Catholic Schools Office
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

STRATEGIC PLAN
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 2013-2015

FORMING CATHOLIC MINDS & HEARTS

And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

Nature and Purpose of the Catholic School
in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

Inspired by the message and example of Jesus Christ, Catholic schools live out a distinctive educational vision. Supported by the Catholic community of which they are a vital part, they invite students and their families into a faith-filled educational experience.

As a key ministry of parishes and the diocese, Catholic schools encourage and support parents in their responsibility for the faith formation of their children. This formation is supported by prayer and opportunities to participate in the life, mission and liturgy of the broader Catholic community.

Our schools commit to:

• nurturing each individual's growth in faith and unique potential

• offering outstanding educational experiences founded on Catholic values

• fostering partnership between parents and staff in the education of their children

• creating communities of respect for each other, the wider society and the earth

• encouraging active engagement in social justice issues, the service of others and the promotion of peace

Catholic schools are part of a long tradition of Catholic education provided by religious and lay teachers in Australia and this diocese for over 180 years. They fulfil parents' rights to choose the schooling for their children which reflects their own values, beliefs and hopes.

Catholic Identity
Key Area 1

1.1 Dynamic and harmonious relationships among Catholic schools, parishes and pastoral regions

We Will

1.1.1 Promote a sense of invitation, welcome and inclusivity between school and parish

1.1.2 Identify and support opportunities for developing ongoing partnerships between parishes and schools

1.1.3 Respond to recommendations in relation to the Parish/Family Liaison trial in building community links between home, school and parish

1.2 High quality delivery of a contemporary and relevant Religion Curriculum (K-12)

We Will

1.2.1 Select and develop teachers of religion who are committed, informed and qualified

1.2.2 Implement the revised K-12 curriculum framework, supported by appropriate resources and professional development

1.2.3 Implement the recommendations of the review into the teaching of Religion in secondary schools

1.3 Authentic and informed Eucharistic communities in our Catholic schools

We Will

1.3.1 Promote student access to Eucharistic celebrations in school, parish and regional settings

1.3.2 Provide opportunities for PD in the delivery of appropriate, creative and meaningful liturgical experiences

1.3.3 Support and resource active and meaningful daily prayer in schools

1.4 Commitment to the nature and purpose of Catholic schools

We Will

1.4.1 Collaboratively develop a clear statement of staff commitment to teaching in a Catholic context

1.4.2 Ensure Catholic perspectives are embedded across the curriculum

1.4.3 Ensure social justice awareness and charitable works programs reflective of Catholic social teaching are in place in schools

1.5 Cohesive and integrated approach to staff spiritual and theological formation

We Will

1.5.1 Form and support school and CSO staff in their faith development and spiritual growth; inviting them into a personal encounter with the person of Jesus Christ

1.5.2 Develop and implement a program of retreat and formation experiences for staff

1.5.3 Support teacher engagement in opportunities for model and witness such as pilgrimages, conferences and World Youth Day

Quality Teaching & Learning
Key Area 2

2.1 Proactive approach to raising student levels of achievement

We Will

2.1.1 Identify and ensure a focus on quality practice and intervention strategies in the early years and at key transition periods

2.1.2 Identify and implement successful strategies for targeted students

2.1.3 Ensure support to schools in the area of religious literacy

2.2 Improved student achievement in literacy and numeracy

We Will

2.2.1 Provide direction to schools in setting explicit goals for literacy and numeracy

2.2.2 Provide professional learning for schools to set explicit targets for student achievement

2.2.3 Specifically target the teaching of K-12 mathematics to improve student outcomes

2.3 Contemporary and high quality teaching and learning

We Will

2.3.1 Investigate and promote contemporary, pedagogical and ICT approaches to support excellence in learning and teaching

2.3.2 Develop policies, provide resources and deliver professional learning to strengthen teaching and learning

2.3.3 Ensure access to a broad and differentiated curriculum for all students

2.4 Effective implementation of National Education Agenda

We Will

2.4.1 Implement plans with participating schools in addressing school improvement reforms and accountabilities of National Partnerships

2.4.2 Provide ongoing, timely professional learning to support the implementation of the new BOS syllabuses incorporating the Australian curriculum

2.4.3 Ensure flexibility in resources, personnel and structures across the system to enable the incorporation of emerging educational agendas

2.5 Student support mechanisms that promote wellbeing and mental health

We Will

2.5.1 Provide support structures for schools to facilitate "whole of school" approaches to pastoral care, behaviour support and student wellbeing

