

VOCATIONAL PRACTICES, ELEMENTS, AND DESCRIPTORS

1. EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING

Lutheran schools value excellence and creativity in teaching and learning for all community members. A culture of challenge and support nurtures enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to life-long learning. Excellence in teaching and learning is focused on improving student outcomes which includes the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural and social dimensions. All learners should have access to quality learning experiences that ensures they develop their God-given abilities so that they may enrich the world. High expectations are established through reflective practice, collaborative planning, monitoring, providing feedback and reporting on the effectiveness of learning. The learning environment promotes active engagement, risk taking, motivation, and a strong learner voice.

1.1 Learning

- 1.1.1 Knowledge and understanding of current theories of learning and teaching which include spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural and social dimensions is used to create effective learning environments for student learning.
- 1.1.2 A range of teaching practices and strategies are employed to meet the needs of individual students — ranging from explicit teaching to problem-based approaches, inquiry based learning, collaborative and peer-to-peer learning.
- 1.1.3 The prior learning of students is explicitly taken into account through teaching practices that build on each student's current understandings and knowledge.
- 1.1.4 The teaching environment is organised and structured to maximise time for students to be engaged in learning.
- 1.1.5 Opportunities for engagement in learning through productive individual, student-student, student-teacher interactions are maximised.
- 1.1.6 Whole-class, small-group, and one-to-one teaching is used to maximise learning for students.
- 1.1.7 Students are encouraged to participate in the learning process including having input into what they learn.
- 1.1.8 The pace of student learning, and the methods of learning, are matched to the needs of individual students.
- 1.1.9 Assessment is aligned with the skills and knowledge learnt by students.
- 1.1.10 Strategies are embedded in teaching practice to assess its effectiveness in terms of the enhancement of student learning.

- 1.1.11 Students gain mastery of the skills and knowledge presented through learning experiences, and provision is made for reinforcement and opportunities to consolidate learning in a range of related contexts.
- 1.1.12 The learning environment is organised to develop independent and life-long learners.
- 1.1.13 ICT is integrated to provide and expand meaningful opportunities of learning which otherwise could not be provided.
- 1.1.14 Small-group and one-to-one tutoring is implemented for students requiring additional support.
- 1.1.15 Formative assessment of student progress is used frequently as a basis for informing teaching practice to meet the needs of individual students.
- 1.1.16 Learning environments that encourage students' active engagement and risk taking are constructed.
- 1.1.17 Internal school-based assessment is aligned to the school's curriculum
- 1.1.18 Assessment data is used as direct feedback to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching practice
- 1.1.19 The profile of learning outcomes is monitored across classrooms for sub-groups of students (e.g. girls/boys, gifted, and students with special needs)
- 1.1.20 The school promotes a culture of inquiry and innovation, where creative expression and independent learning are valued
- 1.1.21 The school has high expectations of student learning through the setting of achievable and challenging learning goals and providing opportunities for growth in self-reflection, collaboration and self-direction
- 1.1.22 Staff engage in processes of reflection, collaborative planning, monitoring and reviewing to enhance the quality of teaching experiences.

1.2 Curriculum

- 1.2.1 A curriculum that addresses cognitive (including meta-cognitive) and non-cognitive (affective, social competencies and physical) student learning outcomes is provided
- 1.2.2 Student learning and progress is measured, monitored and reported against student, school and system targets and benchmarks
- 1.2.3 Units of study are designed to provide differentiated pathways.

- 1.2.4 The curriculum is designed to integrate and transfer skills and knowledge across areas of learning
- 1.2.5 Units of study are aligned with the school's curriculum framework.
- 1.2.6 Units of study are designed within a framework that provides opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.

