

St Mary's College for the deaf (St Mary's College) is a college which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by MACS Specialist Schools Ltd (MACSS).

Curriculum and learning policy

Vision

A faith community shaping the formation of empowered, inquiring students.

Mission

Our College mission integrates our key values of Empowerment, Inclusion, Independence and Resilience with our knowledge of the explicit needs of deaf and hard of hearing students and the values intrinsic to Catholic Faith.

Empowerment: Empowering deaf and hard of hearing students to lead themselves as strong and confident contributors to their school community.

Inclusion: Promoting inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity, acknowledge human rights and commit to the social justice central to the Catholic faith.

Independence: Fostering self-sufficient, capable deaf and hard of hearing students actively setting and achieving their own goals.

Resilience: Building resilient deaf and hard of hearing young people capable of dealing with life's challenges, maintaining positive relationships and holding a healthy sense of their own identity.

Purpose

The Victorian Curriculum is the Foundation to Year 10 curriculum for Victorian government and Catholic schools for implementation from 2017. The Victorian Curriculum reflects Victorian priorities and standards for F–10 and incorporates the Australian Curriculum. It defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling, set out as a series of learning progressions. See <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/foundation-10/Pages/default.aspx>.

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 recognises that increasingly, in a world where knowledge itself is constantly growing and evolving, students need to develop, in addition to discrete discipline knowledge and understanding, a set of skills, behaviours and dispositions, or general capabilities, that apply across discipline content and equip them to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich, globalised world.

The St Mary's College Curriculum Plan has been developed in light of the directions for Catholic education and principles of curriculum from the *Horizons of Hope* education framework: Catholic schools provide an excellent holistic education centred on the students and engaging them in authentic, purposeful learning; and incorporating the philosophy of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 and the Religious Education Curriculum Framework. It also incorporates the Iowa *Expanded Core Curriculum for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students*, adapted to the context of the Victorian Curriculum. The Learning Areas of the *Expanded Core Curriculum for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Students* are designed to address the needs of students with a hearing loss to support their access to the Victorian Curriculum,

and builds upon the understanding that hearing loss adds a dimension to learning that often requires explicit teaching.

The curriculum is a statement of the purpose of schooling and defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling.

Principles

At the heart of our curriculum are our values Empowerment, Inclusion, Independence and Resilience and from these segments our Teaching and Learning Map is designed to build high quality learning opportunities for students:

Scope

Our school curriculum defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling at St Mary's College.

St Mary's College currently operates educational programs from six sites. This is enabled through an agreement with five Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) and Salesian College, Sunbury. Each of these schools (hosts) provides St Mary's College with space within one of their buildings from which to operate. A partnership (Campus Collaborative Agreement) is entered into with each of the six schools with a common intent of providing an integrated educational experience for St Mary's College students. Students attending each campus are included on their Learning Management systems and places are made available for students to join in all classes and extra-curricular activities as offered to their own students.

St Mary's College works in partnership with the following schools in the planning and delivery of the curriculum:

- Holy Trinity Primary School, Wantirna South
- Marymede Catholic College, South Morang
- Salesian College, Sunbury
- Thomas Carr College, Tarneit
- Aquinas College, Ringwood and
- St John's Regional College, Dandenong

St Mary's College students are provided with access to the curriculum through an individualised course of study planned through collaboration with the student (where appropriate), parents and St Mary's teachers annually. This course of study is documented through the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Some areas of the curriculum are delivered by our partner school teachers, some planned and delivered in combination with St Mary's College teachers of the deaf and some directly by St Mary's College teachers of the deaf. This sharing of the curriculum in an inclusive manner enables a breadth of subject offerings and learning experiences to our deaf and hard of hearing students that would otherwise not be possible.

At St Mary's College, curriculum is enriched by the values, beliefs, perspectives and experiences of each member of the learning community when they engage actively with Catholic understandings of the human person. This orientation towards the person means that the process of curriculum design is shared with students, creating within them a sense of ownership and self-efficacy as learners. Our learning community fosters the conditions for students to have a voice in the design process, allowing them to make decisions about what they need to know and when.

Implementation

The Curriculum Plan “reinforces every student’s entitlement to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum and that students have access to comparable opportunities and choices in their education” (*Guidelines for Students with Disabilities*, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2016).

