

ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE

K-12



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

POLICY

2014

1. Policy Statement

St Euphemia College is an independent school and a member of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia School System. It is a coeducational K-12 School. This policy document aims to outline the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community with regards to the Religious Education and Spiritual Nurture of all members involved.

2. Applicability

This policy applies to the Parish Priest of the Parish and Community of St Euphemia, Bankstown, all staff employed by, and students enrolled at St Euphemia College.

3. Context/Rationale

The Orthodox Day Schools were founded under the auspices of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. This communion and the understanding of the significance of the Religious Education of children have led to development of an Orthodox Studies Syllabus which is compulsory for all students in Years K – 10.

There are many elements to Orthodox Studies in an Orthodox School. St Euphemia College offers students the experience of Divine services and opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection through regular Church attendance and participation. In particular, the College views the teaching of Orthodox Studies as a Key Learning Area and sets out to educate students in their Orthodox Faith through a comprehensive and systematic classroom curriculum.

The Religion Education Policy at St Euphemia College encompasses the formal teaching and learning programs and attendance at:

- Church
- religious ceremonies/feast days
- Communion
- religious retreats
- Confession.

The Religious Education program recognises, promotes and respects other beliefs, denominations and religions represented in the School and beyond.

Religious Education is a lifelong process and the curriculum therefore takes into account the realities and needs of the students living in a changing, secular, multicultural and pluralistic society while strictly maintaining Orthodox beliefs and traditions.

Orthodox Studies is a process whereby students are assisted towards:

- gaining access to, and understanding of the traditions of the Orthodox Church, its history, its experiences and its teachings
- experiencing the Faith and Worship of the Church
- making sense of everyday life experiences in the broader contexts of mystery, complexity and awe
responding to God in their lives, their community and in the whole creation (Divine Economy).

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Principal/Delegated Authority

The Principal/Delegated Authority is expected to:

- promote a Greek Orthodox ethos in the School
- facilitate the implementation of the Religion Program within the School
- be a participant in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Education Board

Responsibility of the Parish Priest/Chaplain

The Parish Priest/Chaplain is expected to:

- promote and provide a spirit and environment of prayer and worship
- nurture students in the Orthodox Faith while recognising and respecting the beliefs of other denominations and religions
- provide opportunities for spiritual growth through prayer opportunities and administration of and participation in the Sacraments
- administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion for the community, teachers and students on a fortnightly basis for the High School and on the nominated days scheduled in the School Diary
- incorporate regular spiritual reflection and devotions in prayer gatherings and formal assemblies
- provide spiritual guidance to staff and students of the College community

Responsibilities of the Religious Education Coordinator/Classroom Teacher

The Religious Education Coordinator/Classroom Teacher is expected to:

- provide a high quality educational program in a caring and inspiring learning environment
- develop within students the ability to think and act in a Christian way, critically, logically and creatively, and to communicate effectively
- nurture students in the Orthodox Faith while recognising and respecting the beliefs of other denominations and religions
- recognise their role as being in cooperative partnerships with the Archdiocese, the Parish, parents and the Orthodox Church in general to work towards the aims of the College
- develop an appreciation and acceptance of Orthodox faith and values in students through personal examples and teaching practices
- alert the Parish Priest/Chaplain of spiritual needs of students in their care
- coordinate social welfare and outreach initiatives
- attend the Divine Liturgy services celebrated for the benefit of the College Community, teachers and students
- accept and espouse the Orthodox educational philosophy of the School
- organise appropriate excursions/incursions to promote religious literacy and spiritual development
- lead daily morning and afternoon prayers or nominate a student to do so.

Responsibilities of the School Counsellor

The School Counsellor is expected to:

- acknowledge and apply Orthodox psychotherapy methods where applicable
- work cooperatively with the Parish Priest/Chaplain and classroom teachers when responding to the needs of students
- alert the Parish Priest/Chaplain of spiritual needs of students in his/her care
- accept and espouse the Orthodox educational philosophy of the school.

Responsibilities of the Students

The Students are expected to:

- accept and espouse the Orthodox educational philosophy of the School
- participate in all classroom learning activities to the best of their ability
- participate in the worship opportunities provided by the School
- attend the Divine Liturgy services celebrated for the benefit of the School community, teachers and students.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Requirements

The Parish Priest/Chaplain, Religious Education Coordinator, Teaching Staff and Counsellor will monitor the implementation of this policy and will report to the Principal/Delegated Authority and who in turn will liase with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese through the Education Board.

6. Policy Review

To maintain the currency and value of this Policy, it will be reviewed and updated as necessary.