1.3 Wellbeing

- 1.3.1 The school has clearly defined structures and strategies to support the wellbeing of students
- 1.3.2 There are opportunities for students to develop a sense of meaning and purpose in their school life
- 1.3.3 Evidence-informed positive behaviour management approaches are implemented and meet the expectations of the school community
- 1.3.4 Caring relationships are developed between staff and students
- 1.3.5 Caring relationships are developed between students
- 1.3.6 Students feel physically and emotionally safe when they are at school
- 1.3.7 Students are taught skills and understandings about how to be safe in online and communications environments
- 1.3.8 The school provides an orderly social and learning environment
- 1.3.9 Students behave in a responsible self-disciplined way that respects the values of others
- 1.3.10 The school develops the capability of students to be resilient and self-motivated

1.4 School Connectedness

- 1.4.1 Students experience the school as a place where they have many productive and enriching relationships and experiences
- 1.4.2 Students have a range of opportunities to be involved in school decision-making
- 1.4.3 The school provides parents with access to the information and professional advice they require to enhance and support their child's learning
- 1.4.4 Teaching practices integrate strategies to engage the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation of each student to support their cognitive and social development

2. ONGOING IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Improvement in Lutheran schools is guided by the school's values, vision and mission. Excellence is pursued through a culture of reflection collaboration, innovation and creativity in all areas of the school. Evidence is gathered about learning to develop and implement improvement plans and policies for the continuous development of teaching and learning, the school and its facilities. Ongoing professional learning encourages all members of the community to achieve high standards and develop their service and leadership capacity.

2.1 Improvement Focus

- 2.1.1 The school has a clearly articulated vision of school improvement which focuses on its values, vision and mission.
- 2.1.2 Improvement plans and policies are developed from evidence and are reviewed and updated against a documented renewal cycle
- 2.1.3 The documented renewal cycle ensures that policies are reviewed and updated
- 2.1.4 The school has clearly articulated strategies for improving levels of achievement and wellbeing
- 2.1.5 Explicit goals for improvement in student achievement levels have been set and are communicated to parents, staff and the wider community
- 2.1.6 Growth in school enrolments is supported by clearly articulated strategies for improving and expanding school facilities.
- 2.1.7 The school has clearly articulated strategies for improving the effectiveness of teaching
- 2.1.8 The school's renewal cycle clearly articulates a program of curriculum review.
- 2.1.9 There are clearly articulated strategies for the promotion and marketing of the school to its potential client community

2.2 Financial Management

- 2.2.1 The school flexibly targets and manages its resources — financial, physical, human and intellectual
- 2.2.2 The school has clearly articulated processes and strategies for ensuring the school's financial sustainability, including benchmarking.

2.3 Professional learning

- 2.3.1 Team-based learning is evident in professional practice and utilised as a driving force in school innovation and development
- 2.3.2 Significant time and opportunities are allocated for staff to engage in ongoing, professional learning to achieve high teaching standards, and develop their service and leadership capacity.
- 2.3.3 Evidence about student-learning is at the core of professional dialogue and practice
- 2.3.4 Performance management processes identify and support the specific professional development needs of individual teachers

3. STRENGTHENING LUTHERAN IDENTITY

Lutheran schools, as schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia, share a recognisable Lutheran identity in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. The rituals, symbols, visual displays, and practices of the school convey its Christ-centred identity. The school community is regularly involved in Christian worship which includes daily devotions. Christian Studies is an essential and distinctive part of the formal curriculum. Lutheran schools deliberately and intentionally share and live the good news of Jesus Christ with students, families, staff and the broader community. Opportunities for faith nurture are actively promoted and maintained.

3.1 Religious Identity, culture and ethos

- 3.1.1 The school's Lutheran identity is based on the gospel of Jesus Christ, which informs all learning and teaching, and shapes the school's implementation of its curriculum
- 3.1.2 The school demonstrates its Christ-centred identity through religious symbols and visual displays.
- 3.1.3 Members of the school community have opportunities to put Christian values into action
- 3.1.4 The school works with local congregations to present a unified message about the love of Jesus for all people

3.2 Christian practices

- 3.2.1 Students and staff have opportunities to develop their faith
- 3.2.2 Daily devotions for the school community are an integral part of the school's program
- 3.2.4 Students have the opportunity to engage with social and ethical issues from Christian worldviews
- 3.2.5 Christian Studies is an essential part of the curriculum
- 3.2.6 Behaviour management in the school is designed for good order and the learning and wellbeing of students, and is guided by Christian love, forgiveness and reconciliation.

