



Term 2 2016

Teaching and Learning

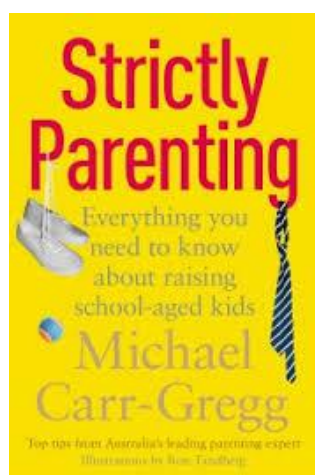
Mission

Pastoral Care

PASTORAL CARE (QUOTE)

"There is no area more important to our children, than the home our children share with us. It's not the size nor the material comforts our home provides, it's the nurturing environment that really matters. Home is a place of great opportunity for emerging young people for it is in the home, amongst family, that value systems can be established and God's love can be experienced through the love that family members express to one another; mistakes can be made without the fear of ridicule and with the real expectation of true compassion and forgiveness."

PARENTING TODAY – PASTORAL CARE



Never in any time throughout our history has there ever been more information on parenting than is currently available. This might sound like a good thing, but the truth is that having so much information readily available requires a level of discernment in order to identify what is useful and what is not.

In Michael Carr-Gregg's book Strictly Parenting, he states:

If you google the word "parent" you will get 192 million results in just 0.17 seconds.

Michael goes on to explain that much of this information is often contradictory or lacking in evidence.

In his book, which was published in 2014, he offers practical evidence-based solutions for parents, on how to raise healthy, resilient, confident and considerate human beings. He includes a quiz in the book that parents can take in order to identify their type of parenting style. Michael Carr-Gregg summarises four main types of parenting styles, outlining the advantages and difficulties of each of the styles.

He begins one section of his book with the following quote:

Raising children is widely acknowledged as one of the toughest jobs around. Yet parenting is also one of life's richest experiences. It must be, otherwise we wouldn't keep making families. Yet it's a job most of us can get quite easily, without any experience, skills or qualifications.

He goes on to explain that the reason he wrote the book is to inspire all of us to look closely at what we do really well and also to identify what we could all do better.

Michael Carr-Gregg is a nationally registered child and adolescent psychologist working in private practice in Melbourne. He is straightforward in his approach and his advice is practical and reasonable. The book is very "readable" and offers a lot of positive perspectives on parenting as well as research based information on the developmental stages children go through as they grow towards maturity.

QUALITY BEHAVIOURS – PASTORAL CARE

Unfortunately, our culture tends to treat gossip lightly. We see evidence of this in magazines, newspapers, the internet and particularly social media. Gossip can foster an environment of fear, mistrust and misinformation.

Important lines of communication between parents and teachers or parents and the school administration can be disrupted because of a lack of trust created by gossip. All schools have processes in place supporting communication and promoting their school values. At St Kieran's our processes support our shared values and this is outlined in our **Quality Behaviour Policy**. (*Available on the school website*)

The role of parents and the community in supporting the school's vision of Embrace, Equip and Engage is to promote positive interactions and relationships between all stake-holders.

Processes and structures are in place for parents to actively engage in and contribute to the wellbeing of the school community by:

- ⤴ Being actively informed and utilising structures supporting communication e.g. reading the school newsletter; attending P&F meetings (held Monday Week 8 each term)
- ⤴ Communicating regularly with class teachers by making appointments.
- ⤴ Attending parent education opportunities
- ⤴ Welcoming the opportunity to participate positively when making a significant plan for responsible behaviour with their children and school leadership.
- ⤴ Being involved in school events e.g. liturgical celebrations, assemblies and other celebrations of learning.

Problems are solved when people of good will engage in informed and compassionate conversation and in doing so, testify to their personal integrity. This links in with our focus on a safe and respectful learning environment.

