

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

Nerang

Religious Education Program



'Making Christ Present'

Our Story

School Description

St Brigid's is a co-educational Catholic Primary School serving families of the Nerang Catholic Parish. We currently have 413 students enrolled at the school.

St Brigid's offers a quality education for students from Preparatory to Year Six, within the context of Catholic values and traditions. The school aims to be a true community of learning and faith - one which recognises the uniqueness and dignity of the individual and operates on the gospel values of respect and care for one another.

Through our curriculum and professional learning opportunities, we celebrate and worship through rituals, the cultivation of the aesthetics and the Religious Education program. Our school attempts to give witness to the essential wholeness of the human experience - social, moral, physical, spiritual and intellectual development.

At St Brigid's we aim to provide a seven year program, which is designed to equip our young people to confront social issues in the light of Gospel teachings.

Faith development is considered an essential component for education of the whole person. The school's formal Religious Education program is based on the Archdiocesan Education in Faith Guidelines.

Students participate regularly in liturgies, celebrations, prayer times and assemblies which help develop the community of faith.

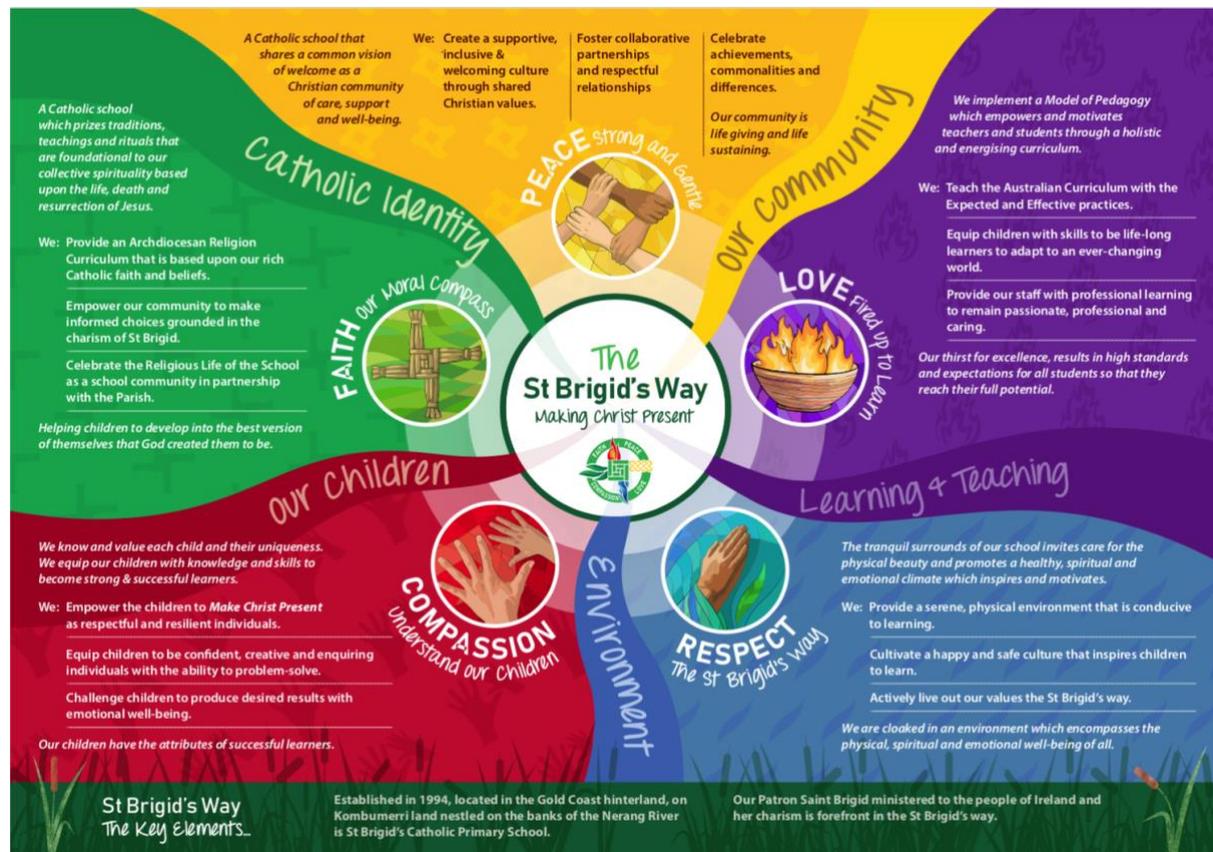
There is a genuine need to meet the needs of all learners by providing a variety of learning opportunities and teaching strategies. There is also an emphasis on the developmental skills and needs of individuals.

Teachers and those responsible for leadership in Religious Education in the school constantly seek to respond to the reality of students' lives by incorporating flexibility in Religious Education classes to ensure that an inclusive and ecumenical spirit pervades all Religious Education and prayer celebrations.



School Mission and Vision

The St Brigid's Way: Established in 1994, located in the Gold Coast hinterland, on Kombumerri land nestled on the banks of the Nerang River is St Brigid's Catholic Primary School. Our Patroness, Saint Brigid ministered to the people of Ireland and her charism is forefront in the St Brigid's Way.



Our Charism : As outlined on our [school public website](#)

The central influence on the charism of our school is the person of Jesus Christ. At St Brigid's, we draw inspiration, direction and spiritual energy from the stories of our founding patron saint, St Brigid. Brigid exemplified the particular gifts of welcome and hospitality in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Brigid...A woman of strength & gentleness...

Our values

FAITH - Brigid was a woman of hospitality and a compassionate heart who lived her life in the light of God.

COMPASSION - Brigid was committed to justice and inclusion of all.

PEACE – Brigid was a Healer and Peacemaker.

LOVE – In her actions, Brigid showed she was a lover of the earth and all created life.



Living out our values The St Brigid's way...



FAITH

We are a community of faith, living out the values of courage, joy and hope;

- ◆ Lovingly accepting the gift of our belief in God as Trinity.
- ◆ Continuing to nourish our faith through prayer, reflection and further education.
- ◆ Spreading God's love, in all we do and say as St Brigid did.

