

School Philosophy Statement



Introduction

The constitution of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) contains a Statement of Mission, which provides the expectations of the sole member of MACS, the Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne (Member), for Catholic schooling and the identity and work of a Catholic school. The Statement of Mission positions MACS firmly in the reality of the Eucharistic character of the Catholic school, affirming that its enterprise is one that builds community and provides opportunity for personal transformation.

With parents and parishes, Catholic schooling seeks to fulfil this mission by providing an environment in which students are enabled to:

- *encounter God in Christ and deepen their relationship with him*
- *pursue wisdom and truth encouraged by a supportive academic culture*
- *grow in the practice of virtue, responsible freedom and serving the common good.*

A Catholic school:

- *is actively embedded in the life of the faith communities of the local Church, which in turn is tangibly manifested in the life of each school*
- *is an essential place for the evangelising of children and young people*
- *exists to assist students, and their families, to integrate faith, reason, life and culture*
- *is conspicuously Christian in outlook, explicitly Catholic in faith and practice, and intentionally missionary in orientation*
- *cultivates spiritual, social and emotional growth in a safe and protective environment*
- *provides a learning environment in which the whole educational community is formed to embrace life in all its fullness (Jn 10.10)*
- *offers a human formation that has the intellectual, practical and moral excellence of learners at its heart*
- *forms consciences, fosters peace and develops respectful dialogue, at the service of intellectual charity*
- *encourages the discovery of Catholic cultural heritage, especially in art, music, literature and architecture.*

Our Lady Help of Christians is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by MACS.

Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC) school sits at the heart of Eltham's vibrant community, celebrated for its natural splendour and cultural heritage. Established in 1928, OLHC proudly upholds a tradition of fostering the growth and success of our students within a dynamic learning environment.

Mission

Our Mission is to bring our Vision to life by...

- Celebrating our Faith through Liturgy, Prayer and the Traditions of the Church.
- Being a welcoming Catholic Community.
- Reaching out and responding in Christian service.
- Promoting academic achievement.
- Basing our Learning and Teaching on best practice.
- Providing a secure and affirming environment.
- Respecting each person's uniqueness.
- Fostering the wellbeing of individuals.
- Encouraging responsible decision making.
- Developing the ability to think clearly, independently and imaginatively.
- Developing adaptability to thrive in an ever-changing world.
- Building an awareness of the world, each person's place in it and the need to be environmentally conscious.
- Providing opportunities for children to engage in a healthy active lifestyle.
- Nurturing creativity, appreciation, performance skills and confidence through the Arts.

We are committed to :-

- Elected Government.
- The rule of law.
- Equal rights for all before the law.
- Freedom of religion.
- Freedom of speech and association.
- The values of openness and tolerance.

Vision

Our school community, united and inspired by the Gospel Values, strives to provide the optimum learning environment in which students are empowered to reach their learning potential.

Values

At Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC), we value faith, integrity, respect, inquiry, excellence, and a strong sense of community. Our Catholic identity is celebrated through liturgy, prayer, and the traditions of the Church. We are committed to fostering the wellbeing of every individual, promoting academic achievement through best practice teaching, and encouraging responsible decision-making. Respecting each person's uniqueness, we nurture creativity, adaptability, and an awareness of the world, inspiring our students to become environmentally conscious, thoughtful contributors to society. These values set clear expectations for all members of our school community and guide our relationships and actions.

Objectives

At Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC), we aim to empower our students to become compassionate, confident individuals who live the teachings of Jesus and are prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world. Through high-quality education, a secure and affirming environment, and a commitment to Christian service, we support each student's academic growth, personal wellbeing, and spiritual development. We encourage clear, independent, and imaginative thinking, equipping our students to make responsible decisions, appreciate the Arts, and engage in a healthy, active lifestyle. Our graduates are encouraged to embrace their role in a global society with faith, wisdom, and a deep respect for diversity, justice, and the environment.

Philosophy enactment

At Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC), our school philosophy—encompassing our vision, mission, values, and objectives—is at the heart of everything we do. It informs our policies, practices, and all teaching and learning programs. We celebrate our Catholic faith through meaningful liturgical experiences and maintain a welcoming community where all are respected and valued. Our commitment to best practice ensures that learning is engaging, challenging, and supportive of every student’s growth. We believe that fostering wellbeing, creativity, and adaptability prepares students for a dynamic future. The OLHC school philosophy is published on our website and integrated into key documents, including our enrolment policy, ensuring that it remains central to our daily work and long-term planning.

Reporting

The MACS Board will ensure schools have implemented a contextualised school philosophy using this template through the annual report to the school community and regular school review processes (at least once every four years).