

St. Elizabeth's Parish School

Unity in Diversity

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS

Principal: Ms Christine Ash O.A.M.

111 Bakers Road, Dandenong North

Phone: 9795 5258

Fax: 9790 0933

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The following documentation has been included to inform parents about the progressive and innovative education offered at St Elizabeth's School. Specifically the documentation addresses the following areas

- The philosophy which underpins an education at St Elizabeth's School.
- The dynamic approaches this school undertakes in learning and teaching.
- The innovative advances the school has made in the structure and organisation of the school to promote contemporary successful learning for all our students.
- The approaches taken to promote responsibility, resourcefulness, respect and resiliency in our students.

This prospectus includes the following documents:

1. Principal's Letter of Welcome.
2. School Vision Statement.
3. School Philosophy.
4. School Rationale.
5. Statement Affirming St Elizabeth's Commitment to Teaching Children What It Means to be an Australian Citizen.
6. Structure of the School Curriculum.
7. Features of the School Curriculum.
8. Student Wellbeing and Discipline Policy.
9. Anti Bullying Policy.
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11. School Fees and Charges.

Principal's Letter To Parents

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Elizabeth's School and thank you for considering entrusting us with your child's education.

St. Elizabeth's School is a school committed to the provision of the best possible education for the children within our care and our commitment to this end is unwavering. In all Learning Communities teachers facilitate learning using the most up to date and effective educational practice available with an emphasis on focused teaching at the point of need. In so doing, teachers aim to balance the social, emotional, physical and spiritual needs of students with their potential for learning and the attainment of academic excellence.

In our attempts to build and provide a school environment which supports the attainment of quality learning outcomes for all students, we recognise that a critical partnership exists between home and school. Quality learning outcomes for students are the result when both the home and the school cooperatively support this endeavour. For this reason, St. Elizabeth's School is a "Family Friendly" School. Parents are welcome and encouraged to actively participate in all areas of the life of the school. Involvement in your child's education through participation in class programs, excursions, the Parents and Friend's Group, the Education Board etc. are some of the many ways in which you can support your child's education at this school. In addition to this, at various times during the school year you will be provided with opportunities to learn more about the processes which this school employs in the facilitation of education of your child; information sessions, forums, curriculum workshops, progress interviews etc. Involvement in the life of the school is a personal investment in your child's education and his/her future success.

Children who will begin their first year of schooling in 2018 will work and play, form friendships and begin their families in ways that may surprise and even shock us! Their world of work will be beyond our current imaginings. They may never retire!

In essence, the world for which we prepare our children is largely unknown.

We do however, have very clear understandings of the characteristics of those individuals who will meet with success. In particular our children will need to be;

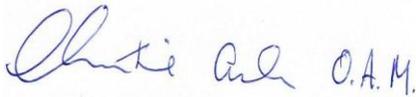
- flexible - able to adapt readily to change,
- social - in possession of those skills which enable them to interact, and work constructively, with people around them,
- multi skilled - it will not be unusual for our children to change their employment many times in their working life or to experience times of unemployment,

- lateral and creative thinkers - our children will need to be able to apply learnings in a variety of contexts and to solve challenges never confronted before, and
- independent, self-disciplined, confident, self-assured, responsible, creative, rational and logical decision makers.

The challenges of the future call on us to prepare our children for a future unlike our own!

St. Elizabeth's School, in partnership with parents, is committed to preparing our children to take their place successfully in the society of the future. For this reason parents should anticipate a progressive education at St. Elizabeth's School. We make this statement with pride and with promise. Pride in the provision of the education currently in place in the school, and promise, that all our staff commit themselves to engaging in a conscious and collaborative effort to maintain a focus on our children, their needs and their right to successful learning outcomes for all.

Again, welcome to our school. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information about an education at St Elizabeth's School.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine Ash O.A.M." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Christine Ash O.A.M.
PRINCIPAL

Vision Statement



St. Elizabeth's Parish School is a Catholic Parish Primary School striving to make faith real in the world for all within our care. Parents and Staff support our students to grow to their full potential as active participating members of the faith community following Christ's example.

Our educational purpose is to meet the needs of the current generation by supporting all our students to become independent and self motivated. We encourage them to be learners who have a deep understanding about themselves, others and the world around them. We strive to develop their capacity to build and maintain relationships and actively and positively contribute to the global community.

As teachers we see ourselves as a community of lifelong learners committed to the provision of innovative learning opportunities for every student. We believe that focused teaching brings about powerful learning. We take advantage of contemporary tools and learning environments to support the provision of relevant, rich and personalised learning opportunities.

School Philosophy

*The future is not some place we are going but one we are creating
The pathways to it are not found but made
And the changing of those pathways changes both the maker
and the destination*

Motto Commission of the Future

The challenge of education in the 21st Century is an awe-inspiring task. It requires professional educators to promote appropriate learning and thereby equip students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to;

- develop a conscious loving relationship with God which impacts on, and influences, their relationships with others,
- take their place successfully in present and future society,
- maintain a belief in the innate dignity and worth of all human beings,
- develop a social consciousness, and
- actively contribute to, and promote, the common good.

In this way we support our students to shape the future.

Education, we believe, must lead to, and help create, a preferred future.

At St Elizabeth's Parish School we are committed to the provision of the best education for each and every student in our care. In meeting these aims we embrace a progressive education and strive to provide exemplary teaching practice.

School Rationale

St Elizabeth's School is a Catholic Parish Primary School that caters for the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, social and creative needs of each child.

St. Elizabeth School is a place where:

- Christian values are nurtured in a caring environment,
- Children grow in love of God, self and others,
- The uniqueness of each individual is valued,
- Children are trained towards self-discipline,
- Individual differences are catered for,
- Children experience a secure and happy learning environment,
- Parents and staff work together in partnership
- Children are taught by teachers who are dedicated to their profession
- Children engage in a comprehensive and purposeful curriculum, and
- There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy.

Statement Affirming St Elizabeth's Commitment to Teaching Children what it means to be an Australian Citizen

At St Elizabeth's we are committed to creating an environment which supports the development of good Australian citizens who have an awareness of the values and systems which underpin our democracy.

We strive to ensure that our children develop:

- an understanding of, and commitment to, Australia's democratic system of government, law and civic life,
- the capacity to clarify and critically examine values and principles that underpin Australia's democracy and the ways in which these contribute to a fair and just society and a sustainable future,
- the knowledge, skills and values that support active citizenship and the capacity to act as informed and responsible citizens,
- an appreciation of the local, state, national, regional and global rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic life,
- an appreciation of the experiences and heritage of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their influence on Australian civic identity and society,
- an appreciation of the uniqueness and diversity of Australia as a multicultural society and a commitment to supporting intercultural understandings within the context of Australian democracy,
- an understanding of the ways in which citizens and governments contribute to environmental sustainability in local to global contexts and a commitment to adopting values, behaviours and lifestyles required for a sustainable future,
- an appreciation of the influence of media and information and communication technologies on the views and actions of citizens and governments,
- an understanding of historical perspectives on Australia's development as a democratic nation, and
- an understanding of the ways in which governance structures from other countries are similar to or differ from democracy in Australia.

