

## **POLICY ON LEARNING**

### **Introduction**

The Policy on Learning has arisen from a need to recognise that learning is central to decision making by the College Council and Leadership Team that relate to capital development, staffing, provision of resources and other policy or procedural matters.

This policy will:

- Provide a framework to ensure the educational, emotional, spiritual and social needs of students are central to the core business of Mercedes College
- Guide the review and documentation of the appropriateness of resources (learning spaces, support materials, staffing) to learning and curriculum
- Formalise the accountability to state, commonwealth and international educational programmes
- Guide the review and development of learning and curriculum at the College
- Identify and respond to the professional development needs of staff
- Highlight the role of assessment and reporting practices for continuous improvement
- Identify and promote the links to the Mercedes College Philosophy Statement
- Respond to the specific issues raised by members of the Mercedes College learning community.

### **Policy Principles**

The following policy statements represent the guiding principles and beliefs that underpin learning and curriculum at Mercedes College.

#### ***Students are at the centre of learning at Mercedes College***

Mercedes College will ensure students are at the centre of learning by:

- using teacher expertise and consulting with students to utilise their experiences in guiding the learning and curriculum agenda
- promoting and sustaining an open culture of student safety within the physical and social environment of the College and other learning places
- providing accountability structures that are visible and accessible to students and the general Mercedes College community
- promoting the Mercy keys of loyalty, integrity, responsibility, mutual respect, compassion and justice across the Mercedes College learning community.

#### **Excellence in Catholic and International Education**

Mercedes College will:

- invite students into a learning process that is grounded in Catholic beliefs and values
- support students in their striving for excellence
- ensure students will attain national benchmarks in numeracy and literacy (including information and communication technology).

### **Constructivism and Holistic Education**

Mercedes College will support constructivist learning throughout the educational experience of students through:

- inquiry based learning and the use of guiding questions in the International Baccalaureate Primary Years and Middle Years Programmes
- encouraging students to discover principles
- guiding students in making connections between concepts and processes
- scaffolding principles with existing experiences
- making learning purposeful, contextualised, challenging and inherently interesting.

### **Contemporary and Relevant Curriculum**

Mercedes College will provide curriculum options that:

- embed spiritual, emotional and social growth within Religious Education and Pastoral Care experiences
- reflect national and international educational trends
- consider the individual needs and talents of students
- provide new and innovative ways to deliver curriculum
- result from regular reviews and developments in curriculum offerings at national and international levels
- ensure every student up to Year 10 undertake a second language
- support career planning for today and tomorrow.

### **Resources**

Mercedes College will endeavour to provide that:

- class sizes and resources are appropriate to the age of students and areas of study
- learning spaces are appropriate for the diverse needs of learning and curriculum
- information and communication technologies are appropriate to support learning and teaching.

### **Accessibility to Education**

Mercedes College recognises that its community reflects diverse skills, backgrounds and cultural needs. We endeavour to:

- meet the physical, mental and emotional needs of students
- provide support to students with identified learning disabilities and giftedness
- determine and respond to the range of learning styles of students
- provide individualised programmes of learning where required
- provide counselling and psychological support
- link with external institutions, industry and the broader community who may provide support and further learning opportunities.

### **Staffing and Professional Development**

Mercedes College is a learning community. We are therefore committed to support the learning needs of staff to ensure they have current and appropriate training to support the learning and curriculum needs of the College and its students. In particular:

- staff will undertake professional development as determined by the **Executive Leadership Team**
- staff will undergo appraisal to determine their personal professional development needs
- teaching staff will regularly update their pedagogical skills to reflect contemporary educational trends.

### **Supporting Life-Long and Life-Wide Learning**

Mercedes College will strive toward students becoming thoughtful, active, responsive and committed local, national and global citizens. These students will possess the capabilities to apply knowledge, skills and experiences to new and different contexts and situations, and to be able to act responsibly with regard to others. This will be guided by:

- encouraging students to embrace a commitment to a lifelong journey of faith exploration and the quest for truth
- promoting an awareness of environmental issues and developing the flexibility to respond to change, recognise connections with the past and conceive solutions for preferred futures
- developing a positive sense of self and group, accepting individual and group responsibilities and respecting individual and group differences through active participation in community and service
- ensuring internationalism and intercultural awareness are embedded in curricular and extra-curricular programmes reflected in working in harmony with others and for common purposes, within and across cultures
- being independent and critical thinkers, with the ability to appraise information, make decisions, be innovative and devise creative solutions
- communicating powerfully and effectively
- structured career counselling and planning.

### **Learning Partnerships**

Mercedes College believes in the partnerships of staff, students and parents to develop and maintain learning and curriculum within an environment of change. This will be supported through communication in areas of:

- links with the Mercy tradition and the broader church community
- review and documentation of learning programmes for continuous improvement
- consultation in design and implementation of assessment and reporting of student achievement
- criteria for promotion, awards and specialised learning plans
- latest national and international trends in education
- links with external institutions, industry and the broader community
- feedback from results of competitions and national learning benchmarks.

