St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM 2016
In 2013 St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School celebrated its 60th year of providing Catholic education to the children of Beenleigh and surrounding areas with the school’s blessing taking place in 1953. The school’s origins began with the enthusiasm and leadership of Father Owen Steele. He founded the school; and inspired by the vision of Mary MacKillop, a group of dedicated Sisters of St Joseph began the educational journey for many local children. The original school building was opened with 97 students including 21 boarders. St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School was blessed on October 25, 1953 and opened its doors in 1954 for students. In 1955 St Patrick’s Parish was founded and the church was built adjacent to the school. This original church now serves the community as an OSHC service. A new church was built in the grounds in 1988.

The school has grown with the construction of new buildings during each of the successive decades. As the school grew in enrolment so did the size and scope of the facilities to suit the needs of the students. The school grew to an enrolment of over 600 students in the 1980’s and 1990’s. In 2008 a fire destroyed the administration building and a new administration and reception was built. At around the same time a new hall was constructed alongside.

It is from Fr Owen Steele’s service as a chaplain in the armed forces during World War 2 that the school gained its title ‘Tobruk Memorial’. During the North African campaign, Fr Steele (later Monsignor Steele) was one of the famous ‘Rats of Tobruk’. These Allied soldiers fought bravely over many months to hold a prized port, Tobruk, from German hands. When Father Steele returned to Australia in 1943 Archbishop Duhig appointed him as Parish Priest of Beaudesert. The agricultural township of Beenleigh was a part of this parish. St Joseph’s was built in memory of the soldiers who served at ‘The Siege of Tobruk’ from April to November 1941. The Sisters of St Joseph served the school as educators until 1994 when Sister Jenny Scari finished her time at the school as principal.
STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY

Faith and Family Demographics

St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, Beenleigh, is a coeducational Catholic school with a current enrolment of 392 students. The school has two streams in each year level from Prep to Year 6. It is part of the St Patrick’s Parish and the church is adjacent to the school within the property. The parish also provides Outside School Hours Care offered through Centacare.

Students are drawn to the school from a very large catchment area compared to other Catholic schools in the outer suburban areas of Greater Brisbane. Students are drawn from over twenty kilometres away in semi-rural and suburban suburbs of the Logan City, Gold Coast City Council and Scenic Rim Council areas.

The school is located in the Logan City Council area of south-east Qld. It is situated in the high growth corridor on the southern outskirts of Brisbane and the northern end of the Gold Coast. The school is centrally located in the business centre of Beenleigh and is easily accessible. The local community is made up of mostly blue-collar employees working in service industries.

The BI tool informs that in May 2016 the school has a Catholic Enrolment of 62.75% which compares to 69.9% for Brisbane Catholic Education schools; and is trending lower each year as is the system level. The trend for students with no religion and other Christian denominations is trending upwards. Beenleigh District has a Catholic population of 28%. (ABS Census, 2011)
Our Vision for Religious Education

The vision for Religious Education at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, ‘...emphasises the two distinct yet complimentary dimensions of Religious Education’ (BCE 2013). Religious Education aims to develop Religious Literacy so that our students can participate critically and authentically in contemporary culture. The Religious Life of the school embodies the faith community in which students are challenged to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

St Joseph’s Religious Education Program embraces inquiry based learning to develop critical thinking skills with clear, visible learning intentions. Children are encouraged to view their world critically in the light of deep Catholic tradition and quality teaching.

The community of St Joseph’s recognises and celebrates the diversity of our students, encouraging and supporting the development of a child’s faith and spirituality through the Religious Life of the School as influenced by our co-founders St Joseph, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, and the Rats of Tobruk.

Gospel values permeate our entire school program and are not merely taught in a Religious Education lesson. Our community celebrates seven (7) core values based on the charisms of our founders: dignity, compassion, courage and resilience, justice, camaraderie, reconciliation, and trust and faith in God.

Our goal as religious educators is to develop religious literacy within our students whilst providing an environment for ongoing faith formation. Within an authentic faith community, where the catholic culture is articulated and embedded in the life of the school, the students of St Joseph’s develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to make connections with catholic teaching and the world in which they live.
Contemporary Contexts

Societal Context

Like all schools of the Archdiocese of Brisbane St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School operates in a complex and ever-changing environment. Our students are part of a global community and are exposed to different values represented by various media. Our school is continually challenged to engage our students and their families in rich and meaningful ways in relation to Religion and Religious Education. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School our Religious Education Program seeks to reflect a Catholic Christian world view that integrates faith, life and culture. At the same time, it seeks to embrace a perspective of diversity and reflect the multi-faith context and reality of the school community.