Implementation

Our Vision statement explains our commitment to supporting and promoting the Principles of Australian democracy. In particular our Christian Religious Education program, our commitment to ensuring that our school culture deepens an understanding of the Australian Values and our work in

teaching to the Australian Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS) show the manner in which we develop this in the school and our reporting to parents, our newsletters, our Prospectus and our school displays all demonstrate our commitment to putting our Civics and Citizenship Statement into practice and to promoting those values in the community.

St Elizabeth's school actively promotes and teaches the values for Australian schooling.

- Care and compassion in caring for self and others.
- Doing your best in seeking to accomplish something worthy and admirable, trying hard, pursuing excellence.
- Fair go - pursuing and protecting the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society.
- Freedom - enjoying all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control and standing up for the rights of others. Honesty and Trustworthiness in being honest, sincere and seeking the truth. Integrity – acting in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensuring consistency between words and deeds.
- Respect - treating others with consideration and regard, respecting another person's point of view.
- Responsibility - being accountable for one's actions, resolving differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contributing to society and to civic life and taking care of the environment.
- Understanding tolerance and inclusion in being aware of others and their cultures, accepting diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others.

St Elizabeth's School Values

In our school:

Mutual Respect: We look after each other and the environment.

Shared Responsibility: We use our choices to make this world a better place.

Social Equality: We are all valued and deserve a fair go.

Self – Discipline: We are all responsible for our own choices.

Cooperation: We encourage each other to work and play together happily.

Just as Jesus taught us.

Structure of the School Curriculum.

St Elizabeth's School is responsive to both the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority as well as the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. At this school we are using the AusVELS Curriculum which incorporates the National Curriculum for English, Mathematics, History and Science and the VELS curriculum for those domains which are still currently being drafted by the national authority.

The development of the Australian Curriculum is guided by the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, adopted by the Ministerial Council in December 2008. The Melbourne Declaration emphasises the importance of knowledge, skills and understandings of learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities as the basis for a curriculum designed to support 21st century learning.

The F-10 Australian Curriculum sets out the core knowledge, understanding, skills and general capabilities important for all Australian students. It describes the learning entitlement of students as a foundation for their future learning, growth and active participation in the Australian community. It makes clear what all young Australians should learn as they progress through schooling. It is the foundation for high quality teaching to meet the needs of all Australian students.

The National Curriculum will also eventually cover the following Domains:

- The Arts
- Health and PE
- Civics and Citizenship
- Economics and Business
- Geography
- Languages
- Technologies.

There are also 3 cross curricular priorities:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders History and Cultures
- Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia
- Sustainability

The Australian Curriculum also includes seven General Capabilities.

These are woven across all the areas of curriculum.

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology capability
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical behaviours
- Intercultural understanding

In Catholic Schools we include a 15th Domain - Religious Education. Learning and teaching in Religious Education is in line with Archdiocesan Policy. Two major resources are used in the planning and implementation of the Religious Education Program; The Guidelines for Religious Education (Catholic Education Office Melbourne) and To Know, Worship and Love texts (Archdiocese of Melbourne.)

In addition to these key learning areas St Elizabeth's School provides a range of programs and approaches designed to support each of our children to develop independence, responsibility, resilience and personal success. We are currently developing our own Developmental Approach to Play Based Learning in years F-2 where the emphasis is on play as a key component of inquiry learning for children in F-2.

We are also a 'You Can Do It' school and we use this program to develop social and emotional skills in our students and resilience.

The National Curriculum Framework in English, Mathematics, Science and History can be viewed online at the ACARA website. www.acara.edu.au

Features of the School Curriculum.

Religious Education

Our religious Education program exists to support each of our children to grow individually in relationship with God and to develop the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that will enable them to take an active role in the faith community and in the contemporary society for which we prepare them. Religious Education is concerned with the development of; relationships, a sense of belonging, and the teaching of gospel values that are lived out in family, friendship and community. Just as faith is a way of life, so we are developing an approach where we look at all aspects of our integrated approach through the lens of our Christian faith. We teach the children that as people of faith they have a unique way in which to make sense of the world and to determine how they can act in that context. Religious Education gives them the knowledge, the skills and the understandings to make their world a better place.

Literacy

Literacy is critical to participation in society and in our school, Literacy covers the skills of reading, writing, spelling, using grammar and punctuation as well as the skills associated with speaking and listening. We also seek to promote a love of literature. Literacy also includes visual literacy, making sense of messages in an electronic form, as well as critical literacy where the author's intent is examined. Literacy is taught explicitly as required as well as being integrated within our inquiry and developmental play based learning programs.

St Elizabeth's staff employ exemplary teaching practice; ascertaining the needs of each individual child through a systematic program of observation and assessment of data pertaining to their learning and then ensuring that each child is challenged at his/her point of need and provided with the individual support and assistance required to achieve quality learning outcomes in literacy.

Mathematics Education

We provide a minimum of 5 hours a week for teaching and learning in Mathematics. Teachers focus on teaching each child at his/her point of need and supporting each child to develop confidence in the understanding and application of numeracy concepts. Mathematics is a focus area for Teacher Professional Learning. Our emphasis is on linking student's learning with the understanding that maths is a critical area of knowledge and skill in the real world. We aim to enable our students to not only understand mathematical concepts but to recognize how they are used in our world and to apply them in problem solving situations based on real life experiences. Successful members of society are confident in their use of mathematical principles and can apply knowledge to solve problems.

Visual and Performing Arts Program

Let us entertain you! This program aims to provide students with opportunities to develop skills and express themselves through the both the Visual Arts - *Art and Craft*, and the Performing Arts – *Dance, Drama and Music*. The work undertaken by students in this area is shared with you in a ***Cross Arts Expo***. The performance provides the students with an opportunity to present the learning they have done during the year to the community using the language of dance, drama and music, The performance is coordinated by teachers but also draws on the skills and talents of students as they work together to present their performance. Many of the performances are scripted, directed and choreographed by the students. These nights are a wonderful celebration of our students' gifts and talents. Children in Years 3-6 may have an opportunity to be involved in the Wakakirri Festival.

Technology Program

St Elizabeth's School integrates technology into all aspects of the curriculum. Years 3-6 students are offered various options to learn with their own e-learning tool. In 2016 we continued to use an iPad provided by parents as our Yr. 6 e-learning tool. We have also provided Year 3 - 5 students with a ChromeBook which is supported by parents through an increased Technology Levy. We have 8 mobile banks of laptops and iPads available to use by all classrooms. Staff use interactive Smart Boards to utilize the very best in software available to us to support student's learning. The current generation of students use technology as their parents were taught to use a pen, technology is something they have grown up with and use daily. Our approach to technology is to give students control over a variety of tools, exploring the capabilities of different tools for different tasks. We also provide specialist classes in all Year levels in Media which encourages students to deepen their knowledge and use of technology both at home and at school. In class, the children use computers to investigate, design, produce and evaluate individual and/or small group projects. Staff are also aware of the responsibilities that go with the use of technology and continually emphasize the importance of the appropriate use of all aspects of technology. No child participates in the 1:1 e-learning program until they have successfully completed the first stage of a 3 stage Learning Tool Licence.