"And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith." Matthew 21:22

COURAGEOUS

We are people of justice and wisdom;

- ◆ Bravely taking a stand for justice.
- ◆ Speaking the truth in love.
- ◆ Trying hard, setting high standards and believing that we can do our absolute best.

"And Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God.'" Mark 11:22

JOYFUL

We are a community who loves life and walks in the footsteps of Jesus;

- ◆ Choosing to be positive and happy so that we are a source of joy to others.
- ◆ Looking after ourselves; being active, content and feeling healthy.
- ◆ Having a joyous heart; smiling and keeping control of our emotions.

"The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad." Psalms 126:3

HOPEFUL

We are a community grounded in the love and faithfulness of God;

- ◆ We can call on God in times of need.
- ◆ The world can be a better place; we make good choices.
- ◆ Our school is a safe and happy place.

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Luke 8:8

COMPASSION

We are people of compassion who are patient, inclusive and generous;

- ◆ We are aware of the needs of ourselves and others.
- ◆ We contribute to making our world a better place.
- ◆ We value, nurture and protect our Earthly home.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

PATIENT

We display patience showing respect for self, others and the world;

- ◆ Using self-reflection as an opportunity to grow in self-control and grace.
- ◆ Always gently expressing love and stillness, accepting differences.
- ◆ Accepting changes and frustrations with peaceful actions and a loving heart.

"And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.'" Luke 15:31

INCLUSIVE

We believe in honouring the gifts of each person and inclusion of all;

- ◆ Respecting all people of different cultures.
- ◆ Enjoying the richness of life in our multicultural land.
- ◆ Reaching out in welcome to those seeking understanding and acceptance.

"All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." John 6:37

GENEROUS

We serve with charity and hospitality;

- ◆ Opening our hearts and showing kindness and charity to others.
- ◆ Showing empathy and consideration for those in need.
- ◆ Building a welcoming community using positive words and actions.

"Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7

PEACE

We are a community of peace, who are resilient, safe and show empathy in our everyday interactions;

- ◆ Solving problems through negotiation and making good choices.
- ◆ Contributing to a happy community; sharing experiences, love and understanding.
- ◆ Inspiring others through our energy, effort and our behaviour.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9

RESILIENT

We are resilient people with a Growth Mindset who problem solve;

- ◆ Using uncertainty as an opportunity to stretch beyond our thinking.
- ◆ Responding with enthusiasm during challenging times.
- ◆ Accepting tough situations as a time to learn and grow.

"May the Lord give strength to his people! May the Lord bless his people with peace!" Psalm 29:11

SAFE

So that everyone can feel safe and happy at school,

- ◆ We are a welcoming community especially to new staff and students.
- ◆ We accept that making mistakes is part of learning and growing.
- ◆ We take care of ourselves and our friends and 'speak up' when necessary.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." John 10:11

EMPATHETIC

We are a community whose attitudes and actions reflect kindness and compassion;

- ◆ Recognising when friends at school need us to listen and understand what we might be feeling.
- ◆ Thinking about how our actions and attitudes affect other people.
- ◆ Doing our best to help those in need.

"And they all ate and were satisfied." Matthew 14:20

LOVE

We show respect to our earth and all created life;

- ◆ Cherishing the gift of love given to us by Jesus.
- ◆ Reflecting love in how we speak and act.
- ◆ Forgiving others so our community may be united.

"So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them." Matthew 7:12

CARING

We feel, think, and act in the interest of others, ourselves and the environment;

- ◆ Using kind and encouraging words and actions.
- ◆ Understanding that learning is hard work.
- ◆ Picking up rubbish and caring about our school grounds.

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12:31

FORGIVING

We are a forgiving community:

- ◆ When we say 'I'm sorry', it is genuine and a chance for a new beginning.
- ◆ We accept apologies with a forgiving heart.
- ◆ We let go to feelings of blame or anger and find inner peace.

"God, be merciful to me a sinner!" Luke 18:13

GENTLE

Following St Brigid, who was an extraordinary woman of faith, with a strong and gentle heart;

- ◆ Being humble and playing fair, at times having to swallow our pride.
- ◆ Controlling ourselves at difficult times with gentleness and patience.
- ◆ Believing that everyone has been gifted by God with dignity, and deserves respect.

"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Luke 18:16

School Prayer of St Brigid

Loving God,

You helped St Brigid to become a strong and gentle person.

Help us to see you in the people that we meet each day

and to serve you as St Brigid did – with joy, courage when things get hard and love for those in need.

Amen

Our Motto “*Making Christ Present*”

St Brigid’s School Song: Making Christ Present

Words and Music: Michael Mangan © 2016 Litmus Productions, Brisbane

Surrounded by creation, God’s beauty all around:

The river, the mountains and the trees.

We gather here together on this ancient holy ground,

A special place for all the world to see.

Chorus

And we are making, making Christ present,

**Everybody, every day. We are making,
making Christ present, in all we do and say.**

We are courageous, joyful, gentle, strong.

We love to learn, we love our God.

St Brigid’s, make Christ present every day.

We follow in the footsteps of Jesus, God’s own Son,

We live in peace and care for those in need.

Inspired by St Brigid, we serve each and every one

With charity and hospitality. (Chorus)

Everyone is welcome here in our community.

We celebrate our gifts and let them shine.

Respecting all our differences, we live in harmony.

We proudly stand together, side by side. (Chorus)

Our Vision for Religious Education

St Brigid's Catholic Primary school shares and promotes the Vision for Religious Education articulated by Brisbane Catholic Education and the wider society. This vision includes the two dimensions of formation- namely, of students' religious literacy and their faith formation:

The schools and colleges of the Archdiocese of Brisbane aspire to educate and form students who are challenged to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and who are literate in the Catholic and broader Christian tradition so that they might participate critically and authentically in faith contexts and wider society.

The *Vision for Religious Education* also appropriately aligns with the **goal for learning and teaching** as articulated in the Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) *Learning and Teaching Framework* (2012):

As a Catholic Christian community, we educate all to live the gospel of Jesus Christ as successful, creative and confident, active and informed learners empowered to shape and enrich our world.

