



St Joseph's Catholic School

Queenstown

PARENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

The school is not the major influence on students' lives nor was it ever meant to be. The strongest influence which shapes their deepest values awaits them when, after sport or other school activities, they arrive home each afternoon. While the Catholic school has an independent religious effect on students it cannot replace the home or accomplish all that it fails to do as regards the total development of youth.

"The Culture of Catholic Schools"

RATIONALE

St Joseph's Catholic School supports the efforts of parents in educating and fostering the faith development of their children. The school acknowledges that parents are the primary educators of their children.

The Catholic school.

It is a significant agent in the children's development as Christians: it awakens the children to the wider community and to their vocation to be full human beings who play their part in building a more just, peaceful and humane world, starting with themselves, their families and the school community.

Education for awareness.

This human development is affected by interaction of parents, staff and students parents and the general tone of the school; the spirit of the school depends on the awareness created, the events that are celebrated, the compassion and care that pervade, and the learning that is valued;

Education will only be Christian to the extent that the educators themselves, that is parents and teachers, choose to live the values of the gospel and ensure that their programs are developed according to the same values.

The children will only feel a sense of a true belonging, security and self-esteem when the values encouraged at school are closely aligned with those of the home, and vice-versa; the school should be so structured as to include participation of parents and other adults in the education of the children. When the school enrolls the children it also enrolls the parents.

The children need to have their abilities challenged, their limitations accepted by the people with whom they live and learn.

AIMS

Working together, parents and teachers aim:

- To enable the development of a total environment where a child's potential can be allowed to achieve development in all areas and to create an atmosphere where staff, parents and students feel comfortable;
- To develop closer liaison in the area of curricula, teaching methods, social development and religious development;
- To allow parents to take greater part in the education of their children and to develop opportunities for them to influence policy, philosophy and the values implied in the curriculum;
- To provide opportunities for parent interaction to together, develop new knowledge and skills.

Why does the school ask for help?

Parent participation is invited to assist children to learn more easily. Parents must recognize the extent of their children's development and how they can make that impact more positive. The school creates real positive opportunities for parents to participate in meaningful ways in the religious and other education of their children.

Some advice on getting to know the children and enjoying them:

- Speak to each child by his or her name. Avoid favoritism, but look for actions, ideas and work to praise.
- Try to see the world through the child's eyes and enjoy the activities and experiences with them.
- Be supportive and encouraging. Listen to what they have to say.
- Feel with them. Can you appreciate the child's joy in using all their senses to extract the utmost benefit from each experience?
- Talk with them. Talk about the activities, the interests and the shared activities.

PROCEDURES

Registration for Volunteers in Tasmanian Catholic Education

All adults working with children in Catholic schools are obliged to submit a **Registration for Volunteers in Tasmanian Catholic Education** form, which includes a consent to check and release Tasmania and National police history records. A short induction session conducted by a member of the school Leadership Team is also a mandatory requirement prior to a volunteer assisting in classes. Volunteers interested in assisting in classes or with student activities are required to express an interest in participating as a volunteer by completing the relevant forms, which are available from the school office and are appendices to this policy. **This must precede any volunteer work undertaken at St Joseph's Catholic School by any parent or friend.**

The daily routine

- Signing in: Please sign in at the school office.
- Setting up: In preparing for activities, **safety and interest** are the key words.
- Please sign-out when leaving school.

Supervision

Supervision for a group is different from looking after just one of two children. Be sure you know the rules the teacher has set for your group. Remember not to over-help the children. Try rather, to do *with* the child, than *for* the child. **Please ensure you are aware of Evacuation Procedures.**

Cleaning up

Encourage the children to put away materials when they have finished with them, but they cannot take full responsibility for this. Check that everything is in order. Jigsaw puzzle pieces, games components etc should be in place. High standards of cleanliness are required. Paint spills should be mopped up immediately.

Ways to guide behaviour

- Give directions in a positive form
- Use praise for acceptable behaviour rather than drawing attention to less desirable ways.
- Avoid favoritism and do not compare the children.
- Remember that children are all individuals – expect different results to the same request but be firm and expect accomplishments to occur.
- When limits have been set, they should be maintained consistently. Give the child a choice only when you intend to leave the decision to him/her.
- Learn to foresee and prevent situations, which cause trouble.

Communication

The teacher

- Choose your time to ask about routine matters when the teacher is free. Always back up the teacher's decision.

The parent

- Never gossip or retell stories about children to anyone about the children.
- Please notify the teacher by telephone or note if you are unable to meet your commitment with a class or any activity. Remember that loyalty to the school is one of the most important functions you have as a parent helper.
- If you find you are unable to discuss with the class teacher a problem that you might see as important please discuss it with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. Do not go out into the community to discuss it with the parents.

Preschool children

- We ask that helpers do not bring preschool children into the classroom with them without consulting the teachers first.

Rewards for being involved

- You show your children that you are interested in what they do.
- You have a sense of belonging.
- You know you are contributing.
- You get to know other children, your child's friends, other parents and the staff.

Areas of involvement

The following is an incomplete list of areas with which you may be invited to help.

- Classroom reading: hearing the children read
- Reading to children in small groups
- Conferencing stories
- Mathematics groups
- Hearing Mathematics Times Tables
- Art and craft
- Music
- Sewing and knitting
- Cooking
- Computer work
- Sports coaching and supervising
- Excursions and swimming campaign support
- Perceptual motor skills program for preps and grade one
- Typing
- Repairing and covering library and classroom books and aids
- Parent and friends association
- Sub-committees for fair, raffles and other related parents and friends functions
- Canteen

<p><i>Introduced February 2008 Amended October 2008; May 2012</i></p>