All parents of students in Yrs. 5 /6 are expected to attend a Cyber Safety evening with their children.

We use technology to support our Homework program. As well as Daily Reading, children complete Numeracy tasks using Mathletics 3-6, Study Ladder F-6 and Literacy Planet F-6 for Literacy tasks. Using Technology allows teachers to select tasks appropriate to the needs of each student ensures that students get instant feedback. Research tells us that timely feedback supports learning success for all students. Teachers are also able to keep a very accurate picture of what each child is doing for homework and track their achievement levels.

Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

St Elizabeth's School has a dynamic Chinese Mandarin language program that focuses on both language development and cultural appreciation. The program which is provided for Yrs. 3-6 explores the traditions and history of the Chinese people and students are introduced to Mandarin Chinese as a spoken and written language. China is an emerging nation with strong economic and cultural links to Australia. Knowledge of this huge and fascinating country will help the children open the window to what has been in the past, a hidden treasure and which will be in their future, a significant neighbour.

Physical Education Program

All classes participate in a weekly skills-based program with a specialist teacher. This program aims to develop students' coordination, balance, fitness and ball handling skills that can then be applied to sports and other major games. An intensive swimming program is offered to Levels F, 1 & 2 on an annual basis and Level 3 and 4 enjoy a Tennis program. Level 5 & 6 regularly participate in an inter-school sport program and camp (Yr. 5 / 6). We also offer after school activities such as Auskick and Net-Set-Go. Children from Yrs. 3-6 also have the opportunity to join the St Elizabeth's Netball Club.

We also promote sport and physical activity through special days such as Picnic Sports day, SWEL Week Activity Day and Wellbeing Activity day.

You Can Do It Program

The You Can Do It Program is a capability approach to promoting the achievement and social – emotional wellbeing of young people.

The main purpose of the You Can Do It Program is to support communities, school, and homes in a collective effort to optimize the social, emotional and academic development of all young people.

The Program teaches the Five Foundations for success and happiness, all of which contribute to a child's ability to develop resilience.

- Confidence
- Persistence
- Organization
- Getting Along with Others
- Emotional Resilience

There are 12 ways of thinking or attitudes (called Habits of Mind) that help young people to be confident, persistent, organized, and able to get along with others and to be emotionally resilient. The

12 Habits of Mind are: I accept myself, I take risks, I can be independent, I can do it, I give effort, I work tough, I set goals, I plan my time, I am tolerant of others, I play by the rules, I think first, I am a socially responsible person.

Personalised Learning Plans

A very significant part of our teacher's work during the early weeks of the year is assessment for the purpose of gaining information about student learning and, in particular, the progress each child is making towards the achievement of learning outcomes appropriate for his/her developmental stage and level of schooling. This testing provides us with very valuable information about each student and enables us to plan programs to meet both collective and individual needs. The information gained enables our teachers to teach each child at their point of need thus ensuring that each and every student is challenged appropriately in learning. In some cases students may require extra **support** to achieve the benchmarks appropriate to their stage of schooling and in others they may require **extension** when they have achieved the appropriate benchmarks for their stage of schooling. These students are identified and in conjunction with the class program, **Personalised Learning Plans** are developed to support these students over the year. These plans are coordinated by our Student Wellbeing Coordinator and are implemented with individual students or small groups of students with common needs. This is one very important way in which we fulfil our aim of supporting each and every child at St Elizabeth's School to achieve their full potential.

Student Wellbeing and Discipline

At St Elizabeth's School we are committed to the nurturing and development of each individual child within our care and to the provision of an environment in which students are supported in growth towards healthy autonomy. We clearly understand that a child's ability and willingness to meet the challenges he/she confronts in life are very much linked to his/her sense of self and the valuing of that self. The development and possession of self-confidence and a healthy self-esteem are essential prerequisites for success in life. We also acknowledge that this sense of self-worth in many ways develops as a result of the feedback each child receives from significant adults in his/her life. For this reason at St Elizabeth's School we strive to communicate a belief in the innate goodness of each of our children and in their ability to learn, grow and develop into cooperative, contributing, respectful and responsible members of the community. We believe that all their efforts must be encouraged and affirmed. We believe feedback is more effective than stickers or rewards!

With respect for the dignity of each child we offer choice and ensure that each choice is matched by a corresponding consequence. It is through choice and consequence that we believe that our children learn responsibility and the skills of effective decision making. In this way we ensure that our students understand that as a member of the community we enjoy liberties but that each liberty has a corresponding responsibility.

Inquiry Based Curriculum

The ***Inquiry Based Curriculum*** at St Elizabeth's Parish School is this school's way of organising learning and teaching so that learning is understood to be purposeful relevant and linked to personal interests.

The inquiry-based approach to curriculum provision leads us to offer our own Developmental Play program at F-2 and we also offer Integrated Studies in Yrs. 3-6. Both these approaches are consistent with the development of the students and provide opportunities for students to explore, investigate, experiment and gather information in meaningful contexts. Inquiry based learning involves a strong emphasis on student centred, active learning and on the process of investigation. The prior knowledge, personal interests and experiences of the students are the starting points for investigations and students are encouraged to actively participate in determining ways in which they will gather and process new ideas.

Our inquiry-based approach to curriculum provision enables the learner to;

- take risks,
- be actively involved in the learning process,
- take responsibility for his/her learning,
- develop individual pathways to achieving designated learning outcomes,
- work at his/her own level,
- gain satisfaction/pleasure from learning,
- develop personal interests,
- develop research skills,
- work cooperatively with others,
- take initiative,
- develop attitudes, skills, values and knowledge that will lead to the development of a social conscience and consequent social action,
- develop thinking skills, and
- develop independence and responsibility.

Developmental Learning

Our Developmental Learning Approach is based on research about play based and personalised learning. The Developmental Curriculum attempts to reflect what is known as the ‘whole’ child. Learning is about the academic but it is also about the social, emotional and cultural influences. The play approach is founded on a set of theories and perspectives on children’s development and learning. It recognises that each child has his/her own rate of development and influences from home and society that impact on learning. It also provides a seamless approach to curriculum, based on established interests and access to investigation stations which introduce new interests. We believe a Developmental Approach enables formal learning to be linked to natural development as children make the transition from their early childhood program into their first years of school. We also see a need to introduce children to tasks based in the Investigation Stations that will prepare them for a greater degree of independent learning as they prepare to move to Year 3.

Mistakes are Part of Learning

At St. Elizabeth’s we believe learning is a risk-taking process. We believe that mistakes are opportunities to learn. Unless children are confident that they can ‘have a go’ they will never achieve their best.

Student Wellbeing and Discipline

*“The integral formation of the human resource is the purpose of education ...
developing strong and responsible individuals,
who are capable of making free and correct choices.”*

Lay Catholics: Witness to Faith, n.17

Introduction:

St. Elizabeth's School is a Catholic Parish Primary School committed to the development of the whole person and to the provision of a school environment that nurtures the growth of all individuals towards full maturity as participating members of the community.