The *Vision for Religious Education* challenges students to be a religious voice in the world. The Vision gives greater prominence and a renewed orientation to the critical interpretation and evaluation of culture. Through vibrant and engaging Religious Education, students become active constructors of culture rather than passive consumers.

Religious Education at St Brigid's seeks to develop the religious literacy of students in light of the Catholic Christian tradition, so that they might participate critically and authentically in contemporary culture.

At St Brigid's, religious literacy includes ways of talking, acting, creating, communicating, critiquing, evaluating, participating, ritualising, theologising, worshipping, reading, reflecting, and writing with others in a variety of religious and secular contexts. Examination of the sample units of work attached as links in this document, will reveal how, in all units of work, teachers and students seek to integrate the two dimensions of religious education, so that religious literacy and faith formation can complement each other as students seek to find meaning in their place and time. The integration of both dimensions in the daily life of the school includes prayer in every classroom to start the day and the timetabling of the mandatory hours of classroom-based engagement with the Religion Curriculum at the school.

Jesus Christ is always the centre of this Vision. Through engagement with both dimensions of Religious Education, students are challenged to be cultural agents in light of the Gospel; authentic witnesses to the mission of Jesus Christ in the world today.

More information on BCE's vision for Religious Education can be found [here](#).



- **The Contemporary Contexts Religious Education**

At St Brigid's, recognition is given to the four contexts identified as having a significant impact on Religious Education in contemporary Catholic and ecumenical schools. They are the *Societal Context, Ecclesial Context, Educational Context and Digital Context*.

Our Societal Context

Like all Catholic and ecumenical schools of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, St Brigid's operates in a complex and ever-changing environment. Contemporary students are immersed in a global world and from an early age are exposed to a range of values represented through diverse media.

As a consequence, our school is continually challenged to engage families in Religious Education in rich and relevant ways. At St Brigid's, Religious Education seeks to reflect a Catholic Christian worldview that integrates faith, life and culture. At the same time, it seeks to embrace an ecumenical perspective and reflect the multi-faith context and reality of this school.



Religious Education at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

The Religious Education Program at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School outlines the values, principles and processes involved in planning for quality learning opportunities in Religion and ...

Go to this
Sway

Our Ecclesial Context

At St Brigid's, as is the case with many Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, an increasing number of students and their families are less engaged with the formal life of the Church than in the past. Consequently, for many students, the culture and language of religion is underdeveloped.

This school, along with many Archdiocesan schools, increasingly provides the introductory and developmental understanding and experience of Church for students and their families. This is supported when the school is a place where students and their families encounter the mission and outreach of the Church, especially through pastoral care and the experience of Catholic Christian community. In this community, such activities include but are not limited to fundraising and support for Caritas, gathering food, blankets, gifts for St Vincent De Paul and Catholic social teaching and fundraising through the Catholic Mission Socktober campaign, thus enabling our school to promote knowledge, deep understanding and skills about the Catholic and broader Christian tradition within the broader evangelising mission of the Church.



Why Socktober?

St Brigid's has engaged in Socktober for many years and the reason for this is that we are supporting an organization that is passionate and committed to serving others through engagement in world issues. Our call to service is highlighted in The St Brigid's Way, being children to develop into the best version of themselves that God created them to be. We provide an excellent learning of Catholic social teaching through a common sense of welcome as a Christian community of care, support and wellbeing.

Socktober is a great avenue for the students to learn and appreciate real life world issues and respond through compassionate action.

To be able to celebrate Socktober with curriculum learning areas content given our teachers an avenue to bring students learning alive.

Our Educational Context

St Brigid's Catholic Primary school, along with each Archdiocesan school, seeks transformation of the whole person so that those in the school community are empowered to live the gospel of Jesus Christ in their everyday lives. In the Catholic Christian tradition, education is a work of love and service. At St Brigid's, we seek to nurture and develop the faith of individuals in ways that are mindful of their cultural and religious identity. Examples include care for the environment, justice and peace, outreach to the poor and the marginalized.

Religious Education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane, including this school, builds on best practice of the broader educational community. The classroom learning and teaching of religion reflects the philosophy, content, structure, academic rigour and assessment and reporting modes used in other learning areas. The religious life of St Brigid's forms and skills students to negotiate the tension of maintaining Christian integrity when confronted with the complexities of life in contemporary society.

Our Digital Context

Religious Education at St Brigid's seeks to engage students in the critical, creative, and responsible use of digital tools which is an important component of digital citizenship. It includes provision and use of a variety of digital platforms through TEAMS using iPads and [The St Brigid's Way Parent Portal](#). This enables our students to express their learning in rich and relevant ways and connect with individuals and communities in a global context.

[6A TEAMS SITE RELIGION](#)

[3B TEAMS SITE RELIGION RESOURCE](#)

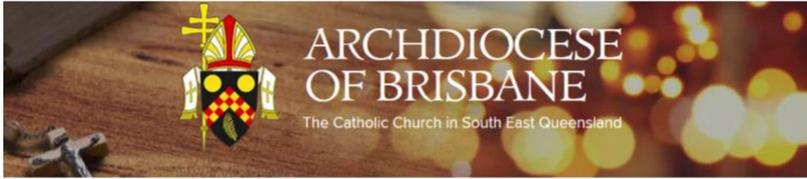


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Welcome to the Archdiocese of Brisbane Community of Believers Web quest!

Access the Archdiocese of Brisbane website here:

<https://brisbanecatholic.org.au/>

- **Our Beliefs about learners and learning in the Religion Classroom**

Learning in the Religion Classroom

Foundational to the shared work of teachers at St Brigid's are the beliefs they have of the learners they serve. The BCE Learning and Teaching Framework (2012) explicitly articulates the beliefs and the responses that flow from these beliefs within schools in the Archdiocese.

Our Learners

St Brigid's School, Nerang Student Data 2020

In the 2020 school year, 38.6% of St Brigid's students identify as Catholic. This has significant implications for the planning and teaching of Religious Education at our school. Up to half of every cohort comes to us with little or no background in the Catholic faith, and little experience with its beliefs, teachings, traditions or rituals. When planning for student learning in Religious Education, teachers access relevant data and consider the individuals and their backgrounds in order to differentiate curriculum delivery and address individual needs, allowing all children to have the opportunity to fully engage with the curriculum.