MISSION - MISSION

Our Year 6 Mission Leadership Team attended the 'Northern Beaches Mission Workshop' at Frenchs Forest where they heard inspirational speakers describe social justice initiatives in their schools and communities. Upon their return to school the Mission Leaders worked with Mrs Rose in supporting the **St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal**. Whilst the majority of the school brought in new winter woollies such as beanies, socks, scarves and food, Year 5 and 6 students prepared for their Winter Sleep out.

Learning through doing, students engaged in the **Head, Heart and Hands Service Learning Model**.

Head: They gathered information about the homeless and how to assist them. St Vincent de Paul representative Mr John McCarney also spoke to Stage Three.

Heart: Students were able to identify what Jesus would have done to assist the poor. They reflected on what a Catholic should do in today's world.

Hands: Students worked in their homes to raise the money for their donation towards the sleep-out. The Mission Team welcomed their peers as they arrived at school with sleeping bags and cardboard boxes. Mrs Rose provided a warming cup of soup for the students, many of whom had not eaten since lunch time. The Winter Sleep-out was a wonderful opportunity for the students to walk in the shoes of a homeless person for a few hours. Students also learnt that they too can make a difference to the lives of others



Vinnies Winter Sleep-out



St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal



VISIO DIVINA - MISSION

Scripture forms the basis of all our Religious Teaching. Teachers from Years 3-6 have engaged in Professional Learning in the area of Scripture. Teachers and children added the dimension or strategy of 'Visio Divina', divine looking. This involves examining scripture through the use of images. Teachers were amazed at the richness of the images and the open conversations, insights and reflections that flowed forth from the students. Students enjoyed a new perspective of studying scriptures they have heard before through the use of Visio Divina.

Why Visio Divina ?

<http://www.patheos.com/Resources/Additional-Resources/Praying-with-Art-Visio-Divina>

Extract from Patheos about Visio Divina

With our culture becoming more and more visually oriented, an intentional way of praying with images is needed now more than ever. Visio Divina invites us to see at a more contemplative pace. It invites us to *see* all there is to see, exploring the entirety of the image. It invites us to see deeply, beyond first and second impressions, below initial ideas, judgments, or understandings. It invites us to be seen, addressed, surprised, and transformed by God who is never limited or tied to any image, but speaks through them.

There is no set time frame for the guided prayer below, but twenty to thirty minutes is suggested. As your prayer begins, take a few moments to open your heart and mind to God. When you are ready, slowly look and notice the image, taking your time to let feelings and thoughts come to you as you take in forms, figures, colours, lines, textures, and shapes. What does it look like, or remind you of? What do you find yourself drawn to? What do you like and not like? What are your initial thoughts? What feelings are evoked?

Examples of Visual Art responses following Visio Divina; Journey with Jesus to the Cross



Jesus and Simon by Sarah H



Jesus and the women of Jerusalem by Alannah W

What does it look like, or remind you of? What do you find yourself drawn to? What do you like and not like? What are your initial thoughts? What feelings are evoked?

CO-TEACHING AT ST KIERAN'S – TEACHING AND LEARNING

Co-teaching is a structured model of professional learning where teachers work together (often where one takes the lead at different times) to share professional knowledge, model new approaches, refine and reflect on practice to **improve student achievement**.

'The realities of today's classrooms include a focus on inclusion, evidenced-based instruction, accountability, diversity, differentiation, and continuous assessment.'

Dr. Sandi Cohen and Dr. Adria Hoffman at the Curry School of Education, Virginia University

This quote highlights some aspects of the changes in teaching children successfully in the 21st century. Co-teaching is one strategy to meet these expectations.

Co-teaching at St Kieran's is currently occurring in the area of Religion, Literacy and Numeracy and is

- ▲ **specifically linked** to the school Teaching and Learning or Catholic Life and Mission SIP (School Improvement Plan) goals
- ▲ **timetabled** to include all grades K-6 over the year
- ▲ **pre-planned**: each teacher nominates a goal, related to the SIP goal
- ▲ **co-taught**: both teacher and coordinator teach between 2- 3 sessions, to meet the nominated goal
- ▲ **reflected upon**: after school meetings occur where the coordinator and teacher share observations, learning, further goals
- ▲ **acted upon**: classroom teachers make changes to practice to reflect new learning or knowledge.