Goals:

The goals of our approach to student wellbeing and discipline are:

- Create a school environment which demonstrates a commitment to the following values:
 - Cooperation
 - Self-Discipline
 - Shared Responsibility
 - Mutual Respect
 - Social Equality

- Provide students with the opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that will enable them to participate fully and effectively in society and the workplace.
- Support students to appreciate individual difference and develop an understanding and appreciation of different cultures and lifestyles existing in the community and the wider Australian society.
- Provide an environment that promotes a healthy self-esteem, confidence and a sense of responsibility for self.
- Provide experiences whereby students gain a feeling of self-worth, develop confidence in their individual identity and grow toward self-discipline.
- Provide a school environment in which all students are able to participate and feel safe, welcome and valued for their contribution and effort.
- Develop learning and teaching practices which enable every individual to develop to his/her full potential.

Principles Underlying Goal Achievement

We believe our goals are best achieved through the establishment of a school climate that promotes the development of 4 Rs in students:

- Respect - Believing that all people have equal worth and equal claim to being treated with dignity and kindness.

Our students are encouraged to have consideration for the feelings of others. They are expected to treat others fairly and to expect respect in return. We believe that students become respectful when treated with respect.

- Responsibility - Accepting one's accountability, not blaming others, becoming reliable and trustworthy and seeing themselves as a primary cause of their own decisions and actions.

Our students are encouraged to develop self-control and self-dependability. They are encouraged to contribute to the wellbeing of the school, to be helpful and to participate willingly in the life of the school. We believe that students become responsible when given responsibility.

- Responsiveness - Having concern and caring for others and cooperating with them, evoking a strong sensitivity to the feelings of self and others as well as an empathetic awareness of family, school, community, nation and world.

Our students are encouraged to be friendly, cooperative, loving and affirming. We believe that students become responsive when treated fairly with love and respect.

- Resourcefulness - making use of one's talents and skills, fostering the ability to devise innovative ways of meeting new situations, seeing these as a positive challenge and using internal resources as well as the assistance of others to solve problems.

Our students are encouraged to take care of themselves, to develop independence and self-reliance, to develop their relationships across a broad range of people and to meet the challenges which confront them with confidence. We believe that students become resourceful when permitted to solve life's challenges.

In stating the above principles we recognise the importance of the development of a healthy and confident self-image, a sense of belonging and the fostering of authentic self-discipline.

*“Self-esteem is a quiet sense of self respect, a feeling of self-worth ...
with high self-esteem you don't waste your time impressing others;
you already know you have value”*

Definitions:

Inappropriate Behaviours

At St Elizabeth's Parish School we define inappropriate behaviours as behaviours which violate self; others or the social order i.e. agreed and established expectations of behaviours. We further recognise that many of our students may lack knowledge and skill resulting in inappropriate choice and action.

Professional Code of Practice:

As professional educators we recognise our responsibility to support our students to develop responsible behaviours through maintaining the following beliefs and practices;

- Fostering the values of justice, love and respect by modelling appropriate behaviours and developing warm, supportive and positive relationships with students.
- Developing close partnerships between home and school and supporting parents in their understanding of relevant school philosophy, policy and practice.
- Displaying sensitivity to the home environment and the effects critical family events have on a students' behaviours.
- Establishing and maintaining high expectations of student behaviours.
- Promoting self-discipline through the recognition of consequences for choices.
- Identifying and acknowledging appropriate behaviours using encouragement.
- Providing class meetings as a forum for the discussion of issues of student/teacher concern, a vehicle for group decision making and the establishment of social order i.e. agreed behavioural expectations.
- Maintaining a school and classroom climate which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.
- Establishing a school and classroom climate which promotes cooperation rather than competition.
- Establishing a school and classroom climate which is safe, structured and orderly.

Assumptions underlying behaviours

Our beliefs about, and understandings of, student behaviours at St Elizabeth's School reflect the psychology of Alfred Adler (1870 – 1937) titled Individual Psychology. The following principles provide the basis for our beliefs about behaviours;

- Belonging is the most innate need.
- All behaviour has social meaning.
- Behaviours exist for a purpose.
- Humans are essentially active decision makers.
- “Lifestyle” (an individual’s cognitive belief about how he/she belongs) is unique.
- Discouragement underlies all inappropriate behaviours.

Practices and Strategies:

Inappropriate Behaviours

At St Elizabeth's Parish School we believe that inappropriate behaviours are behaviours that violate self, others or the social order. It should not be confused with a lack of skill or behaviour students are not aware is inappropriate.

We believe that behaviour is goal oriented and that it exists for a purpose and seeks to gain a particular reaction/response from the individuals to whom it is directed. There are four goals of inappropriate behaviours and in descending order each represents a growing discouragement and decreasing self-esteem in the student.

The four goals of inappropriate behaviours are:

- Attention
- Power
- Revenge
- Withdrawal

Examining an individual's feelings and reactions to inappropriate behaviours can identify goals of the inappropriate behaviours. An individual's reaction to the inappropriate behaviours may be in line with the purpose for which the behaviours exist. Reacting to inappropriate behaviours therefore may reinforce those behaviours. Teachers will act upon rather than react to behaviours deemed to be inappropriate by ensuring consequence for choice.

Encouragement

At St Elizabeth's Parish School we believe in the innate goodness of every human being and uphold the unconditional acceptance of each individual. In supporting a strong sense of belonging for all within the community we maintain the following beliefs and principles:

- An encouraged person possesses the courage to accept him/herself unconditionally.
- To encourage means to give heart to a person.
- Encouragement is different to praise; encouragement recognises contribution and effort while praise is an external reward for a well done task.
- Discouragement underlies all inappropriate behaviours.

In our efforts to promote belonging through encouragement we recognise that there are three common sources of discouragement which we seek to minimise in our school.

- Negative reactions.
- Conditional acceptance.
- Competition.

We promote a strong sense of attachment and belonging for all students by engaging in the following encouragement strategies:

- Having realistic expectations.
- Giving responsibility.
- Valuing risk taking.
- Teaching new skills.
- Building on assets and strengths.
- Viewing mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Emphasising process not product; the activity rather than the result.
- Unconditional acceptance.

Consequences

At St Elizabeth's Parish School we believe that responsible behaviours develop when students are given the opportunity to make choices and experience the consequences of those choices. We believe that this practice stimulates students to become more responsible for their individual behaviours and increases self-discipline.

There are two types of consequences;

1. Natural ~ reflect the reality of the situation, and
2. Logical ~ reflect the reality of the social order; the agreed expectations of behaviours.

Natural consequences represent the routine effects of reality of the natural flow of events without interference from teachers e.g. a student who fails to return a parental permission slip cannot go on an excursion, a student who continually leaves his/her lunch at home goes hungry. It is the natural order or reality of the situation which impresses the student, the teacher is not involved and adopts the role of the friendly bystander; "I am sorry that you cannot go on the excursion but you know what to do for the future."