Student Religion Name	Student Religion Percentage
Catholic	38.6%
No religion	30.2%
Not stated	8.7%
Other Christian	20.1%
Other Religion	2.3%

Table 1: Student Religious Background

Every learner is created in the image and likeness of God and, inspired by the Spirit, responds with passion and creativity to life.

- Every learner seeks to find meaning in life and learning and, in the Catholic Christian Tradition, we find meaning in the person and teachings of Jesus to grow as pilgrim people.
- Every learner is a lifelong learner, with a desire to search for truth and do what is right; accountable for choices and responsible for actions.
- Every learner is in some respect, like all others, like some others, like no other and we respond creatively, flexibly and with a futures orientation to ensure dignity and justice for all.
- Every learner can achieve success in life and learning where diversity is valued and shared wisdom contributes to decision-making that enriches and enlivens our world.
- Every learner brings to the learning experience their own richly diverse life journey to contribute to a community in communion, empowered by the Spirit to be at the service of others.



At a class and individual student level, at St Brigid's, the interests, religious backgrounds and learning needs of students inform the development of units of work. Data retrieved from the BI Tool, Census Application (Eminerva) and other sources is used to inform planning decisions for learning. Teachers use this information to interpret the curriculum flexibly to meet the individual learning needs of students and to personalise their learning by:

- Adjusting the way in which students are taught and the means through which they demonstrate their learning.
- Using the extended general capabilities learning continua from the Australian Curriculum to adjust the focus of learning or to emphasise specific aspects such as higher order cognitive skills.
- Providing students with opportunities to work with content in more depth or breadth; ie. Class TEAMS Sites.
- Providing students with additional time and support.
- Use of the requirement for diversity in assessment tasks, required in the planning template.
- Consultation with specialist staff- e.g. STIEs, Speech Therapists, Indigenous Support workers in order to make adjustments and develop appropriate learning and teaching strategies to enable success.

[STAFF PORTAL LINK TO YEAR LEVEL PLANNING DOCUMENTATION WITH ADJUSTMENTS](#)

For more information about the Contexts for Learning in the Archdiocese of Brisbane, see [here](#).

- **Collaborative Planning**

St Brigid's Catholic Primary school has a population of 413 students, with 2-3 classes in each year level. The planning and development of units of work in Religious Education therefore takes the following format.

Year level planning opportunities in Religious Education are provided at least twice per term during working hours. These sessions are supported by the Assistant Principal Religious Education (APRE) and the Primary Learning Leader (PLL), and Education Officer – BCE Religious Education (EO-RE) by invitation, when available. Supported after-school opportunities are also offered on a needs basis. Individuals or teams are also able to use their curriculum planning time each week to arrange to meet with the APRE for ongoing support of planning. This occurs each term in the weeks following initial short cycles of Year Level planning meetings, which are held in Weeks 5 and 10.

The school portal has Curriculum and Religious Education Folders that are utilised by teachers to share and store planning documents and resources. This is a valuable source of ideas, materials and shared wisdom.

Each classroom teacher of Religious Education at St Brigid's completes a separate version of the year level planning or includes the adjustments for individual needs in the teaching and learning sequence and the assessment tasks in the Year Level Unit Plan. Student religious background data are included and used to inform planning decisions. Data about student learning is collected at the end of each short cycle of Learning and Teaching to provide direction for the next unit of work. Parent and student feedback about learning and teaching in the Religious Education program is collected by the classroom teacher at various intervals to inform unit evaluation and reflection. To assist teachers in meeting these obligations, the school planning template has links to all necessary documents and often includes questions to prompt comprehensive coverage of each stage of the teaching and learning cycle.

- **Communication to Parents/Wider Community**

At St Brigid's Catholic Primary school, every effort is made to ensure parents are informed and engaged in the religious education of students.

Religious Education content is published on the school website each year. Many classroom teachers upload teaching and learning content on their class TEAMS site for parents to view. All Classroom teachers forward a Year Level Overview via email to parents which incorporates Religion Curriculum content. Parents also have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at formal and informal Parent/Teacher meetings throughout the year.

• Impact of System Initiatives

St Brigid's Catholic Primary school is a dialogue school. With this project aligning to BCE's Vision focus area of [celebrating our Catholic culture](#), by participating in the project we are working towards gaining a better understanding of how our Catholic Identity is expressed and what can be done to strengthen it in the future.

In 2018, the entire St Brigid's school community embarked on a bold program of recontextualization. The school logo was re-developed and updated forming a new school vision and mission; namely The St Brigid's Way which was inspired by our patroness, St Brigid of Kildare. This document has provided our school community with a more contemporary context in which to apply our beliefs and values giving us a shared language and understanding of how we live and learn at St Brigid's.

In addition, each year whole school strong Catholic Identity goals are developed as a result of evaluating the previous year's school goals, through consultation with staff and data collection and analysis gathered through the 3 High Yield strategies. I.e. The St Brigid's Data Wall, Review and Response Meetings and Learning Walks and Talks. The Religious Education goals align with the BCE system Strong Catholic Identity aspirations and strategies.

The pedagogical practices embedded in the Brisbane Catholic Education Model of Pedagogy (2012) are consistent with a reconceptualist approach to the teaching of religion. Five practices provide a common language for planning and reflecting on learning and teaching in the religion classroom; focusing on learners and their learning; establishing clear learning intentions and success criteria; activating multiple ways of knowing, interacting and opportunities to construct knowledge; responding with feedback to move learning forward; and evaluating learning with students as activators of their own learning and resources for others (RE Curriculum P-12 P.26).

The Religious Education Program for St Brigid's School outlines the values, principles and processes involved in planning for high quality learning opportunities in Religion that promote equity and excellence for our students. Our aim is that all students develop as confident, creative learners who can participate in society as empowered citizens who can shape their world, inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Our Curriculum Structure and Organisation For Religious Education

- **A Catholic View of Learning**

At St Brigid's, a Catholic view about Learning and Teaching is reflected in both dimensions of Religious Education, namely, the classroom teaching and learning of Religion and the Religious Life of the School. Teaching and Learning in Religious Education is intentionally developed on the foundation of a Catholic theology and philosophy of curriculum. Four core themes are central: ***Anthropology, Epistemology, Cosmology and the Catholic Christian Tradition.***



Catholic View of Christian Anthropology



A Catholic view of Christian anthropology is centred on the person of Jesus. It recognises each person is created in the likeness and image of God. It emphasises Jesus as teacher whose Spirit infuses the whole curriculum with a hope-filled vision of life. At St Brigid's, it is characterised by inclusion, holistic and relational learning, and action in community.