Ecclesial Context

Similar to many other schools in the Brisbane Archdiocese St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School has an increasing number of students and their families are less engaged with the faith life of the Church than in the past. This results in a challenge for teachers of Religious Education in the school when the student’s knowledge of, experience in and understanding of the culture and language of Church is underdeveloped.

As is the case in many Catholic schools part of our role is to introduce and induct our students into the life of the church community and provide the opportunity to develop understanding and offer the initial experience of Church. We offer the chance for students to experience the mission and outreach of the Church within the school and beyond. We promote the ideals of pastoral care and the experience of Catholic Christian community. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we promote activities such as Lenten, Holy Week and Pentecost rituals and celebrations, weekly Liturgies and Masses, fundraising for Catholic charities such as Caritas, St Vincent de Paul and Catholic Missions. The students are engaged in class prayer and assembly prayer reflections.
These activities enable the school to promote knowledge, deep understanding and develop skills related to the Catholic and broader Christian tradition as a part of the evangelising mission of the Church.

**Educational Context**

St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, seeks to transform the whole person so that those in the school community are empowered to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their lives. In the Catholic Christian tradition, education is a work of love and service. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we seek to nurture and develop the faith of individuals in ways that are mindful of their cultural and religious identity.

Primarily this takes place though the student’s involvement in leading and participating in class prayer. This sacred time is dedicated in each class each school day. Students plan, create and lead various forms of prayer across the school. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we promote the living of their faith through the **GOTCHA! initiative** to reward positive behaviour and interactions in and out of the classroom. Student work and conduct is guided by the school’s Respect Rules and Core Values. Each class has a poster on display for reference. They are also part of the display along the school hall in the form of banners. We celebrate the feasts of St Joseph and St Mary of the Cross; and in a lesser way St Patrick (the patron of our parish). Throughout the year students participate in an Art program which connects their creativity to their lives and as followers of Christ. They make crosses, study iconography and the beauty of nature and the spirituality of art. Their work is displayed at the biannual art show, Artworx.

Students take the opportunity to be involved in such events as Caritas during Lent, St Vincent de Paul winter and Christmas appeals, Catholic Mission activities and various appeals for people in need. The school has begun a Minnie Vinnies group in 2016. Year 6 students are involved in a Peer Mediation program which allows them to serve the school and support their peers in playground mediation of disputes.

St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School promotes best practice in relation to the learning and teaching of Religious Education. Classroom learning and teaching of religion reflects the
philosophy, content, structure, academic rigour and assessment and reporting modes used in other learning areas. The religious life of the school forms students to be prepared for the challenges of living their life in contemporary society with strong Christian virtues.

**Digital Context**

Religious Education at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School seeks to engage students in the critical, creative and responsible use of digital technology which is an important part of our contemporary society. Students have ready access to hardware when involved with tasks. There are a number of desktop and laptop computers in each room. As well as this there is a bank of laptops which can be utilised. There is also a bank of iPads available for these classes to use. Teachers use these for individual learning as well as small group tasks. Each class has an interactive whiteboard for teachers to use and support their teaching. Extra laptops can be borrowed from the other classes. IPad are also available on a roster system for classes to use.

In the library a space is designed for a whole class to use laptops together for guided instruction by the teacher or the teacher/ librarian.

The laptops and desktops are used primarily for internet research and desktop publishing and the iPads for creative tasks and for apps used to support the learning tasks.

Students and teachers use LMS (Life Management Systems) to create tasks, develop and enhance learning and as a portal for information and resources to support the units of work in Religion.
Beliefs about Learners and Learning

Foundational to the shared work of teachers are the beliefs they have of the learners they serve. The BCE Learning and Teaching Framework (2012) explicitly articulates the beliefs and the responses that flow from these beliefs within schools of the Archdiocese.

Every learner is created in the image and likeness of God and, inspired by the Spirit, responds with passion and creativity to life.

- Every learner seeks to find meaning in life and learning and, in the Catholic Christian Tradition, we find meaning in the person and teachings of Jesus to grow as pilgrim people.
- Every learner is a lifelong learner, with a desire to search for truth and do what is right; accountable for choices and responsible for actions.
- Every learner is in some respect, like all others, like some others, like no other and we respond creatively, flexibly and with a futures orientation to ensure dignity and justice for all.
- Every learner can achieve success in life and learning where diversity is valued and shared wisdom contributes to decision-making that enriches and enlivens our world.
- Every learner brings to the learning experience their own richly diverse life journey to contribute to a community in communion, empowered by the Spirit to be at the service of others.