Logical consequences are guided and arranged by the teacher in consultation with the class group and allow the reality of the social order to impress the child rather than the authority of the teacher. Consequences are appropriately utilised when the student has prior knowledge that his/her choice will result in a particular consequence. Consequences when applied effectively satisfy the following criteria:

- Reasonable - uncomfortable, unpleasant but not extreme, suffering is not conducive to the learning process.
- Related - logically related to the behaviours, makes sense.
- Respectful - no moral judgment implied, treats student with dignity and respect.

Class Meetings

At St Elizabeth's Parish School we believe that class meetings are the vehicle for decision making in our classrooms. We believe that joint decision making between teachers and students fosters shared responsibility and cooperation and promotes all of the values which underlie our student welfare and discipline policy. We recognise in our democratic classrooms that the authority of the group replaces the authority of the adult but maintain the teacher as an important leader of the group.

Class Meetings aim to:

- Assist students to understand themselves and each other.
- Stimulate students to help each other.
- Establish the social order (group rules) of the class.
- Establish the consequences for inappropriate behaviours.

Meetings comprise a balance of:

- Encouragement.
- Planning.
- Problem Solving.
- Training.

The specific guidelines for running classroom meetings that must be adhered to are:

- Group consensus is essential.
- Meetings should comprise a balance of Encouragement, Planning, Problem Solving and Training.
- Class Meetings for senior students are held weekly for 30 minutes.
- Class Meetings for junior students are held 2 – 3 times weekly for 10 – 15 minutes.
- Meet at regularly scheduled times and adhere to time limits.
- When problem solving, issues are pinpointed and discussed, not events.
- When problem-solving, issues should not be personalised and names should not be used.
- Don't allow monopolisers.
- The teacher should be an equal member of the group.
- Encouragement may be personalised and names used.
- Agendas should be compiled before each meeting and minutes of the meeting kept.
- Evaluate meetings periodically.
- Put agreements into action.

Restorative Practices

An integral aspect of the whole school approach to wellbeing and discipline is the use of Restorative Practice. Restorative Practices describe a range of approaches used to reduce harm and to fix ‘the damage’ caused by incidents.

Restorative Practice is about teaching and modelling ways in which young people can be effective citizens. Restorative Justice in the school setting views inappropriate behaviour, not as school rule breaking, but instead as harm done to relationships within the school community.

The fundamental concepts of Restorative Justice are:

- Misbehaviour is a violation of people and relationships.
- Violations create obligations and liabilities.
- Restorative Justice seeks to heal and put things right.

Restorative Justice means ‘that the harm done to people and relationships needs to be explored and that harm needs to be repaired’ *Cameron & Thorsborne 1999*.

The Restorative Justice philosophy is based on listening, skill enhancement, relationships, maximizing affect / emotions, accountability and empowerment.

The affective questions used in restorative practice focus on specific behaviours or incidents without blaming. Restorative practice uses ‘relational questions’ to draw out who was affected and how they were affected and directs questions toward problem solving and what needs to be done ‘to make things right’.

Individual Support Plans

At St Elizabeth’s Parish School we recognise that individual students may require specialised support as they strive to meet the challenges that confront them at school and in making appropriate choices about their behaviours. Individual Support Plans are developed for students who are, as a result of the referral process/protocol in the school, identified as “at risk” due to repeated inappropriate behaviours. An Individual Support Plan is developed in the context of a Student Support Group and is, therefore, developed in conjunction with the individual student and the parents/guardians of that student. The aim of the Individual Support Plan is to provide a student with focused and intensive assistance to address the issues of self-esteem and responsible behaviours.

An Individual Support Plan is goal oriented and addresses targeted inappropriate behaviours. The Individual Support Plan has a major emphasis on encouragement and is aimed to build a student's self-esteem and consequently modify the motivation for inappropriate behaviours. Whilst encouragement is the focus, the student is held accountable for inappropriate decisions which result in inappropriate behaviours and agreed consequences apply.

The Individual Support Plan has duration of 2 weeks. Contact is made with parents/guardians at the end of the first week to discuss progress towards goal achievement and a formal evaluation meeting is held at the end of the second week. The student may attend this meeting. The Student Support Group will make decisions about discontinuation, continuation and/or modification of the plan. It is not intended that the Individual Support Plan be an ongoing feature of support for the student.

Conclusion:

St Elizabeth's Parish School is a school which recognises the innate goodness of every individual. Our policies and practice embrace this belief and aim to assist students in growth towards healthy autonomy. At all times the valuable partnership which exists between home and school is valued and promoted, and we recognise that parents play a vital role in the education of their children. Through the application of this ***Student Wellbeing and Discipline Policy*** we aim to support our students in becoming responsible, resourceful, respectful and responsive human beings. In promoting the establishment of appropriate values and the development of appropriate understandings about life, people and relationships we believe we assist our students to look forward to, with optimism and hope, a bright, positive and successful future.

*“Healthy people see themselves as liked, wanted, accepted, able and worthy.
Not only do they feel they are people of dignity and worth,
but they behave as though they were.”*

Hamacheck (1976)

Discipline Protocol

Classroom Targeted Behaviours

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for the environment.

The following steps will be followed by teachers if a student chooses not to engage in one or other of the targeted behaviours.

If a student engages in a targeted behaviours teacher states:

- “(Name) I see you have chosen to.....you have lost your right to be part of our group please go into the time out area in our room for 5 minutes. You may then come back and try again.”

Repeat of a targeted behaviours:

- “(Name) I see you have chosen to ... you have lost your right to be part of our group please go into ... (*Teacher names another classroom*) for 10 minutes. You may then come back and try again.”

Second repetition of targeted behaviours:

- “(Name) I see you have chosen to ... you have lost your right to be part of our group please go to the school office for the remainder of this period of time up until the next break. You may then come back and try again.

(At this point a letter will be sent home to parents seeking their assistance in support of the child. Parents will be asked to contact the classroom teacher.)

Repeated inappropriate behaviours will result in the establishment of a Student Support Group comprised of the student, his/her parents, the class teacher and Principal/Principal's delegate. The function of this group will be to develop a school/home based Support Plan to support this student in the development of acceptable behaviours and to monitor the student's progress. The frequency and duration of meetings of the Student Support Group will depend on the expressed needs and progress of the individual student.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

St. Elizabeth's School is a Catholic Parish Primary School committed to the development of the whole person and to the provision of a school environment that nurtures the growth of individuals towards maturity. It is a school that strives to enable individuals through the promotion and development of the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that will enable them to successfully belong, and participate in all facets of society. Inherent in this quest is the development of a school climate that promotes the development of 4Rs in students:

- RESPECT
- RESPONSIBILITY
- RESPONSIVENESS
- RESOURCEFULNESS

(refer to page 19 for definitions)

Rationale:

Our *Anti Bullying Policy* is based on the following principles:

- All individuals have a right to feel safe and secure.
- All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect.
- All individuals have a right to work and play in safety and without interference.

In stating the above beliefs we recognise the importance of the development of a healthy and confident self-image, a sense of belonging and the fostering of authentic self-discipline.