For deaf and hard of hearing children, limited access to auditory input and spoken language during early childhood years results in a range of learning challenges that linger throughout their 13 years of schooling. A delay in the development of literacy skills, language, social skills and executive function are the most significant barriers to curriculum-based learning. To meet the learning needs and goals of deaf and hard of hearing students, appropriate teaching and learning programs, based on the Victorian Curriculum F-10 complimented by the Expanded Core Curriculum is required.

In responding to this expanded program of learning, there is a need for flexibility in the allocation of time to each learning area. Teachers may also need to make appropriate adjustments to the complexity of the curriculum content, focusing instruction on content different from that taught to others in their class. It follows that adjustments will also need to be made to how the student’s progress is monitored, assessed and reported.

St Mary’s College implements the curriculum by offering or providing access to a broad range of subjects, catering to the diverse needs of students with disabilities:

- **Prep – 6**

Students focus on learning and consolidating the foundations of literacy and numeracy and communication. Through exploration and inquiry-based learning activities, curiosity and a love of learning is inspired. Positive behaviours and social skills are built, and students supported to make and sustain friendships.

- **Year 7-8 Breadth Stage**

Students have the opportunity to fully engage with all learning areas and capabilities, with a focus on English, Mathematics, Science and Religious Education. Understanding what their learning needs are as deaf students and how to ask for and use those adjustments across all learning areas are explored.

- **Year 9-10 Pathways Stage**

Students engage in a broad education and begin to plan their senior secondary program of study. Focus on student choice is increased and additional careers and work education learning and experiences offered to St Mary’s students. Developing a positive identity, expanding pragmatic language and the abstract language required to access the senior curriculum is a focus. Careers Action Plans are developed.

- **Senior Years**

Students are supported through a pathway of their choice including VCE, VET, VCAL or a tailored senior secondary program based on vocational and work readiness. Self-advocacy and connection to community organisations supporting young people with disabilities in employment or further education is also a focus.

The curriculum is designed and delivered from whole-school to level planning to individual teacher plans. These are created in a collaborative and supported environment. This ensures that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is driving student learning and lifting student outcomes.

Curriculum content

The College implements the Victorian Curriculum in order to provide students with a comprehensive and cumulative curriculum from Foundation to Year 10.

The College's teaching and learning program is the school-based plan for delivering this common set of knowledge and skills in ways that best utilise local resources, expertise and contexts. Information technology is an integral part of our curriculum as a basic tool for learning. Supported by our governing body, St Mary's College develops strong processes for monitoring student progress and the application of appropriate explicit teaching and intervention strategies.

St Mary's College Deputy Principal – Curriculum, ensures the curriculum is rigorous, viable and guaranteed. St Mary's College teachers of the deaf attend curriculum and year level planning meetings with classroom and subject teachers of partner school classes where St Mary's students will be engaged. The teacher of the deaf modifies, adjusts and plans the curriculum content designed for our partner school students to meet the learning needs of the St Mary's College students in that class, taking into account their diversity.

St Mary's College will also take inspiration from the *Horizons of Hope* education framework. This framework supports Catholic school communities to engage in dialogue about the distinctive nature of learning and teaching, leading learning and enhancing Catholic identity in our schools. The framework is a living document that has been added to over the years with examples of practice from schools, as well as additional strategy statements in the areas of Leadership, Wellbeing, Diversity and Religious Education.

Religious Education has a central place in the curriculum at St Mary's College, as it reflects our unique character of Catholic identity and focus as a Catholic school. The primary source for developing our Religious Education program is the Religious Education Curriculum Framework, developed by our governing body MACS through our partner schools.

Whole-school curriculum plan and time allocation

The following provides an outline of the learning areas and recommended minimum weekly time allocation across F–10. Multiple learning areas, particularly in primary levels and Year 9, are often part of a unit and not always taught as separate subject areas. This is ensured through time allocations which are in line with recommendations of the educational authorities.

Time allocation listed are minimum starting points for all students. However, there is adequate provision to be flexible and responsive to the individual learning needs of each student. A set of procedures as outlined below, is used to modify time allocations to the various learning areas.

In order to ensure St Mary's College students have access to the full range of curriculum, the following procedures will be followed regardless of the campus the student attends.