REPORTING – TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Semester One **Reports** were sent home this week. It is a good idea, once parents have had a look through the report, to then discuss the summary of progress with their child. Parents will notice that these reports identify a goal for future learning, particularly in the KLA's of English and Mathematics. This is because the mid-year point is a perfect opportunity for students to reflect on past learning and begin working on some goals for future progress.



Below is a brief summary of the Achievement Grades, highlighting words that best exemplify the level specified by the **grade**. All grades 1-6 will use these achievement levels. Kindergarten grades use the Effort Grades only.

Key to Achievement Code	
Outstanding	The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the process and skills and can apply these skills to new situations.
High	The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.
Sound	The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills
Basic	The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.
Limited	The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

Effort Grades are given taking into account learning behaviours such as initiative, application, attitude towards learning and the ability to persevere. These learning behaviours are crucial to success not just at school, but indeed in life!

PLAYGROUND SPACES – TEACHING AND LEARNING

It is always a pleasure to welcome so many parents and members of our community into our playground space at St Kieran's. Our playground is made up of a number of different levelled, landscaped and enclosed areas that are designed to be used on a rotational basis. Millers Reserve is also a space that is used three times weekly by each of the Year 3 to 6 grades. This enables for different configurations both of groups as well as activities resulting in greater variety for the students.

The number of people in our playground is at its absolute maximum between 8.30 and 8.45 am. This is because the different areas are not designated at that time of day e.g. Shared Space and there are lots of parents, other family members and toddlers visiting our playground for morning drop off. It is also the reason we implement the rule of "No Running" before school.

This then may result in a perception that the playground space is small for the number of students at St Kieran's. However, careful planning involving rotations and specific activities or equipment for particular areas has resulted in best use of the space available.

We have a playground that is:

- ▲ Specific to particular age groups and activities
- ▲ Appealing in that different areas cultivate a sense of variety for the students.

The younger students enjoy playing in the sand pit and on the climbing equipment in Shared Space. They also enjoy opportunities to run in a space that is allocated to an appropriate number of children e.g. the Grass Area outside the Kindergarten rooms. By ensuring that this area is not used by a large number of children, we are enabling students to play safely.

Older students enjoy being able to access the handball courts as well as some of the space near the undercroft. They also need space to run safely and so the days allocated to lunch at Millers Reserve caters for this. The senior (Stage 3) students also enjoy accessing the handball courts and spaces where they can play with equipment that is suitable for their level of development and interest. Parents may not be aware that other playground spaces used at lunchtime include the space between the Church and Hall as well as the section of the Carpark closest to the school.

SEVEN STEPS TO WRITING SUCCESS – TEACHING AND LEARNING

'We read to enjoy, to learn, to share in other's experiences –and to enrich our lives. A narrative is the richest form of writing and it is also the most difficult to create.'

Jen McVeity 'Seven Steps to Writing Success' 2012

While students have rich, creative minds, their ambition to express themselves imaginatively in writing can be hindered by weakness in structure. If the point of writing is to entertain, to inform or to persuade a reader (NSW English Syllabus), then 'getting the message across' is supported by clearly expressed ideas that 'hook' the reader and keep them reading!

In 2015 we undertook professional learning in 'Seven Steps to Writing Success' (Jen McVeity), a comprehensive resource that makes imaginative writing easier, by breaking it into seven main skills:

- ▲ Plan for success
- ▲ Sizzling starts

- ⤴ Tightening tension
- ⤴ Dynamic dialogue
- ⤴ Show, don't tell
- ⤴ Ban the boring bits
- ⤴ Exciting endings

These skills are specifically taught in our classrooms and are integrated into our daily writing sessions. The idea is to put these skills into 'muscle memory', so they are transferable to other writing genres.

Here are a couple of tips from the resource....

Sizzling starts....

*'A story has about 60 seconds to grab the reader and make them want to keep turning the pages. So your story should start with the **action**.'*

Tightening tension...