At St. Elizabeth's School we define inappropriate behaviours as behaviours which violate self; others or the social order i.e. agreed and established expectations of behaviours. We further recognise that many of our students may lack knowledge and skill resulting in inappropriate choice and action. Whatever the derivation of inappropriate behaviours, the school recognises its responsibility to support students through education in the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills which underlie effectiveness in building and maintaining relationships.

Definition:

Bullying is repeated intimidation, over time of a physical, verbal or psychological nature of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or groups of persons.

Rigby & Slee 1996

At St Elizabeth's School we maintain that *Bullying* involves an imbalance of strength, physical or psychological and occurs when one individual in his/her attempts to gain a sense of personal wellbeing /superiority engages in behaviours which seek to elevate him/herself above another. For some individuals feelings of inadequacy, of internal discouragement and fear of rejection have resulted in a faulty sense of belonging and an inability to establish and maintain relationships built on trust and respect. For other individuals, ego centeredness/self-importance and a focus on "being the best" result in self-elevation. For this individual, social interest is lacking and his/her belonging to the world is expressed through elitism. We believe that participation in behaviours which could be categorised as *bullying* is indicative of an individual who possesses low self-esteem and/or a lack of social interest and seeks to gain a sense of worth/belonging through elevation over others; putting others down in order to promote self.

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain, fear or discomfort to another;

- it can take many forms; physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion,
- it is an abuse of power,
- it can be planned and organised or may be unintentional, or
- individuals or groups may be involved.

Some examples of *bullying* include:

- any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing etc.,
- interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying,
- using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families,
- using put-downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements,
- writing offensive notes or graffiti about others,
- making degrading comments about another's culture, religion or social background,
- hurtfully excluding others from a group,
- making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse,
- ridiculing another's appearance, or
- forcing others to act against their will.

If we are *bullied*:

- we may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated,
- our work, sleep, and ability to concentrate may suffer,
- our relationships with our family and friends may deteriorate, or

- we may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem.

We have identified seven elements in *bullying*:

1. A desire to inflict hurt.
2. That desire is expressed as a physical or verbal action.
3. The action is hurtful and plays upon student (victim) vulnerability.
4. There is power inequality.
5. The actions are without justification although the bully may try to present an argument.
6. The actions or bullying behaviours are repeated.
7. There is evident enjoyment felt by the bully.

We believe the following to be characteristic of individuals who *bully*:

Some are outgoing, aggressive and get their way by brute force or open harassment. Others may not want to be recognised as tormentors and get their power discreetly through smooth talking, cunning, manipulation and deception and anonymity (cyber bullying). As different as these two types may be they have some characteristics in common, such as wanting power over others; using and abusing other people to get what they want; and difficulty seeing things from someone else's perspective.

Other characteristics may include:

- Lacking empathy.
- Insecure.
- Impulsive.
- Manipulative.
- Low academic performance.
- Perceived inability to meet own or others expectations.
- Aggressive.
- Verbal.
- Dominating.
- Arrogant.
- Physically strong.
- Disruptive.
- Easily provoked.

- Lacking self-discipline.
- Subversive.

School Action Re Bullying

In a *bullying* situation two or three parties may be involved; 1. The Bully/ies 2. The Victim/s 3. The Bystander/s

The Victim/s

Research (Rigby & Slee 1993) tells us that there are classic characteristics of “victims” which provide/promote opportunities for bullying to take place.

The following are common characteristics:

- Physically less strong than others.
- Timid, non-assertive.
- Introverted.
- Low self-esteem.
- Few friends.

These characteristics are general and do not include students who experience harassment/bullying as a result of some social characteristic e.g. they belong to a minority ethnic group or possess a personal/individual characteristic which others perceive as “different.”

At St. Elizabeth’s School, we skill and support our students not to be “victims,” encouraging students to utilise the following strategies:

- Teach Students to Make a Reply: Telling students to ignore bullying and to just walk away can actually inflame the situation. Experts agree that a passive or distressed reaction can act as an encouragement to bullies - this is exactly the reaction they are looking for. Students should always make some sort of reply. They should make a strong “I” statement but they still need to walk away and inform a teacher if the behaviours continue. Statements like, “I don’t like being treated like that, don’t do that to me” are appropriate.
- Physical Signals: Physical signals, such as walking erectly, standing confidently and looking the bully/ies in the eye are also effective strategies.

The Bystander/s

Bullying usually involves more than the bully and victim. Most episodes of bullying occur in the context of a peer group. Whilst most bystanders watching bullying may feel uncomfortable, research indicates that peers assume many roles in a bullying episode: joining in, cheering, passively watching and occasionally intervening. We recognise that peers who form the audience for bullying may be critical figures in both starting and continuing a bullying experience. Peers tend to give positive attention to the bully, rather than the victim. Their reinforcement of the bully may serve to maintain the bully's power over the victim and within the peer group.

Harm Minimisation

At St. Elizabeth's School we minimise the potential for episodes of *bullying* by:

- Fostering the values of justice, love and respect by modelling appropriate behaviours to students and developing warm, supportive and positive relationships with students.
- Developing close partnerships between home and school and supporting parents in their understanding of relevant school philosophy, policy and practice.
- Establishing and maintaining high expectations of student behaviours.
- Promoting self-discipline through the establishment and application of consequence for choice.
- Identifying and acknowledging appropriate behaviours using encouragement.
- Establishing a school and classroom climate that promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.
- Establishing a school and classroom climate that promotes cooperation rather than competition.
- Providing class meetings / circle time as a forum for:
 - the discussion of issues of student/teacher concern e.g. bullying,
 - a vehicle for group decision-making,
 - training and skilling students to deal with the challenges they confront in life e.g. conflict resolution, responses to bullying behaviours,
 - the establishment of school/classroom social order i.e. agreed behavioural expectations,
 - Establishing a school and classroom climate that is safe, structured and orderly,
 - displaying sensitivity to the home environment and the effects critical family events have on a students' behaviours,
 - explicitly promoting and actively supporting a school climate in which students are encouraged to report perceived incidences of bullying i.e. "*It's okay to tell.*"
 - using Restorative Practices to repair the harm done.

Use of Sanctions

In the event of any *act of bullying*, as described in this document, the school will take the following steps:

- Student who experiences or observes “*perceived bullying*” reports incident to a “designated teacher.” The school will establish and train “designated teachers” to deal with instances of *bullying*.
- Mediation will take place between the students involved. If *bullying* behaviour is *established* the incident/name of the student/s involved in *bullying* behaviours will be recorded on school records.
- If a second incident of “*established bullying*” occurs this student is removed from the playground for a period of one week and will be supervised by staff for the duration of this period. The statement made to this student will be, “*You have lost your right to play on the playground because you have chosen to (describe behaviours) and therefore cannot guarantee the safety of other students. In one week you can try again.*” Parents will be notified of this step taken by the school.
- If a third incident of “*established bullying*” occurs this student will be removed from the playground and suspended from school for one day or a designated period of time negotiated with and agreed to by the student’s parents. A third incident will involve the establishment of a *Student Support Group* comprised of the student, his/her parents, the class teacher and Principal/Principals’ delegate. The function of this group will be to develop a school/home based Action Plan to support this student in the development of socially acceptable behaviours and to monitor the student’s progress. The frequency and duration of meetings of the *Student Support Group* will depend on the expressed needs and progress of the individual student.