Leadership
Key Area 3

3.1 A Catholic Schools Office that is focused on effectiveness, performance and improvement

We Will

3.1.1 Enable a review of CSO operations including functions, structures, roles and service provision

3.1.2 Continue to develop enhanced and consistent communication systems within CSO

3.1.3 Renew and review CSO and school core values, mission and vision statements to ensure alignment with the Nature and Purpose of Catholic Schools statement

3.2 Ensuring quality and accountability in our schools

We Will

3.2.1 Develop strategic processes for identifying and supporting schools at risk

3.2.2 Develop strategic processes for identifying and supporting school leaders in need

3.2.3 Publicise and support the sharing of good practice in our schools

3.3 Principals as leaders of learning

We Will

3.3.1 Support school leaders to improve student achievement by improving the quality of teaching in their schools

3.4 A contemporary framework for leadership that builds capacity

We Will

3.4.1 Review leadership framework to ensure alignment with system priorities and AITSL requirements

3.4.2 Explore, identify and develop mentoring programs and structures aimed at providing opportunities for newly appointed and aspiring leaders

3.5 Effective Strategic Thinking, Planning and Acting

We Will

3.5.1 Support executive teams in the evaluation and synthesis of data to inform the strategic planning process

3.5.2 Develop and implement tools to assist the thorough evaluation of school and system strategic plans

Community & Partnerships
Key Area 4

4.1 Partnerships that provide for consultation and engagement with parents and families

We Will

4.1.1 Explore opportunities for increased engagement with parents in the life of the school

4.1.2 Optimise opportunities for communication and dialogue with parents on educational matters

4.2 Effective engagement and alliances with church, community and professional organisations and sectors

We Will

4.2.1 Strengthen system relationship with University of Newcastle, Australian Catholic University and other regional universities

4.2.2 Promote meetings with Local, State and Commonwealth Government members

4.2.3 Engage with aboriginal communities locally and through immersion experiences with Catholic mission

4.2.4 Engage in planning and deliberations at diocesan and state level about shared services

4.3 Increased options for student learning through partnering with business and the wider community

We Will

4.3.1 Review sponsorship arrangements and develop policy to encourage appropriate sponsorship and increased commercial arrangements

4.3.2 Explore expanded opportunities to engage with industry programs

4.4 An enhanced sense of community and belonging for CSO and school staff

We Will

4.4.1 Prioritise opportunities to develop and form staff in their faith life

4.4.2 Explore and deepen our understanding of our identity as CSO staff

4.4.3 Provide regular opportunities for social and collegial interaction for CSO staff

Strategic Resourcing
Key Area 5

5.1 High quality staff to deliver identified strategic priorities

We Will

5.1.1 Identify and prioritise key areas for targeted intervention in response to emerging system and government agendas

5.1.2 Allocate appropriate resources to respond to key areas

5.2 A contemporary and integrated approach to risk management and compliance

5.2.1 Prioritise an integrated plan for risk management and compliance

5.2.2 Develop and implement a school and CSO WHS system

5.2.3 Fully develop and implement Business Continuity (BCP) and Disaster Recover (DRP) plans for ICT and information systems

5.3 Contemporary and consistent approach to strategic recruitment, performance review and management of human resources

We Will

5.3.1 Implement a contemporary and integrated human resources management system

5.3.2 Improve efficiency and effectiveness by refining human resource practices and procedures

5.3.3 Explore, develop and implement contemporary and consistent approaches to performance appraisal for school and CSO staff

5.4 Planning for growth and organisation of schools

We Will

5.4.1 Develop a strategic roadmap for the growth and development of schools that addresses enrolment demand, appropriate school structures, access and participation for all students

5.4.2 Develop a master plan for a review of current structures for secondary schools

5.4.3 Integrate facility and infrastructure master planning for the creation of sustainable learning spaces

5.5 Equitable, effective, and efficient financial systems and practices

We Will

5.5.1 Implement a sustainable and equitable fee structure for families K-12

5.5.2 Review structures and processes for financial and management support

5.6 Information technology architecture, systems and services that enhance student learning and operational effectiveness

We Will

5.6.1 Develop and renew the ICT strategic plan, aligned to a contemporary approach for architecture, shared and local services

5.6.2 Review, evaluate and update ICT support models, information systems and network services

5.7 Stewardship of the natural and built environment

We Will

5.7.1 Develop a strategy and process to improve energy management and environmental sustainability across all schools and CSO

5.7.2 Complete Building Asset Management plan and commence program of cyclic updates and maintenance