*'How can you create nail-biting tension in your writing? Fill your scene with detail to make the reader feel as though they were really there. Use the **5 senses** as a guide. What could you see, hear, taste, touch, smell.....'*

NUMERACY – TEACHING AND LEARNING

The expectations around teaching of Mathematics have changed quite dramatically over the past twenty years or so and there is no better place to see this change than the current Board of Studies Syllabus for Mathematics. When comparing the Mathematics Syllabus that was in place in the early nineties to the most recent Syllabus, the richness of tasks and strategies as well as the complexity of connections and concepts covered is very obvious. There is also a strong focal point on the processes of Working Mathematically.

There is a very definite emphasis on developing students' ability to solve multi layered, complex problems. This requires creative thinking and the ability to make connections between concepts or ideas. It requires thinking "outside the box" and being able to view a situation from a variety of perspectives. It is all about the development of an open mindset and ability to effectively communicate thought processes or solutions.

These directions in the teaching and learning of Mathematics can sometimes be "daunting" for parents of school age children who appear to be doing things quite differently to how parents remember their school experience.

Our Parent Education Sessions are designed to keep parents up to date and informed with latest teaching trends. Many parents will have already attended the Literacy Sessions earlier this year and next term there will be an opportunity to attend our Parent Education Session on Numeracy. This will be held on August 8 in our i centre and will focus on Curriculum expectations; the difference between Numeracy and Mathematics as well as aspects of our particular context here at St Kieran's. Parents will also find out how to best support their child in this Key Learning Area.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN – TEACHING AND LEARNING

Each year the school identifies key goals and targets as part of the School Improvement Plan. These goals cover the major domains: Catholic Life and Mission; Teaching and Learning; Pastoral Care.

This year, St Kieran's will be going through the cycle of School Review; a compliance and assurance process that occurs in each Diocesan School on a 5-6 yearly basis.

Below are the 2016 School Improvement Goals and Targets for the three domains. These form the basis of our yearly focus and are drivers for Professional Learning and budget considerations.

Catholic Life & Mission

Goal: To develop and awareness of the school as a contemporary Catholic community.

- Improved ability of students to relate Scripture in order to inform their missionary call to discipleship

Pastoral Care & Wellbeing

Goal: Implement KidsMatter Primary Framework to build a whole school approach that supports student mental health and wellbeing.

- Improved awareness and application of SEL skills impacting on student wellbeing

Teaching & Learning

Goal: to implement and embed a shared understanding of the Teacher Inquiry and knowledge building cycle (Timperley 2008) to improve student learning

- **Literacy:** Improved student application of co-constructed success criteria to improve their writing
- **Numeracy:** Improved student ability to work mathematically when problem solving

SOME FACTS ABOUT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS - MISSION

Religious Education Modules for Term 2
K: God our Creator and Talking with God
1: Baptism
2: Land, People, Spirit
3: Eucharist and Structure of the Mass
4: Mary, woman of faith
5: Co-operators in God's Creation
6: Bible; Wisdom, Poetry and song.

Religious Education is taught for 2.5 hours per week.

In the younger grades this may be half an hour each and every day. In the older grades this may be an hour lesson once a week then half hour lessons.

Religious Education is often integrated with other Key Learning Areas.

Scripture studies may be included in reading activities or Creative Arts. How the messages of the Scriptures are applied to our lives may be included in Drama or writing activities.

Religious Education is taught in modules of learning with a clear theme

Modules may range from 2-3 in duration to 10 weeks in duration, depending on the topic For Example: Lent to Easter is a four week module whilst Baptism is a ten week module.

Our Sacramental modules run concurrently with the Parish Sacramental program.

Modules of Religious Education include Missioning, Old and New Testament Studies, studies of God and Jesus, studies of the Liturgical Year and studies of Spirituality and Prayer

THE SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM - MISSION

This term we congratulate to the students who have completed their First Holy Communion. This completes the children's journey into full membership with the Holy Catholic Church. The children have now prepared for, and participated in all the Sacraments of Initiation; Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation and finally Eucharist.