Catholic Perspective on Epistemology

A Catholic perspective on epistemology orients a curriculum towards rationality; holistic knowing; knowing and living; wisdom as the fruit of knowing and life-long and life-wide learning.



Catholic Understanding of Cosmology



Cosmology relates to how we understand our place in the universe and the choices we make to live within the integrity of creation. Through the elements of stewardship and sacramentality, Catholic Christians are called to respond to questions like: *'What is our place in the universe?' 'How do we live within the integrity of creation?'*

Catholic Christian Story and Tradition

From the very beginning of Christianity, the Christian community has been engaged in teaching. The transformative process of learning and teaching is captured in the Vision of Brisbane Catholic Education to *Teach, Challenge and Transform*. This Vision is realised at St Brigid's through everyday



witness; and learning and teaching that challenges and transforms the culture and the world in which we live. In particular, as a community we strive to live the charism of St Brigid in The St Brigid's Way; faith, compassion, peace, love and respect: A love of learning and love for God. Our school motto 'Making Christ Present' is a regular reminder to all at St Brigid's that the knowledge we seek in the Religion Curriculum serves a purpose only when it informs our relationships with God and with others.

Opportunities to involve children in application of their classroom learning to life in our community and beyond are planned for each term. A thorough knowledge of the Religion Curriculum and of the Religious Life of the School document allows teachers to make links between prayer, liturgy, ritual and sacrament and the theology and traditions behind those faith experiences with daily life in and beyond our community.



Ongoing spiritual formation for religious educators is as important as professional and theological learning. A person-centred understanding of spiritual formation begins with honouring and exploring the personal narrative of each individual's experience of My Story through an approach that engages the head, the heart and the hands (experience, knowledge, practice and application). At St Brigid's, such an approach is supported by weekly Staff Prayer, Staff Formation experiences at StoryFire, Spirit Fire, Keepers of the Flame,

Staff with Spirit, Professional Learning on Silence and Stillness.

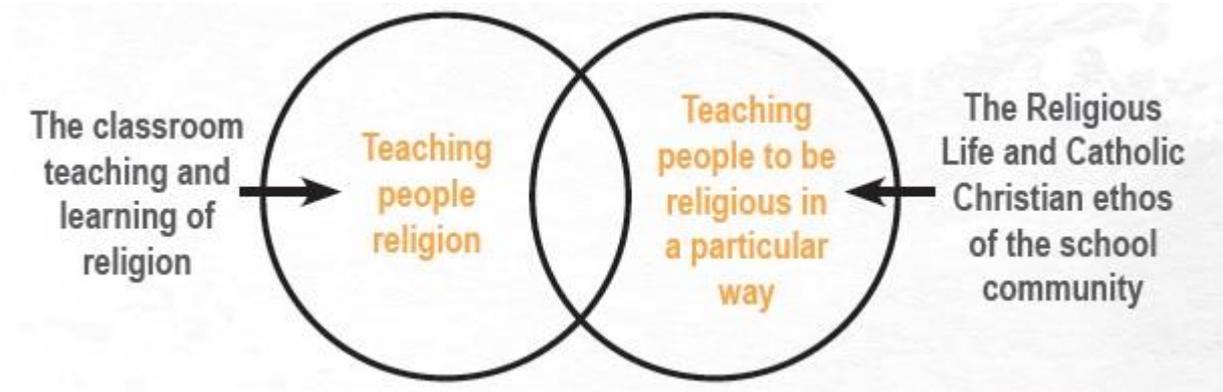
Further information about a **Catholic View about Learning and Teaching** can be found [here](#).



- **Our Model for Religious Education**

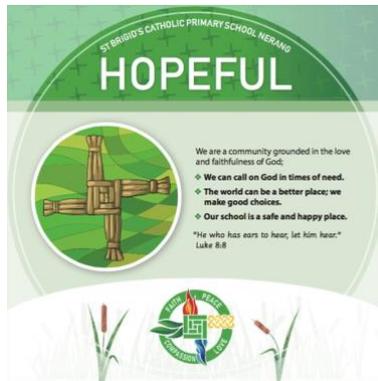
At St Brigid's, as in all schools and colleges of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, teaching people religion and teaching people to be religious draw upon the Catholic Christian tradition in ways that are mindful of local contexts and the ecumenical and multi-faith realities of contemporary culture.

Since 2008, the distinct and complementary nature of both dimensions of Religious Education has been conceptualised in the following *Model for Religious Education*.



The St Brigid's school community seeks to understand and utilise the distinctiveness and complementarity of these two dimensions of Religious Education in the holistic education and the formation of our students.

Our School programs, activities and experiences for the classroom learning and teaching of religion and the religious life of the school are responsive to religious diversity, while being faithful to the



Catholic Christian identity of the school. Some examples include developing policies, structures and practices to provide equity for all students through our PB4L framework by aligning these to the values in The St Brigid's Way.

This school recognizes that the *Vision for Religious Education* and the *Model for Religious Education* take a big picture view; for while both take place within the physical and temporal context of this Catholic school, they presuppose a broader context and length of time not available to a school: a whole lifetime.

- **The Reconceptualist Approach to Teaching and Learning in Religious Education**

Since 2008, the classroom learning and teaching of religion in the Archdiocese of Brisbane has been characterised by a reconceptualist approach. In short, it operates from an educational framework rather than from a catechetical or 'shared Christian praxis' framework. This means that at St Brigid's, the classroom religion program becomes a primary arena for dealing with the critical religious issues and concerns of life. There are three key considerations for teachers using this approach: the *Avoidance of Presumptive Language*, *Teaching 'about' the Tradition and Powerful Pedagogies*.