1. In each term 4 PSG/SSG meeting (or prep transition meeting), teachers, parents/guardians and students (secondary year levels) will plan the following year's course of study based on the full curriculum as offered to students of their partner school peers.
2. The student's current levels of learning, strengths, goals and interests will be considered in determining how much of the Expanded Core Curriculum will be required to be taught in order to access and succeed in all areas of the curriculum but most importantly, English, Mathematics and Science.
3. A reduction in some areas of the curriculum as offered to students of their partner school peers will be determined in order to increase access to the Expanded Core Curriculum. Given the ongoing difficulty that deaf and hard of hearing students have in developing their English skills (written and spoken), withdrawal from LOTE to focus on English language and literacy is common.

4. Teachers of the deaf will consider further adjustments to content and sequence based on the learning needs of the student. If the adjustments required relate to an integrated class, the teacher of the deaf will work with the subject/class teacher in adjusting the content for the St Mary's College student.

Note: The VRQA may exempt a school from addressing one or more of the learning areas if the school is a specialist school.

Primary P - 6

Learning Area	Min hours per week	Weekly %	Content Planning
English (Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening) <i>Receptive & Expressive Language Communication</i>	10 1	40% 4%	Teacher of the Deaf & Classroom teacher Teacher of the Deaf
Mathematics	5	20%	Classroom teacher
Inquiry (Science, Humanities, Social Sciences, Technology)	2	8%	Teacher of the Deaf & Classroom teacher
The Arts (Visual, Performing)	1.5	6%	Classroom teacher
Health and Physical Education	2	8%	Classroom teacher
Religious Education	2.5	10%	Classroom teacher
Languages	0	0%	
<i>Expanded Curriculum for Deaf & Hard of Hearing (auditory skills, speech development, Social-Emotional Learning)</i>	1	4%	Teacher of the Deaf
Total	25	100%	

Secondary 7 - 10

Learning Area	Min hours per week	Weekly %	Content Planning
English (Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening)	3.5	14%	Teacher of the Deaf & Subject Teacher Teacher of the Deaf
Mathematics	3.5	14%	Subject teacher
Sciences (inc Physics, Chemistry, Biology)	2.5	10%	Subject teacher
Humanities & Social Sciences	2.5	10%	Subject teacher
The Arts (Visual, Performing)	3.5	14%	Subject teacher
Health and Physical Education	2.5	10%	Subject teacher

Religious Education	2.5	10%	Subject teacher
Technologies	2	8%	Subject teacher
Languages - LOTE	0		
<i>Expanded Curriculum for Deaf & Hard of Hearing (auditory skills, speech development, language, Social-Emotional Learning, Careers)</i>	2.5	10%	Teacher of the Deaf
Total	25	100%	

Capabilities

The Victorian Curriculum includes both knowledge and skills. It is expected that the skills and knowledge defined in the capabilities will be developed, practised, deployed and demonstrated by students in and through their learning across the curriculum. Many of the capabilities as they relate to students who are deaf and hard of hearing are explicitly taught through the Expanded Core Curriculum:

- Critical & Creative Thinking
- Ethical
- Intercultural
- Personal & Social.

Curriculum organisation and implementation

The school's planning for curriculum draws on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) curriculum planning site for age-appropriate content, sequential learning patterns, and interrelated aspects of the content and skills and of the desired learning capabilities. Refer to the Pedagogical Framework.

All content is developed using the following documents:

- Aquinas College Teaching and Learning Handbook English 2020
- Holy Trinity Curriculum Planning and Policy document
- Marymede 2021 Primary School
- Marymede 2021 Subject Selection handbook Yr 9-12
- St John's Regional College Curriculum Guide
- Salesian College Sunbury Subject Selection 2022
- Thomas Carr College 2021 Learning and Teaching Overview
- Victorian Curriculum F-10
- Expanded Core Curriculum for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students Scope
- SMC Expanded Curriculum Framework 2022

A variety of other resources, including online resources, will be available to support planning.

Periodic Review

The St Mary's College Deputy Principal Curriculum is responsible for annually reviewing the curriculum as planned and offered by St Mary's College and its partner schools. This is done through fortnightly meetings with the principal, annual contact with the curriculum leaders of our partner schools and annual review of the Expanded Curriculum with the St Mary's College leadership team.

Evaluation

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the staff, in accordance with the School Improvement Plan or as required.

School policies/references

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- St Mary's College Prep to 12 Curriculum Structure
- Subject Handbooks for each year level as offered at each partner school.
- Assessment and Reporting policy.
- VCE / VCAL Handbook for each senior secondary provider school.