4. COMMUNITY BUILDING

Lutheran schools value the richness and diversity of the school's wider community and other education sectors. Positive and strategic partnerships are developed and maintained with students, families, local Christian communities, the broader community and Lutheran education. The relationships are built upon support, collaboration, trust and reconciliation. The Lutheran school community lives out the gospel and is active in service of others. The multicultural and multi-faith nature of Lutheran education and Australian society fosters understandings of diverse cultures. Lutheran education promotes reconciliation through understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

4.1 Supporting learning

- 4.1.1 The school provides parents with the information and professional advice they require to enhance and support their child's learning
- 4.1.2 The school reports regularly to parents in a readily understood language and format that provides interpretive comments about their child's progress in academic and non-academic areas
- 4.1.3 The school reports against school and state-wide and national standards.

4.2 Developing strategic partnerships

- 4.2.1 The school enhances student learning through partnerships with community networks, local Christian communities including business and industry
- 4.2.2 The school values the richness and diversity of the school, wider community, Lutheran education and other education sectors
- 4.2.3 Parent involvement in their child's learning activities is encouraged and supported
- 4.2.4 Relations with the wider community, based on support, collaboration, and trust are developed.
- 4.2.5 The school is actively involved in providing service to the community.

4.3 Recognising student diversity

- 4.3.1 The needs of specific groups (e.g. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people or refugee and immigrant families, people with a disability) in the school community are recognised and addressed
- 4.3.2 The school's actions and structures respect and support student diversity
- 4.3.3 The school provides opportunities for parent and carer education around issues related to pastoral care and wellbeing

5. LEADING EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

In Lutheran schools, roles, responsibilities and procedures are clearly articulated so that staff can participate in the smooth and efficient operation of the school. Data and knowledge management methods and technologies are used to ensure that the school's resources (human, physical, technological and financial) are efficiently organised and managed to provide an effective, safe and caring, growth oriented learning environment. Strategic planning ensures the ongoing improvement and sustainability of the school. Best practice is built upon effective collaboration between the governing body, staff, students, families, church and others.

5.1 Identity

- 5.1.1 Staff roles, responsibilities and procedures are clearly documented and communicated.
- 5.1.2 The school has a clearly articulated set of organisational values that frame the behaviour of staff, students and parents
- 5.1.3 The school's mission and vision statements align with the strategic intentions of Lutheran Education Australia.
- 5.1.4 Staff, students, parents and other key stakeholder groups are engaged and consulted in the development of the school's mission and vision statement.
- 5.1.5 The school's mission and vision statements are clearly communicated in school brochures, promotional materials and other resources disseminated to the school community.

5.2 Governance

- 5.2.1 The school's resources (human, physical technological and financial,) are efficiently organised and managed to ensure a safe, growth oriented and caring learning environment
- 5.2.2 The leadership team and governance work coherently to respond to current and future opportunities and challenges.
- 5.2.3 The school council articulates the school's goals, direction and accountability frameworks.
- 5.2.4 The school council reviews the school's policies against a documented renewal cycle.
- 5.2.5 The school council adheres to its governing constitution.
- 5.2.6 The school council understands the difference between governance and management and the operation of the school reflects this

5.3 Leadership

- 5.3.1 The school's executive team articulates the school's direction through long-term, mid-term, and short-term plans.
- 5.3.2 The school council and/or parents association, staff, students, families and congregation/s work collaboratively to achieve the outcomes of the school's strategic plan.
- 5.3.3 Leadership at all levels effectively uses strategic planning and risk management processes to support the school's ongoing improvement and sustainability.
- 5.3.4 Leadership at all levels behaves ethically and builds trust.
- 5.3.5 The school has a clearly articulated set of succession plans that support staff to aspire to leadership positions both within and beyond their current context
- 5.3.6 The school has a clearly articulated business continuity plan to facilitate recovery after a critical incident.
- 5.3.7 The school embraces the practices of knowledge management in retaining corporate knowledge and making it available in an on time, current and an easily accessible form.