In addition to the Parish program the students have deepened their understanding of these sacraments through the learning modules taught in their classrooms. Thank you to the parents who have faithfully lead and encouraged their children's faith journey. Thank you also to the teachers



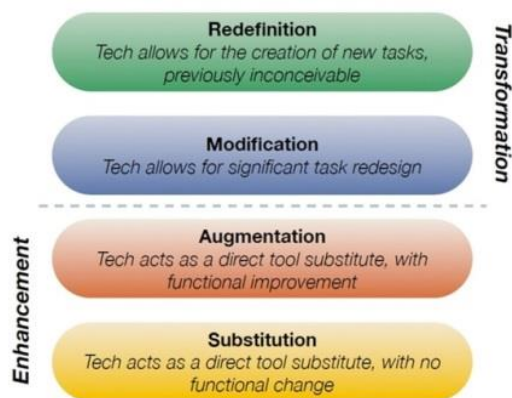
who attended the First Communion Masses over the past four weeks.

TECHNOLOGY – TEACHING AND LEARNING

The tidal wave of technology that has entered classrooms over the last few years has changed from simply one (or more) PCs to a variety of devices and programs or apps that when used correctly and in context can create rich learning experiences for students. The challenge has been one of ensuring that such “richness” is implemented appropriately and in a way that is beneficial for students.

Consider the following:

- ▲ Devices are best used in an educational setting when programmed into the teaching and learning plan in order to enhance learning outcomes for the students.
- ▲ Depending on the planning a teacher adopts, devices can be used in ways that are either based on *Enhancement* of teaching and learning strategies or *Transformation* of the same. (SAMR Model)** Ideally, rather than basic Enhancement (which means that the device is used simply as a substitution e.g. instead of a piece of paper to write on it is an iPad) we make **better** use of devices if we work towards Transformation (which allows for redefinition of a task usually by using a program or app in a way that completely redesigns the task and forces a different way of thinking or approaching a task.)



Researchers have determined that technology integration typically moves through specific levels. The higher the level of an activity the greater the educational benefit. **SAMR** is a model of tech integration designed to support this integration.

** SAMR model Image created by Dr Ruben Puentedura, Ph.D.

Real learning gains for students result from engaging them in learning experiences that could not be accomplished without technology. At the **Modification** and **Redefinition** level, the task changes and becomes more than just a classroom task as the context and project can have implications in the “real” world.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS - MISSION

Over the past term our teachers and children have prepared and lead many Liturgical celebrations. Following the Mother’s day breakfast our smallest members, Kindergarten, lead the school in prayers and songs for Mum. At the 6.00pm Pentecost Mass, Year Six proclaimed the gospel and lead a beautiful reflection. Many children from Year Six were in the youth band enhancing the Mass with their musical talents. Year 3 teachers and children prepared the ‘Come to the Table’ Mass celebrating their First Holy Communion. Thank you to parents for bringing your children along and participating in the Liturgical life of the school.



Kindergarten 2016 lead the School in a Mother’s Day Liturgy

NAPLAN – TEACHING AND LEARNING

Next term, the NAPLAN results for Year 3 and Year 5 students will be communicated to the school and to parents. The NAPLAN assessments are a standardised assessment in the areas of English and Maths. "Standardised" means that the students' performance can be compared to that of the wider population. The information provided by these standardised assessments is valuable, detailed and comprehensive. They provide an excellent "snapshot" of learning at that particular point in time for the KLAs of English and Maths. As comprehensive as these assessments are they, they do not provide an all-inclusive report on the whole child including the many other facets of learning and growing that make for success. Assessment of student progress is not just about "summing up" student achievement.

It also has other purposes. Learning occurs along a continuum and indeed continues well past the school years throughout one's lifetime. Assessment for and of learning needs to encompass much more than multiple choice tests in order to provide a complete picture of capabilities. Key problem-solving capacities, the ability of learners to work on collaborative tasks and specific capabilities such as scientific thinking are examples of competencies that are not really assessed by the current format of NAPLAN.