Avoidance of Presumptive Language

In a reconceptualist approach, teachers avoid using presumptive language and do not start with assumptions about students' faith development based upon their particular religious affiliation. That is, we acknowledge and embrace the diversity of our student body, their experiences with religion and being religious and the strengths and interests they bring to the teaching and learning experience. At St Brigid's, teachers are required to use language that is invitational and educational to better engage students in the religion classroom. Students who can readily identify themselves as Catholics are affirmed by this approach. Further, when using non-presumptive language, teachers provide students with the freedom to respond in ways that do not assume a programmed response.

Teaching 'about' the Tradition

A reconceptualist classroom is not simply a place for transferring facts and knowledge. At our school, a reconceptualist approach to teaching religion promotes a post-critical belief attitude among our young people. This way of dealing with religious belief perceives truth as a search for value and meaning, rather than as objective and certain fact. There is a dimension of mystery and uncovering new layers of meaning, a process in which critical reasoning plays an important role. It is a way of authentically engaging with the Catholic faith and learning to live intelligently and religiously in cultural and religious plurality.

Powerful Pedagogies

A reconceptualist approach requires powerful pedagogies that engage students with the richest resources of the tradition. As Brennan and Ryan (2011) remind us, the Catholic tradition is accessible through good teaching.

The pedagogical practices (as aforementioned) are embedded in the Brisbane Catholic Education [Model of Pedagogy \(2012\)](#) are consistent with a reconceptualist approach to the teaching of religion.



Focusing on learners and their learning

While some students at St Brigid's come from families strongly connected to their local parish community and are literate in the Catholic Christian tradition, a growing number of our students enter the religion classroom with low levels of religious affiliation and at best a tentative familiarity with public expressions of Catholic life.

Using a reconceptualist approach, our religion teachers acknowledge the reality of students' lives, identify learners' levels of thinking and build on the attributes each student brings to the religion classroom. It incorporates a powerful questioning pedagogy, within the context of a community of thinking, that stimulates and supports genuine, active and authentic student engagement.

Examples of fertile Questions used in our Year Level Planning documents:

- ***Year Prep: What is Jesus' story?***
- ***Year 1: How do believers past and present honour Mary, Mother of Jesus?***
- ***Year 2: How are we God's hands?***
- ***Year 3: What is my relationship with God?***
- ***Year 4: What are the consequences of making right or wrong choices?***
- ***Year 5: How is faith shared and strengthened?***
- ***Year 6: How is Jesus present in parts of the Mass?***

Establishing clear learning intentions and success criteria

At St Brigid's, the starting place for the classroom religion program is the Religion Curriculum P-12. Religion teachers use the curriculum to create and make clear and visible the learning intentions and success criteria for all students.

Prep Learning Intention:

By the end of these learning experiences, students will be able to:

- Participate with respect in a variety of personal and communal prayer experiences, including meditative prayer and the Hail Mary.

Success Criteria:

- I will know how to sit and be still.
- I will know how to think about Jesus in a quiet space.
- I will think about Mary as Mother of Jesus.
- I will be able to say the Hail Mary during prayer.

In our units of work, which are stored on the [Staff Portal – Religion Curriculum](#), the rigour of our school’s approach to learning and teaching in the religion classroom, drawn from the Knowledge and Deep Understanding and Skills of the P-12 Religion Curriculum document , takes account of the capabilities and readiness of students, while at the same time ensuring a classroom that engages and challenges students.

Further, at 2 points throughout the term (Week 5 and Week 10 planning days), time is made available to assist teachers to collaboratively reflect on; the effectiveness of their planning, the strategies employed and the achievement of students within a learning and teaching cycle so as to inform the teaching and learning, and assessment of the unit in subsequent years. Teachers also complete a [Monitoring Student Achievement in Religious Education](#) document at the end of each planning cycle.

- **Time Allocation and Effective Timetabling of Religious Education at St Brigid’s**

This school strongly supports the mandated minimum of 2.5 hours per week of religion teaching from P-6. This equates to 92 - 100 hours per year, based on 37 - 40 available teaching weeks per year. Liturgy, prayer, hymn practice and other religious practices are not included in this provision. The effective timetabling of religion classes is given high priority within the life of the school, as is evidenced by the [timetables](#) and [teacher’s work plans](#) on the Staff Portal.

- **Design Principles for Religious Education at St Brigid’s**

The *Religion Curriculum P-12* has been developed around four design principles: embracing a *Catholic Christian Worldview*; modelling a *Seamless Curriculum*; setting a clear *Pedagogical Direction*; and strengthening *Alignment*. These principles have been put into practice at St Brigid’s.

Catholic Christian Worldview

In alignment with the content of the *Religion Curriculum P-12*, *Religious Education at St Brigid’s* unambiguously reflects a Catholic Christian worldview that integrates faith, life and culture. Where possible, content embraces an ecumenical perspective and is responsive to the multi-faith context and reality of contemporary religion classrooms.

Seamless Curriculum

The *Religion Curriculum at St Brigid’s*. reflects the philosophy, content, focus, structure, academic rigour and assessment and reporting modes used in all other learning areas. See for example, the assessment tasks in the Year Level units on our [Staff Portal](#).

Pedagogical Direction, including Line of sight

The pedagogical direction of the *Religion Curriculum P-12* is consistent with the *BCE Model of*

Pedagogy (2012) and draws significantly on John Hattie's research, *Visible Learning* (2009), and the visible learning and teaching story outlined in *Visible Learning for Teachers* (2012).

The *Religion Curriculum P-12* promotes inquiry learning, a learner centred pedagogical approach to learning and teaching, that aligns closely with the directions taken in the Australian Curriculum.

By adopting the Planning Template for Religious Education from BCE, these pedagogical directions have been adopted by St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School.

There is also a clear focus on the **line of sight** in year level planning: [Year Level Description, Achievement Standard and Content Descriptions as evidenced in the planning template used for RE.](#)

High Quality Teaching in RE at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

The teaching and learning identified in this Religious Education Program is consistent with whole school approaches to teaching and learning across the curriculum at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School.

