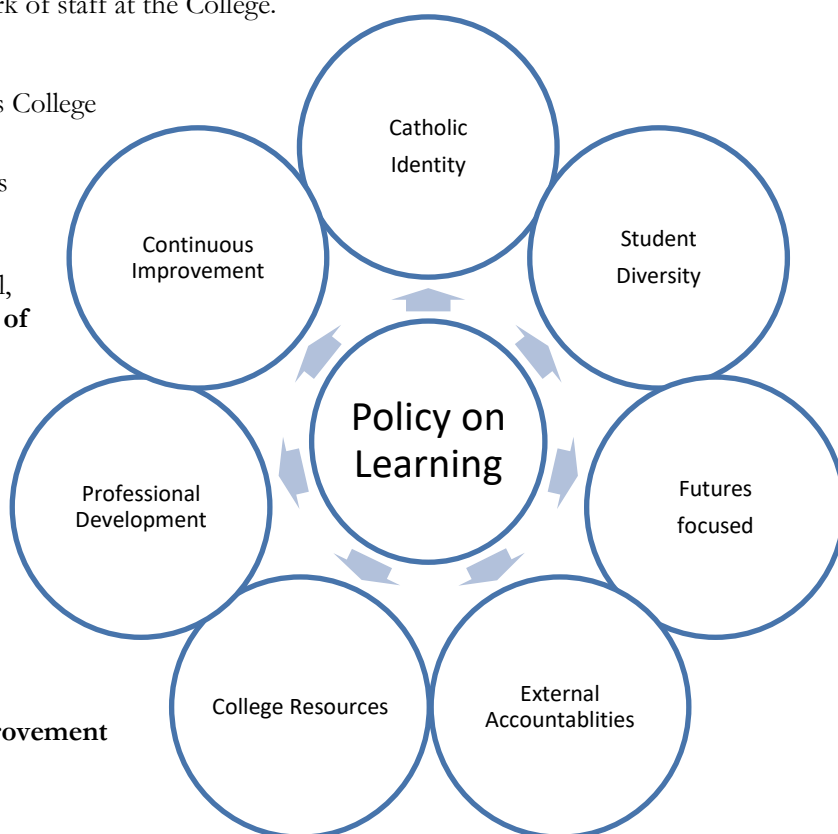
Rationale

The Policy on Learning requires that **learning** is central to decision making by the College Council and Executive Leadership Team relating to Catholic identity, capital development, staffing, provision of resources and other policy or procedural matters. This Policy underpins the work of staff at the College.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Mercedes College community and will:

- identify and promote the links to the Mercedes College Vision and Mission to develop and support **Catholic identity**
- provide a framework to ensure the educational, emotional, spiritual, physical and social **needs of students** are central to the core business of Mercedes College
- formalise the **accountability** to church, state, commonwealth and international educational programmes
- guide the review and planning of **resources** (learning spaces, support materials, staffing) and **organisational structures** to maximise learning outcomes
- identify and respond to the **professional development** needs of staff
- guide effective practices for **continuous improvement**



Policy Principles

The following policy statements represent the guiding principles and beliefs that underpin learning at Mercedes College.

1.1. Learning experiences develop and support Catholic identity

Mercedes College will ensure students are provided with experiences that help develop and support authentic Catholic identity by:

- forging links with the Mercy tradition and the broader church community
- promoting the value of living the Mercy keys of loyalty, integrity, responsibility, mutual respect, compassion and justice
- inviting students into a learning process that is grounded in Catholic beliefs and values
- encouraging students to embrace a commitment to a lifelong journey of faith exploration and the quest for truth
- developing a positive sense of self and group, accepting individual and group responsibilities and respecting individual and group differences through active participation in community and service
- embedding spiritual, emotional and social growth within Religious Education and Pastoral Care experiences

1.2. Student diversity is valued

Mercedes College recognises that its community reflects diverse skills, backgrounds and cultural needs and will address these by:

- providing support to students with identified health, learning or psychological needs
- identifying and supporting the individual needs and talents of students
- developing processes to create and support personalised plans for learning (PPLs) where appropriate
- exploring links with external institutions, industry and the broader community who may provide support and extend learning opportunities
- supporting teachers to appreciate the diversity of their students in order to provide engaging and inclusive learning experiences
- valuing and developing international mindedness
- providing opportunities to support mother tongue (first language other than English) maintenance
- scaffolding learning principles with students' existing experiences and knowledge