All students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs in religion, drawn from the Religion Curriculum, that address their individual learning needs. The three dimensional design of the Religion Curriculum comprising specified curriculum content, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities, provides teachers with the flexibility to cater for the diverse needs of students, including the needs of students with disability, gifted and talented students and students for whom English is an additional language or dialect. Teachers use the curriculum flexibly to meet the individual learning needs of students and to personalise their learning by:

- adjusting the way in which students are taught and the means through which they demonstrate their learning;
• using the extended general capabilities learning continua from the Australian Curriculum to adjust the focus of learning or to emphasise specific aspects such as higher order cognitive skills;
• providing students with opportunities to work with content in more depth or breadth;
• providing students with additional time and support; and drawing from content at different levels along the Prep to Year 10 sequence.


**Collaborative Planning**

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School the interests, religious backgrounds and learning needs are taken into account and appropriate adjustments are made as required when preparing units of work. Teachers are using data from the BI Tool and GradExpert to inform planning decisions for their students. Teachers are supported in this by the CST, STIE and LST where required. Teachers are able to use this information to allow the units of work to be designed with flexibility to meet the needs of their students.

This flexibility may include:

• Adjusting the way, the student is taught and the way they demonstrate their learning;
• Providing students with opportunities to work with content in more depth or breadth;
• Providing students with additional time and support;
• Using the requirement for diversity in assessment tasks required in the planning template

Teachers and school leaders constantly seek to incorporate flexibility in Religious Education lessons, activities to ensure an inclusive spirit is associated with the learning of Religion and activities related to the Religious Life of the School.

Each term teachers at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School engage in collaborative planning to develop an overview for the year to meet the diverse needs of their students. Religious Education is valued as a curriculum subject and time is allocated for the planning of each term’s unit of work with the APRE and CST on planning days.
At these planning sessions teachers are encouraged to incorporate the skills and expertise of the teacher librarian; as well as any other specialist teachers who might be able to support the learning and teaching of Religion. In some cases, our music teacher and art teacher advise on opportunities to bring the Religion unit alive with their collaboration.

**Communication to Parents and the Wider Community**

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we use various media to communicate to parents and the wider community matters relating to the Religious Education and the Religious Life of the School. Teachers send home via email or letter an overview of the units to be covered in class each term. Within this the overall focus, knowledge and skills to be achieved are outlined. Some unit tasks and resources are available via LMS in some year levels also.

The school’s Religious Education initiatives and events which are part of the Religious Life of the School are discussed, promoted and reviewed through the school newsletter, school app and St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Community Facebook Page. Every effort is made to ensure that all who seek to share and celebrate our Catholic Christian heritage; including students, parents, friend of the school and staff feel welcome to join with us in celebrating through ritual, mission, outreach and prayer.

The school assemblies are vehicles to promote Religious Education taking place in classes through their involvement in preparing and presenting prayer reflection. The leadership team and teachers are also involved in promoting and inviting the community to participate in community events.
Our new model of parent engagement has replaced the traditional P&F Association. Joey’s Engagement Teams (JETs) have a special role in engaging the community in religious celebrations and events in the school through their “Faith” engagement team. This team’s focus is the school’s annual action plan for the Mission and Religious Education strategic renewal component of the Strategic Renewal Plan.

Events the school is proud to offer each year include our Welcome Mass, Feast day Masses, Lenten celebrations, Twilight Markets, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Grandparents Day, Thanksgiving Mass and student Graduation liturgy and awards.

Each fortnight students are involved in either a Mass (Yr 3-6) or Liturgy (P-2) presented by a host class. The community is also welcome to participate in a monthly Mass in the Parish hosted by a year level.
Impact of System Initiatives

St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School has begun in 2015 the principles of Visible Learning to improve student outcomes for all learners. This is implemented across all learning areas including Religious Education. We are enabling students to become independent with their own learning which in turn develops lifelong learners.

The inquiry approach to learning used at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School enables teachers to develop the curriculum intent through the formation of students’ questions that can be investigated throughout and across other learning areas. Inquiry based learning at St Joseph’s promotes a constructivist approach with the Religion Curriculum and enables deep conceptual understandings and critical thinking skills.
A Catholic View of Learning and Teaching

A Catholic view of Learning and Teaching is reflected in both dimensions of Religious Education— in classroom learning and teaching and well as the Religious life of the school. Learning and teaching in religious Education is intentionally developed on the foundation of a Catholic theology and philosophy of curriculum. The foundation is built around four themes: Anthropology, Epistemology, Cosmology and the Catholic Christian Tradition.