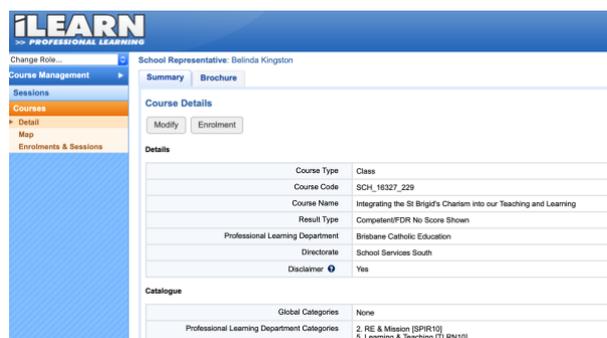
- **Accreditation Requirements**

Accreditation to Teach Religion in a Catholic or Ecumenical School

All teachers of religion in Archdiocesan schools are required to be accredited to teach religion. Currently at St Brigid's, we have 23 staff fully accredited to teach religion, 4 staff accredited to teach with one staff member working through post graduate studies, 3 staff working through post graduate studies with interim accreditation. 4 staff have interim accreditation to teach, one of these is the band teacher, one LOTE teacher. 4 staff have interim accreditation to teach or no accreditation and are new to St Brigid's. They are investigating study options.

Maintenance of Accreditation

As part of their professional learning, all staff are required to maintain their accreditation status by engaging in the required number of hours (25 and 25 every five years) to maintain accreditation to Teach and to Teach Religion. The school provides many opportunities through dedicated Staff Meetings, Twilights and Professional Learning days each year and teachers are expected to find other opportunities in their own time to complete the requirements.



• Professional Learning

Religious educators at St Brigid's engage in ongoing professional learning focused on enhancing individual and collaborative practices, as stated above, as well as the capacity to improve student learning through short cycles of planning during Weeks 5 and 10 each term.

• Effective Assessment

At St Brigid's, assessing student learning is an integral part of the school classroom. It improves learning and informs teaching. It is the process through which teachers identify, gather and interpret information about student achievement and learning in order to improve, enhance and plan for further learning.

Teachers at all year levels, as part of their planning, and teaching, employ the five key strategies for formative assessment, namely;

1. Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success,
2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning,
3. Providing feedback that moves learning forward,
4. Activating learners as instructional resources for one another (peer feedback),
5. Activating learners as the owners of their own learning (self-assessment).

At St Brigid's, it is believed that evidence of achievement should reflect the knowledge, deep understanding and skills described in the relevant achievement standards and reflected in the success criteria.

Knowledge describes the information, facts and principles specific to a learning area.

Deep Understanding relates to the concepts underpinning and connecting knowledge in a field/discipline and is related to a student's ability to appropriately select and apply knowledge to solve problems in a particular learning area.

Skills describe the way of working specific to a field/discipline, and are therefore focused on specific techniques, strategies or processes in a learning area.

Differentiation of student learning should be considered and noted on planning documents. Some means of differentiation to allow curriculum access to all students may include breaking the task or question down into smaller parts, allowing for a scribe or for the task to be completed orally or with assistive technology, providing more time to complete the task or a number of attempts to complete similar tasks, teacher modelling or peer support.

A student's Personalised Learning Plan should be a source of information on useful differentiation strategies. Our Support Teacher Inclusive Education along with members of the St Brigid's Support Team are also available to discuss strategies to support all learners. Task differentiation or adjustments are recorded on the Religion Curriculum Plan.

Tools for Assessment

Teachers at St Brigid's are encouraged to use a range and balance of assessment tools which allows teachers to cater for all learners and learning situations, to measure the impact of their teaching and plan for further learning and teaching. Assessment revolves around three core practices, namely,

- Teacher observation: observing students and monitoring their progress as they work;
- Student/Teacher consultation: interacting with students either formally or informally.
- Focused analysis: teachers examining in detail student responses to tasks or activities.

Examples of Assessment tools used at St Brigid's.

Assessment tools	Questioning	Reflective tools	Teacher Observation
Running Records	Think Pair Share	Blogging	Anecdotal records
Criteria for success	Wait time	Voice Thread	Checklists
Research projects	Effective questioning	Reflective journal	Monitoring of online learning tasks through TEAMS.
Annotated work samples	Asking questions	Podcasting	
Written tests	Question Matrix	Reflective questions and prompts	
Multiple choice tests	Bloom's Taxonomy	Learning logs	
Extended response	Solo Taxonomies	Thinking skills	
Group discussion		Peer feedback	
Oral presentation		Two Stars and a Wish	
Written tasks		Plus, minus, interesting	
Portfolios		Traffic Lights	
Graphic organisers		De Bono's Thinking Hats	
Concept maps			
Concept mapping			

Making Judgements

Teachers at St Brigid's use approaches such as individual and class success criteria and quality annotations to make judgements and provide feedback to students. This can also be achieved through conferencing. Further information on making judgements appears below under the heading Consistency of Teacher Judgement.

Moderation

The moderation of assessment tasks occurs on a number of informal and formal levels at St Brigid's.

- *A degree of moderation occurs during the planning process for units of work: teachers agree on the line of sight between the Achievement Standard, Knowledge, Understanding and Skills, and diverse assessment tasks which are similar in standard.*
- *All year level teachers meet at the end of a short cycle of planning with sample assessment tasks from their class and attempt to establish equity in marking through discussion and annotation.*
- *Cross marking often occurs in year levels.*

• Consistency of Teacher Judgement

- *Consistency of Teacher judgement occurs regularly at St Brigid's. At short cycles of planning, consistency in teaching and learning, which assists consistency of teacher judgement, occurs through collaborative planning, use of a common planning template which requires learning intentions, success criteria; line of sight with the Achievement Standard and commonality of standard in assessment tasks.*
- *A formal intra-school moderation occurs at a nominated date in the year where teachers bring to an Intra-School meeting annotated samples of work "at standard" and "above standard".*
- *The school may also participate in inter-school moderation at a nominated date in the year where staff share with other teachers at their year level annotated samples of work.*

Feedback to Students

At St Brigid's, student self-assessment is regarded as vital to success at school. It involves teachers;

- sharing with students the success criteria for each assessment activity,
- ensuring that students understand the success criteria,

- explicitly teaching students how to apply those criteria to their own work,
- providing students with feedback to help them improve,
- helping students to set learning targets to achieve that improvement.

