

## Notes

- ~ The term 'parents' includes guardians, caregivers and all those who share the primary responsibility for the raising and education of children.
- ~ The term 'family' includes those people in the immediate or extended family who care for and support the child's learning and welfare. The school should be sensitive to the specific cultural and social aspects of family structures.

## References

1. John Paul II, Message for the XXVII World Day of Peace, 1 January 1994, no. 2.
2. Archdiocese of Brisbane. Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998-2011, Brisbane, 2001, p.13



Archdiocese of Brisbane  
Catholic Education Council

# Family School Partnership POLICY

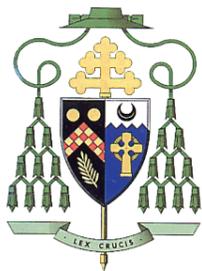
JULY 2012

## Policy Statement FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS



For more information please contact the  
Catholic Education Council  
G.P.O. Box 1201 Brisbane 4001  
Telephone (07) 3033 7400  
Fax (07) 3844 5101





## FAMILY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Catholic schools commit to nurturing active partnerships with families and providing parents and caregivers with opportunities to participate in the life of the school community. The student's learning journey is enriched through positive and reciprocal relationships.

### FOREWORD

I commend to parish and school communities this new Archdiocesan policy on Family School Partnerships endorsed by the Catholic Education Council. This policy, addressing the important relationship between families, school and parish communities that our Catholic schools serve, replaces the earlier Parent Partnership and Participation Policy.

*The Catholic school has a specific evangelising and educative mission. It is a most important place for human and Christian formation. However, it does not carry the entire responsibility for ongoing catechesis of children. Without strong family-school-parish collaboration, students will be deprived of the range of fundamental experiences needed for their faith development. (General Directory for Catechesis, 1997, no. 259)*

*Parents have a particularly important role to play in the educational community since it is to them that 'primary and natural responsibility for their children's education belongs'. Parents need to be acknowledged in this primary role as educators and as major partners in the education process. Such a close relationship with the school implies a partnership with mutual rights and responsibilities. (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, 1998)*

This policy statement reflects the Archdiocese of Brisbane's ongoing commitment to strengthening partnerships and involvement of families in the life of the Catholic school. Parents and schools enter into a partnership through the enrolment process. Through enrolment in a Catholic school parents 'anticipate that amongst the provision of a secular education, there will be an enrichment of their children's experience and knowledge of God and Church'. (The Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project, Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998 – 2001; p. 14)

I ask that Catholic school communities reflect upon this Family School Partnership Policy and ensure that all staff members are familiar with the policy and procedures in order to strengthen and promote this most important relationship.

As always in the Lord

Most Rev Mark Coleridge  
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

July 2012

### INTRODUCTION

*"The family, as the fundamental and essential educating community, is the privileged means for transmitting the religious and cultural values which help the person to acquire his or her own identity. Founded on love and open to the gift of life, the family contains in itself the very future of society."*<sup>1</sup> Home and school support each other in their distinctive roles in relation to the education of children and young people.

### RATIONALE

Parents/caregivers, school staff and pastors have differing responsibilities within the school community. Catholic schools value relationships which sustain and nurture the partnerships between family and school. This relationship depends on the acceptance of mutual responsibility and recognition of each other's family heritage, culture, experiences and skills that each brings to the relationship. Such partnerships need to be based upon mutual respect. Schools and parents share a common goal – the holistic development of their students.<sup>2</sup>

### CONSEQUENCES

#### Participation

- Families are actively welcomed in the life of the school and encouraged to contribute to the liturgical life, teaching and learning, pastoral care, policy making, resourcing and voluntary assistance.
- Families have opportunities to contribute their knowledge and skills to engage with their children's learning, to support the school's goals and to promote the principles of Catholic education.
- Commitment to processes of open reciprocal communication is evident in developing the partnership within the school community.
- Parents are integral to the process of school renewal, including both review and future planning.
- The responsibility of policy development collaboratively belongs to pastor, staff and

parents. The recommended model for policy decisions is the pastoral model of the school board. The responsibility of policy implementation rests with the principal in collaboration with relevant groups.

- Parents & Friends Associations exist to further develop the partnership between home and school, playing a vital role in promoting family engagement.
- Parents support their Catholic school financially, in accordance with their capacity.
- Schools are accountable to their community with transparent processes in leadership, religious education, curriculum, pastoral care, funding and resourcing.

#### Learning and Teaching

- Parents are informed of contemporary curriculum directions and educational programs.
- Parents are consulted to inform school-based decision making in learning and teaching.
- Schools communicate regularly with parents and carers regarding their child's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Schools explore interactive ways to connect parents with student learning.

#### Community

- Staff, parents and pastors understand, respect and support one another in their varying roles and responsibilities and so give true witness to the values of the Catholic faith.
- Catholic schools support families to understand that the school is a faith community within the context of the local church.
- Families and schools work together to educate students to become faith-filled, responsible citizens who contribute to a better world.