



## Catholic Special Character

The special character of a Catholic school is defined in each school's Integration Agreement:

"The school is a Roman Catholic school in which the whole school community, through the general school programme and its religious instructions and observances, exercises the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ. These values are as expressed in the Scriptures and in the practices, worship and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, as determined from time to time by the Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese."

**The Board of Trustees, as obligated under the Integration Act, undertakes to promote and preserve the special character of our school.**

Sacred Heart College is a community where gospel values are central, faith is nourished, and Christian celebration in the Catholic tradition is highly valued.

See information about our Catholic Special Character on our website.

### Spirituality

At Sacred Heart College, we promote and nurture the individual and communal spirituality of the whole school community.

- Students experience devotional, traditional, liturgical, imaginative, and contemplative forms of prayer as set out in the Religious Education Curriculum Statement for Catholic Primary Schools.
- A prayer focus is established in each classroom, and students are encouraged to maintain and respect this area.

### Social justice

Social justice teaching is an essential part of religious education. In keeping with the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church emphasises meeting human needs caused by poverty, oppression, exploitation, and injustice.

### Evangelisation

The school is a faith community, which proclaims the gospel as a means of bringing people to Christ.

- All members of Sacred Heart College are encouraged to be examples of Christians living in faith and service.
- The school values knowledge and understanding of scripture and the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- All members of the school community are expected to know about the school's unique Catholic special character, traditions, and founding history.

### Partnership

Education is a collaborative responsibility, shaped by core values of cooperation and solidarity.

- We foster positive working relationships amongst the principal, board of trustees, staff, students, and their families.



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- The parish priest and parishioners are welcomed into the life of the school. The school liaises with the parish in the sacramental programme of Reconciliation and First Eucharist.
- The board undertakes an annual self-review process on Catholic special character, and completes an annual comprehensive report to the proprietor. This is in addition to an external Catholic character review every three years.

## Values

The school identifies and actively promotes gospel values.

- Catholic values are taught, modelled, and promoted to students learning how to face ethical issues from a Catholic perspective.
- Teachers respect and reflect the Catholic special character of the school in all curriculum areas and in all school activities.
- Excellence in the learning process is upheld as a strong Catholic value.

Our special character underpins the work of the college through our values of:

- family spirit
- presence for others
- spirit of simplicity
- support for individuals and families in need
- commitment to diligence
- loyalty and pride
- all in the way of Mary.

## School culture

The school culture embraces and reflects the Catholic special character in the way staff and students treat each other with courtesy, consideration, and aroha, and in the physical environment of the school.

## Stewardship and leadership

The school accepts responsibility for delivering education with a Catholic special character: all planning and policy documents (e.g. enrolment, employment, professional development procedures) have Catholic special character components.

Leadership effectively shapes the faith-based vision, direction, values, and outcomes of the school programme.

- The Headmaster is qualified by education and experience for the Catholic special character responsibilities of the position, and shows a commitment to Catholic special character.
- The Headmaster and Deputy Headmaster - Special Character work collaboratively to lead the development of Catholic special character.
- Senior students have opportunities to lead the school in school assemblies, liturgies, and masses, and to be involved in St Vincent de Paul, youth groups, altar serving, etc.

## Worship

A Catholic culture of prayer, liturgy, and faith-based celebration is promoted in the school. Community prayer is part of the daily life at the school. The school marks significant feasts and seasons of the liturgical year.



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### Service

Catholic schools aim to contribute a Catholic dimension to the development of values and wellbeing of the wider community. Sacred Heart College endeavours to provide opportunities for students to contribute to the local community, and to be involved in national and international projects where appropriate. These service and outreach opportunities demonstrate for students the connection between spirituality and social justice, and raise awareness of others' needs. Our school has a Young Vinnies programme, which fosters inclusion, community engagement, and forward thinking.