1.3. Learning experiences are future-focused

We will identify and develop student attitudes, knowledge and skills needed during and beyond their schooling experience by:

- valuing and developing a positive learning culture
- exploring and implementing evidence-based wellbeing practices
- making learning purposeful, contextualised, challenging and inherently interesting
- promoting student agency
- supporting students to strive to be the best they can
- developing and reinforcing processes that promote personal responsibility in learning including academic integrity
- providing and promoting opportunities to develop leadership capacity
- focusing on students being curious, independent and critical thinkers, with the ability to inquire into and appraise information, make decisions, be innovative and devise creative solutions
- encouraging students to discover principles and make connections between concepts and processes
- providing authentic learning experiences through making connections and clarifying contexts
- supporting new and innovative ways to deliver curriculum
- developing responsible and healthy behaviours as digital citizens
- regularly reviewing and developing relevant and contemporary curriculum offerings

- valuing a commitment to learning a second language
- supporting career planning in response to current and future needs
- promoting and developing healthy attitudes and practices toward physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological wellbeing
- developing effective communication skills
- promoting an awareness of environmental issues and developing the flexibility to respond to change, recognise connections with the past and conceive solutions for preferred futures
- ensuring international mindedness is embedded in curricular and extra-curricular programmes, and is reflected in working in harmony with others and for common purposes, within and across cultures
- identifying and providing opportunities to engage parents in the learning process to highlight their role and responsibilities as first educators

1.4. Educational programmes meet accountability requirements

Mercedes College is committed to meeting external accountability requirements at local, national and international levels. This is reflected by:

- providing accountability structures that are visible and accessible to students and the general Mercedes College community
- ensuring student safety and wellbeing is a first priority in the physical and social environment of the College and other learning places
- providing a focus on inquiry processes that are fundamental to educational programmes
- raising awareness of ethical, social and global responsibilities

1.5. Learning needs shape the provision of resources and organizational structures

Mercedes College will provide resources and develop organizational structures that:

- are focused on meeting current and future learning needs
- review and reflect local, national and international educational trends
- collect and communicate relevant information regarding learning needs of the community
- ensure learning spaces are appropriate for diverse learners and inclusive curriculum
- develop information and communication technologies that are appropriate to support and enrich learning and teaching

1.6. Staff are supported in their professional learning needs

Mercedes College is committed to supporting the learning needs of staff to ensure they have current and appropriate training to support the learning and curriculum needs of the College and its students. This will be reflected by:

- the Executive Leadership Team identifying and providing equitable access to required professional learning specified by the College and other organisations including Catholic Education SA (CESA), Australian Curriculum And Reporting Authority (ACARA), South Australian Certification of Education (SACE) Board, and the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO)
- promoting of Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership)
- supporting staff in undertaking appraisals to determine their personal professional development needs and clarify lines of accountability
- providing strategies for staff to document their professional learning
- expecting teaching staff to regularly update their knowledge of curriculum and their pedagogical practices to reflect contemporary educational trends
- providing opportunities for staff collaboration and planning

1.7. Data is used to inform continuous improvement

Mercedes College is committed to using data to continuously improve learning outcomes. The College will

- analyse student achievements in numeracy and literacy to identify strategies to support individuals and cohorts in exceeding national and international benchmarks