Conclusion

St. Elizabeth’s School is a school that recognises the innate goodness of every individual. Our policies and practice embrace this belief and aim to assist students in growth towards healthy autonomy. At all times the valuable partnership which exists between home and school is valued and promoted. Through the application of this *Anti-Bullying Policy* we aim to support our students in becoming responsible, resourceful, respectful and responsive human beings. In promoting the establishment of appropriate values and the development of appropriate understandings about life, people and relationships we believe we assist our students to look forward to, with optimism and hope, a bright, positive and successful future.

Anti Bullying Policy - Student / Teacher Protocol

If a student comes to a teacher either on the playground or in the classroom and reports an incident of bullying, the teacher is to ask:

“Did you make a reply?”

- If the response is YES the teacher is to say –

“Tell me what you said” and “Show me how you said it”

If the teacher is satisfied with the response he/she records the names of those involved in the yard duty folder where it will be handled by one of the designated teachers.

- If the response is NO the teacher is to direct the student saying –

“The next time this happens to you, stand up straight and tall, look at the person, hold your hand in a stop signal and say,

Stop, don't do that to me, I don't like it! (Junior)

Stop, I don't like being treated like that, don't do that to me again! (Senior)

And then walk away.”

The teacher is then to indicate that if the above step is taken and the bullying continues the student must come back and tell the teacher on duty or their classroom teacher depending on where the incident occurred. Once again, the names need to be recorded in the yard duty folder where it will be handled by one of the designated teachers.

Feedback is given to staff on a regular basis identifying any patterns in bullying /victims.

School Structure and Organisation

“In the 21st century Australia’s capacity to provide a high quality of life for all will depend on the ability to compete in the global economy on knowledge and innovation. Education equips young people with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to take advantage of opportunity and to face the challenges of this era with confidence”.

Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for young Australians

The challenge of education in the 21st Century is an awesome task as it requires professional educators to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to take their place successfully in the society of the future.

At St. Elizabeth’s School we are committed to the provision of the best possible education for the children within our care; and our commitment to this end is unwavering. In all classrooms teachers are dedicated to facilitating your child’s learning utilising the most up to date and effective educational practice available.

We see our task of education as supporting your child to develop socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually and academically.

No one area is more important than the other and we believe progress in all areas leads to the development of a well-rounded and balanced human being.

At St Elizabeth’s School our pursuit of educational excellence is linked with the development of the “whole child.” It is to the achievement of this objective that we, at St. Elizabeth’s School, are committed. All policies, programs and general approaches to learning and teaching flow from this.

If we are to prepare children for success, what are the implications? In answering this question perhaps it would be better to ask, ***“What are the characteristics and qualities of people who will meet with success in society?”***

The *Commission for the Future* informs us that the following characteristics apply:

- flexible; able to adapt readily to change,
- positive about change,
- organised, active and purposeful,
- social; in possession of the skills which enable them to interact, and work constructively, with people around them,

- people who have a “we” attitude (cooperative not competitive),
- self-confident,
- multi skilled and lifelong learners; it will not be unusual for our children to change their employment up to five times in their working life or to experience times of unemployment,
- innovative,
- people who plan,
- people who take and share responsibility,
- lateral thinkers; our children will need to be able to apply learnings in a variety of contexts and to solve challenges never confronted before, and
- people who are autonomous, confident, self-assured, responsible, creative, rational and logical decision makers.

This list is by no means entire but represents many of the important factors, which contribute to personal success.

When do individuals acquire these attributes?

At St. Elizabeth’s School we believe that we share responsibility with parents for ensuring that our children experience the opportunity to develop the attributes of successful people. We maintain that this occurs through sensitive structuring of the school environment and the classroom learning environment aimed at achieving these outcomes.

The nature of schools and schooling today is vastly different to the type and nature of schooling that many of us experienced in our early years. This is appropriately so, for the needs of the learner today are very different from those of the past. ***If we educate our children today in the same way we were educated then we prepare them for a world that no longer exists and as such we do them a disservice.***

Educators today are far more knowledgeable of the learning process and possess a much greater awareness of the needs of the learner. Teachers, too, are far more skilled in structuring a learning environment conducive to meeting the needs of the individual child and challenging each student appropriately at his/her point of need. We are committed to this practice at St Elizabeth’s School.

In the past schools have been based on 4 basic assumptions

1. Children learn in the same way.
2. Children take the same amount of time to learn.
3. Children of the same age have the same needs.

4. Children who don't learn the same amount in the same amount of time are “failing” students.

For many of us these assumptions created the basis for the type of schooling we experienced. Children of the same age placed in the same grade, given the same work to do in exactly the same amount of time ... if you finished early you were given something else to do and if you didn't finish you had to stay in at playtime or lunch time to do it! How well many of us would remember those days.

These assumptions about learning are wrong.

Children do not all learn in the same way. Today teachers utilise a number of different strategies to assist an individual student's learning. Some children take longer to learn some things than others and some children learn some things faster than others. Children come to the learning situation with a variety of experiences, attitudes and skills. As a result of this their individual needs are very different. At St Elizabeth's School we are strongly committed to the belief that, given ***the appropriate support and time all children are capable of reaching appropriate standards and benchmarks and developing to their full potential.***

This philosophy clearly has implications for school structuring and classroom organisation.

The development of a school philosophy, however, is not based on beliefs alone. In addition to these, as professional educators, we consult research and educational expertise to assist in the development of school policy. In relation to the structure of schooling the research is extensive and conclusive;

“The most critical factors in student learning are the quality of the relationship between the student and the teacher and the effectiveness of the teaching experienced by each student.”

Hill & Crevola 2000

The most recent research available to us indicates that it is not school structure that impacts on student learning but ***what teachers do in classrooms*** which has the most significant impact.

Past and present research indicates the following in relation to the issue of straight classes versus multi-age classes:

Research on Cognitive Development

- No significant difference in academic achievement (Schrankler 1976).
- No significant difference on tests of basic skills in reading, maths, language and study skills (Way 1980).
- No significant differences in reading and mathematics but children in cross age classes scored significantly higher on vocabulary tests (Milburn 1981).

- No significant difference in academic achievement in literacy or numeracy (Victorian Quality Schools Project 1996).
- No significant difference in academic achievement in literacy & numeracy (Literacy Advance Research Project 2000).

Research on Affective Development

- Children in multi age groupings had more positive self-concepts and self-esteem.
- They were more independent, developed more positive attitudes to work and took responsibility for their learning.
- The children were better adjusted and accepted others more readily.
- There was greater emphasis on the individual.
- They had more opportunities to form relationships with a wider variety of children.
- They developed attitudes & qualities such as being a leader and a follower, developing respect and the ability to work together.

Clearly this research indicates that whilst school structure has no significant impact on cognitive or academic learning it does have an impact on other significant aspects of a child's learning at school. The research tells us that children develop many personal qualities and social skills when we group them across age.