Peer feedback occurs when students offer each other advice about their work which incorporates reference to;

- what has been done well in relation to the success criteria
- what still needs to be done in order to achieve the success criteria
- advice on how to achieve that improvement or progress.

Teachers who engage students in self-assessment see the responsibility for learning shifting from them to the students, see an increase in student motivation and are able to use the feedback from their students about how they learn to shape future teaching and learning.

• Reporting Student Learning

Whole School Processes

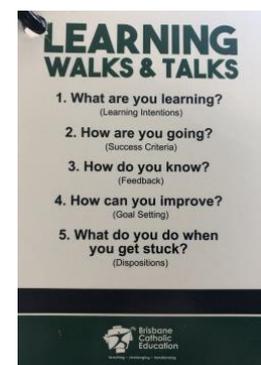
Religious Education is not taught in isolation, it is a curriculum area similar to all other curriculum areas in the school. It is taught, assessed, reported and evaluated in the same way as other subject areas.



Student achievement is recognised and celebrated within our school community in a variety of ways including at informal meetings; one on one feedback to students; parent-teacher meetings; celebrations of learning.

The Student Reporting System (SRS) is Brisbane Catholic Education’s online student reporting tool. SRS facilitates the reporting of student achievement to parents and caregivers by allowing teachers and administrators to create, proofread, edit, verify and publish student reports. As has been noted previously and is evident in the school’s Religion Planning Template, Religious Education is taught and assessed with rigour and is flexible to enable each student to achieve and demonstrate what they have learned.

Further, as part of the school’s commitment to the BCE Excellent Learning and Teaching initiative, the three High Yield Strategies have become part of the teaching and learning of Religion, namely: Data Walls, Review and response and Learning Walks and Talks. Students are becoming familiar with articulating responses to the give questions around their progress and achievement:



Reporting

Twice yearly reporting

Twice yearly reporting judgements are made on a folio of evidence collected during the reporting period. When providing twice yearly written reports, teachers:

- Compare the folio with the achievement standard and student work samples and make a judgement about whether the evidence in the folio reflects the knowledge, understanding and skills in the achievement standard.
- Make a professional judgement about the quality of the evidence using a 5 point scale i.e. Does the evidence show a depth of understanding, sophistication of skill and/or application of knowledge that goes beyond that described in the standard?

A	B	C	D	E
Well above the Australian achievement standard	Above the Australian achievement standard	Australian achievement standard	Below the Australian achievement standard	Well below the Australian achievement standard
Evidence in folio reflects the standard. Reporting judgements reflect the quality of the evidence in terms of the depth of understanding, sophistication of skill and the way in which knowledge has been applied.			Evidence in folio does not reflect the standard	

All students access learning in the Australian curriculum and in the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum P-12 in each of the published learning areas. The achievement standard is read in conjunction with the year level statement, content, general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities at the point of planning. Few, if any students will not be included in the learning and teaching outlined in the year level curriculum. For example, literacy skills of some students may challenge teachers to target their teaching so that these students are able to demonstrate the full extent of their knowledge, understanding and skills. Developing literacy skills are not a reason to limit students' access to the curriculum. Likewise, teachers make adjustments for students with disabilities (e.g. visual impairment) so that the student is able to fully access the learning for the year level.

- **Meaningful, Relevant Learning Experiences**

Resources for the teaching and learning of Religion are varied to allow for multiple ways of knowing and interacting. Digital media and TEAMS platforms, quality literature, hands-on materials and the Catholic Identity tab on SPIRE often form the basis for resource selection. BCE Resource link is also a valuable resource. The APRE will make a point of checking in with teachers at regular intervals to ensure resources remain contemporary and relevant.

Monitoring and Evaluation in RE at St Brigid's

Processes used at St Brigid's for monitoring and evaluating student achievement and development for the whole school, year level, class and individual planning.

• **Processes for Monitoring Student Achievement**

Evaluating Student Achievement

At St. Brigid's, planning and evaluating the effectiveness of assessment processes occurs when:

- Teachers meet during short cycles of planning to plan units of work and to review the previous unit, including assessment tasks and student performance and annotate the unit for the information of teachers the next time the unit is used.
- Assessment data is collected by classroom teachers at the end of a cycle of Teaching and Learning and uploaded to the Staff Portal : Religious Education for each year level. Anecdotal data is also recorded. This allows teachers to record qualitative information about students in addition to the hard data of results. This is particularly useful when considering the impact of the Religious Life of the School on student progress. Using all of this information, teachers reflect on the unit of work and the success of the students in terms of both achievement and progress.
- The APRE, PLL and Classroom Teachers use the BI tool to evaluate the awarding of standards across year levels and at individual class levels. This leads to discussions and professional learning opportunities such as diversity of assessment; depth in tasks to extend students; assessing students with special needs.
- The APRE and the PLL also use the BI tool to evaluate learning and teaching of religion and other curriculum areas in the school. This leads to whole school discussions and professional learning on assessment.

• **Processes for Monitoring the Religious Life of the School**

At St Brigid's Catholic Primary school, both formal and informal processes are used to monitor how well the components of the RLOS are being addressed and taught. Formally, this occurs when the elements of a component are addressed in units of work which are then recorded in the Unit Plans for each year level.

This monitoring also occurs as part of the ongoing formal and informal school renewal processes – for example, when:

- The APRE meets with the Parish Priest and Principal to review and plan liturgical celebrations and prayer rituals in the school.
- The Leadership Team evaluates and reviews the school's annual Prayer and Ritual calendar.

- The Leadership Team discusses and reviews the school’s Social Justice activities.
- The Catholic Identity Team evaluates and reviews the Religious Education and Evangelisation Element of the School Renewal Process, both internal and external.
- The school community undertakes the Enhancing Catholic School Identity (Leuven) Questionnaire and Recommendations.
- The school undertakes a review of its mission statement/prayer policy/school prayer/motto.
- School policies and procedures are reviewed in light of the school’s charism and mission statement.
- The school undertakes to renew its understanding and commitment to the charism of its Patroness.



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