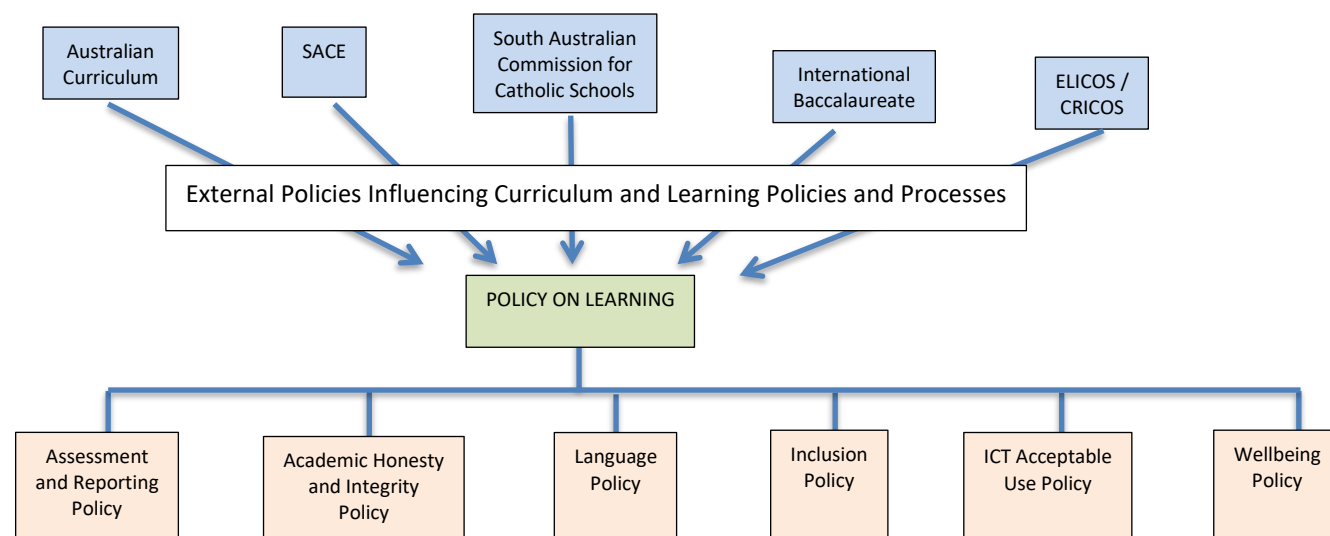
- use professional judgment, student results and perception data to review effectiveness of the learning programmes and environment
- promote the value of assessment and reporting data as feedback to students, teachers and parents to guide progress in learning
- develop and promote criteria to identify benchmarks and for promotion, awards and specialised learning plans
- links with external institutions, industry and the broader community
- have systems to make student demographic and learning data available to teachers to improve teaching practice
- identify individual professional learning requirements through the Continuous Cycle of Improvement (CCI)
- provide opportunities for staff to gain feedback on their practice and identify areas for improvement
- provide organisational structures to collect, analyse and use data to improve College practices

Implementation and Responsibilities

The Principal is the key person ensuring the implementation of the Policy on Learning either by direct involvement or through delegation to key people/groups including

- The **Executive Leadership Team**
 - Monitoring impact of College resources, alignment with strategic vision, supporting catholic identity, planning professional learning and meeting external accountabilities
- The **Learning Enrichment Team**
 - Collection and communication of data to support inclusive practices
- **Programme Coordinators and Learning Area Leaders**
 - Meeting external accountabilities
 - Collection and communication of assessment data for continual improvement
 - Learning Culture
- **Heads of School and Year Level Leaders**
 - Development and communication of policy principles and processes with parents and students
 - Learning Culture
- **Education Support Officers**
- **All staff**

Connections



Implementation of the Curriculum and Learning Programmes – *What we teach and how we teach it!*

The Policy on Learning has numerous connections with other policies and documents within and beyond the College. These include

- Current Mercedes College Strategic Plan
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy
- Language Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- SACE Board - Policies and Subject Frameworks
- International Baccalaureate - Policies, Curriculum Frameworks and Standards
- South Australian Commission for Catholic School - Policies
- Catholic Education SA (CESA) – Live, Learn, Lead Framework
- CESA - Crossways – Religious Education Framework
- CESA – MITIOG – Human Sexuality Education
- Council of International Schools (CIS) - Policies and Standards
- Australian Curriculum And Reporting Authority (ACARA) - The Shape of the Australian Curriculum
- Department for Education (DfE) – Keeping Safe – Child Protection Curriculum
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) – Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders
- Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2109)
<https://www.dese.gov.au/alice-springs-mparntwe-education-declaration>

Relevant References

Australian Curriculum <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>

ACARA – Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority <http://www.acara.edu.au>

IB – International Baccalaureate <http://www.ibo.org/>

SACE Board – South Australian Certificate of Education <https://www.sace.sa.edu.au/>

CESA – Catholic Education South Australia <http://www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/>

SACCS - South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools

<http://www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/about/education-in-south-australia#2277>

CIS – Council of International Schools <http://www.cois.org/>

DfE – Department for Education <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/>

AITSL – Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/>