Catholic View of Christian Anthropology

At St Joseph’s the human person is centred on the person of Jesus. Our school motto expresses this: *Jesus in each other*. Each community member of St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School is created in the image of God. Our school motto – *Courage, Faith and Love* - calls us to live with these virtues as people of Christ.

A Catholic view of Christian anthropology is centred on the person of Jesus. It recognises each person is created in the image of God. It emphasises Jesus as teacher whose Spirit infuses the whole curriculum with a hope-filled vision of life. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School it is characterised by inclusion, holistic and relational learning, and action in community.

All students are respectfully supported and encouraged to express their unique talents and ability at the school. They participate in a MI Smarts program from Yr3-6 to allow them freedom to use and expand their multiple intelligences.

Teachers understand that each student brings their own distinctive interests, life experiences and understandings to the classroom. However, it is expected that all students find success
and have access to the curriculum. During planning time, teachers work with specialist learning support team; STIE, CST, ESL. LST, Guidance Officer, and administration to create learning plans and adjustments for students; so that all students can access the curriculum. Parents provide a wealth of knowledge and understanding about their children and they are a resource that teachers access at the beginning of each school year during the Parent Information evening where teachers are given opportunities to form relationships with families and discuss learning interests and needs. Throughout the year, parents are required to attend a meeting with the classroom teacher where student progress is shared and discussed.

**Catholic Perspective on Epistemology**

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we believe that learning is life-long and life-wide. We see ‘knowing’ as a search for understanding by the whole person. We believe that knowing leads to wisdom.

A Catholic perspective on epistemology orients a curriculum towards rationality; holistic knowing; knowing and living; wisdom as the fruit of knowing and life-long and life-wide learning. The Catholic tradition views the acquisition of knowledge as a life-long and life-wide enterprise. Reflective, self-directed learning and teaching provides meaningful spaces for teachers and students to depth their knowledge. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we understand this and strive to create learning experiences that support this epistemology.

This year, St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School started our Visible Learning journey to improve student outcomes and experiences in the classroom. This is a whole school approach to learning across the curriculum. Visible Learning is about making learning explicit and meaningful for students. Our principal leads a Visible Learning Team of four to guide the staff through the process. They have regularly shared their new knowledge and shared it with the rest of the staff. Visible Learning encourages students to take an interest in their own learning and have explicit understanding of the learning goals and success criteria. It encourages students to reflect on their learning, set goals, think critically, ask questions and explore possibilities. It promotes a richer style of learning and teaching that encourages holistic understanding and life-long learning. As we have travelled on our Visible Learning journey we have begun to use Data Walls, Walk-Throughs and Review and Feedback as an essential part of the teaching; and this will be for Religious Education as well as all learning areas.
At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we believe that students must go beyond the subject of Religion to gain a more holistic understanding of Catholicism. Our school recognizes that students can also learn ‘how to be religious in a particular way’ and this is promoted within the Religious Life of the School (RLOS). This means teachers must provide students with practical experiences that links the classroom to the Church and move into the ‘real world’.

There are a number of practical ways students get involved in the RLOS. During Lent students raise money for Caritas’ Project Compassion. During winter students donate warm clothes, blankets and non-perishable items. These donations support St Vincent De Paul’s Winter Appeal. At the end of the year students again collect donations for the St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal.

Our students and families are incredibly generous. Often these Social Justice responses, coordinated by the students, provide a strong, real-life connection to the Religious Education units of work being taught in the classroom. They provide students with the ability to act and reflect on what they are theoretically learning in class by being involved in practical activities such as creating promotional posters for fundraising for social justice initiatives.

Catholic Understanding of Cosmology

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School members of the community are called to be stewards of creation and as such, are charged with nurturing the God’s gifts to the world. As sacramental people who experience God’s presence in the everyday world. There is the experience of God as being central to everything we say and do in our world – there is no separation between the secular and ‘religious’ learning areas of the curriculum.

Cosmology relates to how people understand their place in the universe and the choices which are made to live within the integrity of creation. Through the elements of stewardship and sacramentality, Catholic Christians are called to respond to questions like: ‘What is my place in the universe?’ and ‘How do I live within the integrity of creation?’ This understanding is supported at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School in various ways. Over the past two years, the leadership team at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School has been working with various stakeholders and service providers to improve levels of sustainability and reducing the school’s impact on the environment. These have included energy audits and reviews of school practice. During these activities students and staff have been involved in changes which will improve the environment. In the past our Student Representative Council
and Environment Engagement team have put proposals forward to improve a number of areas within our school. For example, ideas to solve our litter problem around the school, educating younger students about the importance of recycling, creating prayer spaces and improving the aesthetics of the playground. There has been talk about providing better habitat provision for local water dragon and possum communities whose habitat has been diminished over the years of development in the school and surrounding areas. Students and staff enjoy the time spent nurturing the Native Food Garden.

