

MULTICULTURAL POLICY - JUNE 1995

Rationale

“Because we are a Catholic school we celebrate Gospel values”

Where ‘commitment to the development of the whole person’ and ‘relevance of our faith to contemporary culture’ are basic assumptions about a Catholic school one is led inevitably, in the light of the varied cultural backgrounds of our student population, to a need to address the issue of multiculturalism in the education provided to these students.

Importance of the Individual

As a Catholic school we regard all educational endeavour as being enlivened by Gospel values which demand that the uniqueness of each person be recognised and catered for. The acceptance within our multicultural school of cultural diversity as a positive social value is therefore basic to this teaching.

Social Justice

It is acknowledged that minority group status has been a significant factor contributing to the educational disadvantage of students of some linguistic and cultural minorities within Australia. Our pursuit of the Gospel value of justice demands therefore an attempt to ameliorate the inequality brought about by such cultural factors so that there are ‘equality of life chances for all Australians with access to and an equitable share of...resources.’

Our school recognises that the development of the attitudes and values that will assist students to become part of a more cohesive democratic society are best acquired through their lived experience.

As a centre of Christian values and education the school has a responsibility to take a leadership role within the wider community on many issues. The cultural diversity of its student population demands that it be not loathe to promote a Christian perspective in respect of that diversity both through exemplifying intercultural acceptance in its structures and functioning and through its external communications and relationships.

Outcomes

The school community should

- a) by assisting students from different cultural backgrounds to take advantage of opportunities to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from mainstream social institutions, and
- b) by promoting cohesion within the school community through a respect for the diversity it manifests

enable students to recognise their self worth and reach their potential whilst preparing them for their place in the wider multicultural society of Australia

Strategies

Therefore we intend to :

- provide appropriate experiences of liturgy and devotions based on the different cultural and religious background of the students
- encourage the acquisition of a multicultural perspective through the learning of a language other than English
- provide programs and facilities that meet the special needs of students from language backgrounds other than English
- consider the need for persons in positions of teaching or authority to reflect the cultural diversity of the student population
- provide experiences that are culturally diverse
- have multi-lingual displays in the school
- eliminate discrimination whenever it is encountered
- actively promote cultural tolerance and celebrate the contribution of cultural diversity to a developing Australian culture
- promote links with the local ethnic communities that effectively supply the majority of our student clientele
- encourage school participation in community activities
- involve ethnic groups within the school community in curriculum and school activities
- employing staff fluent in languages relevant to the school
- encourage staff development in multicultural education