At St Elizabeth's School we are very committed to creating authentic purpose for our children's learning. We believe our children learn best when it makes sense to them and they can see a link between their learning and life. Interestingly schools are the only place that group people according to their age. When we looked into the reasons why this was so we found that grouping children according to age was initiated in the 18th Century when mass schooling was introduced. In other words it happened because it was administratively easier to group the enormous number of children presenting for school according to their age.

If we as a community are serious about preparing our young people to take their place successfully in society then we have a responsibility to provide them with an environment in which those competencies can develop. St. Elizabeth's School, in partnership with parents, is committed to this outcome and for this reason, parents should anticipate a progressive education at St. Elizabeth's School. The challenges of the future call on us to prepare our children today!

Curriculum provision at St Elizabeth's School is informed by the National Curriculum, AusVELs and Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) which indicates standards and benchmarks to be achieved at particular levels of schooling for all key learning areas in primary education. These documents form frameworks which guide teacher expectations and support the development of all

programs at St Elizabeth's School. Teachers also consult this document when they are developing learning programs for each student in the school. In this way we can ensure that each child is appropriately challenged in his/her learning. We are very much aware that some of our children achieve the standards, some surpass the standards in certain key learning areas and other children may need special support in their progress towards achievement of the standards relevant to their level of schooling. ***At St Elizabeth's School we are committed to teaching each and every child at his/her point of need and ensuring that every child progresses and achieves quality learning outcomes.***

In primary schools the Australian Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS) describes outcomes in relation to 7 years of schooling. We deliver our curriculum in a school organised into 4 levels. We teach children according to their needs not their ages so a multi-age learning community approach suits our vision for all students.

Foundation Learning Community

This is where our youngest children learn. Foundation is the new name given to the first year of formal teaching across Australia. Foundation replaces a lot of terms used to describe this first formative year with one name common to every state and territory. We used to call it Preps.

In Level 1 or Foundation Year, children are expected to achieve the Level F standard in AusVELS assessed.

Year 1 / 2 Learning Community

Our Year 1 & 2 children work together in this learning community.

In terms of academic achievement, children in Year 1 are expected to achieve Level 1 in AusVELS and Level 2 at the end of Year 2.

Year 3 / 4 Learning Community

This is the Learning Community for Year 3 and 4 students. In terms of academic achievement, the intended level to be achieved by children at the end of Year 3 is AusVELS Level 3 and for Year 4 children in AusVELS subjects it is Level 4.

Year 5 / 6 Learning Community

This is the Learning Community for Year 5 and 6 students. In terms of academic achievement, the intended level to be achieved by children at the end of Year 5 is AusVELS Level 5 and for eaYr 6 children in AusVELS subjects it is Level 6.

Year Foundation	2 Home Groups	2 Teachers	Prep
Year 1 & 2	4 Home Groups	4 Teachers working in pairs	Year 1 / 2
Year 3 & 4	4 Home Groups	4 Teachers working in pairs	Year 3 / 4
Year 5 & 6	4 Home Groups	4 Teachers working in pairs	Year 5 / 6

In summary:

Our Learning Community structure:

- supports and reflects our philosophy of education as indicated in this letter to you,
- acknowledges and acts on relevant research about successful student learning and teachers working collaboratively,
- provides, in our professional opinion, the best possible structure to support each child to develop the characteristics of “successful” people by supporting the development of the “whole” person,
- gives greater opportunities for children to relate to each other and their teachers,
- allows teachers to learn from each other whilst they are teaching, and
- provides greater capacity to meet individual needs as there are two teachers sharing groups and targeting particular needs across the Learning Community.

The class structure at St Elizabeth’s School is structured as follows.

	Year of Schooling	AusVELS	Traditional Name
Foundation	1st	F	Prep
Year 1 and Year 2	2 nd & 3 rd	1 & 2	1/2
Year 3 and Year 4	4 th & 5 th	3 & 4	3/4
Year 5 and Year 6	6 th & 7 th	5 & 6	5/6

As parents and teachers we form a very important and valuable partnership. The quality of this partnership will have a significant impact on each of our children’s learning. The research tells us quite conclusively that where parents take an interest and support their child’s education that child does better at school. ***It is critical therefore that our partnership be strong and supportive.***

It is our hope that parents at St Elizabeth’s School will always be open to change in our pursuit of exemplary teaching practice and the provision of the best possible education for each and every child in our care. The world in which these children live is changing on a daily basis and we need to

meet that challenge in a prepared but open manner constantly seeking ways to improve what we do to support our student's learning.

You have our commitment as teachers and leading learners of St Elizabeth's School that we will leave no stone unturned in our pursuit of teaching excellence. we make this statement with pride and with promise, pride in the provision of the education currently in place in the school, and promise; all that will be for the future will be the result of a conscious and collaborative effort to maintain a focus on our children, their needs and the effecting of quality learning outcomes for all.

The school structure we are providing students is, in the light of both educational research and the outcomes to which we are committed to achieving, prudent, educationally sound and an example of our commitment to educational excellence at St Elizabeth's School.

School and Parish Charges 2017

In 2017 families at St Elizabeth's Parish School will pay 5 amounts of money to the school; School Fees, Resource Levy, Technology Levy, School Capital Levy and Maintenance Levy (previously the Working Bee Levy)

In 2017 families at St Elizabeth's Parish School will pay 1 amount of money to the parish; Parish Capital Levy

SCHOOL CHARGES

SCHOOL FEES

\$966 per family per year.

This amount applies irrespective of the number of children in the family attending the school.

RESOURCE LEVY

\$220 per child.

This levy covers all books, materials, resources, incursions and excursions provided at school.

TECHNOLOGY LEVY

\$60.00 per child in Foundation, Yr 1 and, Yr 2.

\$160.00 per child in Yr 3, Yr 4 and Yr 5.

\$210.00 per child in Yr 6.

This levy covers all aspects of school technology that the children will have access to including laptops, Chromebooks, notebooks, pc's and interactive smart boards etc.

SCHOOL CAPITAL LEVY

\$200 per family.

This levy facilitates capital repayments on the school loan which enabled the building of the Performing Arts Centre in 2004.

MAINTENANCE LEVY

\$60 per family.

SACRAMENTAL LEVY

\$25 per child in Yr 3 for Reconciliation.

\$25 per child in Yr 3 for Eucharist.

\$25 per child in Yr 6 for Confirmation.

The Sacramental Program at St Elizabeth's is a Parish based program. Whilst the school supports the Parish through the provision of learning and teaching in Religious Education the Parish assumes the responsibility for the overall preparation of all Parish children (including those in Government Schools). The Sacramental Levy covers the cost of resources and materials, medals, certificates and the expenses associated with activity/reflection days including transport.

OTHER SCHOOL CHARGES 2016

<i>Year 1 & 2</i>	<i>Year 3 & 4</i>	<i>Year 5 & 6</i>
Swimming - \$70 per child	Tennis – \$55 per child	Interschool Sport (Away Matches) - TBA School Camp - \$170 per child

PARISH CHARGES

PARISH CAPITAL LEVY

\$250 per family per year.

This levy is our contributions as a School Community to pay loan repayments on the renovation, remodel and refurbishment of the Church building which we use regularly.