Catholic Christian Story and Tradition

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we continue Jesus’ example as a teacher through the BCE vision to *Teach, Challenge and Transform*. Our school patron saints give us a model to which our students learn, share and develop the Catholic Christian story and tradition. This transformative process of learning and teaching is captured in the Vision of Brisbane Catholic Education to *Teach, Challenge and Transform*. This Vision is realised at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School through everyday witness; and learning and teaching that challenges and transforms the culture and the world in which we live. Ongoing spiritual formation for religious educators is as important as professional and theological learning. A number of teachers have participated in the REAP initiative and two more are enrolled in 2016. A person-centred understanding of spiritual formation begins with honouring and exploring the personal narrative of each individual’s experience of my story through an approach that engages the head, the heart and the hands (experience, knowledge, practice and application). At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School, such an approach is supported by regular opportunities for staff to participate in spiritual retreats and encounters. In 2016 the school has members involved in Spirit Fire. This includes Guiding Lights, Spirit Fire and Keepers of the Flame. Each member of staff has the opportunity to take part in a colloquium focussed on the charism and story of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. The whole staff has participated in two iconography days to enrich their spirituality around Mary and Jesus. We have also begun the school year with spirituality sessions hosted by the EORE, APRE, Principal and Parish Priests. Each teacher is encouraged to have an individual learning path which includes professional learning in Religion. Some of these learning paths include study offered by the Australian Catholic University.
There are also many other voluntary opportunities presented to the staff via the BCE Professional Learning Calendar. Our Religious Education Officers and guest presenters have also run other spiritual and professional development sessions.

Staff members are invited to attend Staff Prayer every week and are rostered on to lead their colleagues in prayer, Christian meditation or reflection. These times of prayer are well supported with the majority of staff members in attendance most weeks.

The majority of these Spirituality opportunities also contribute to the staff maintaining their Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School. All twenty-eight members of the teaching staff are accredited to teach Religion in a Catholic School (four hold interim status).

Over the past few years these are some of the professional learning offered to staff include:

- Liturgy and Ritual led by Margaret Connors
- Judaism in the Religion Curriculum led by Dr Peta Goldburg
- Spirituality Reflections led by Father Joseph Kannat
- Teaching Staff Professional Learning about the Religious Education Curriculum led by APRE over the last two years; including twilight sessions
- The New Roman Missal led by Elizabeth Harrington
At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, as in all schools and colleges of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, teaching people religion and teaching people to be religious draw upon the Catholic Christian tradition in ways that are mindful of local contexts and the ecumenical and multi-faith realities of contemporary culture.

Religious Education at St Joseph’s School is organised around the Model for Religious Education (Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane, 2013, p. 11). This model illustrates the distinct and complementary roles of the classroom teaching of the learning area Religion and the Religious Life of the School.

The school Religious Education Program draws its content from the Religion Curriculum P-12 (Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane, 2013, pp. 20 – 180) and is organised at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School through Year Overviews, Scope and Sequences and Unit Plans.

St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School programs, activities and experiences for the classroom learning and teaching of religion and the religious life of the school are responsive to religious diversity, while being faithful to the Catholic Christian identity of the school. The unit planner and Scope and Sequence documents require that teachers consider the Religious Life of the School and the learning context for the term to inform their planning. They do this through incorporating significant feasts, seasons and events which are important to the broader church as well as events and celebrations significant to the school. In addition, some practical examples of the inclusion of our Catholic identity into daily life include our core values and respect rules. It is also reflected in the use of Positive Behaviour 4 Learning strategies. Each
fortnight the school focusses on a respect rule and students are awarded with GOTCHA! Cards. They put these in a draw to win a prize.

We also highlight the learning opportunities for Holy Week activities appropriate to each year level including the Stations of the Cross, Liturgies and Masses (whole-school and fortnightly class), social and cultural events, Harmony Day, Prayer Assemblies, Sacramental Program, Caritas and Mission Appeals, individual class Religious Education Curriculum and visits from guest speakers from Catholic outreach organisations.

Other ways the school develops the religious life of the school includes Personal Development sessions for Year 6 students, developing a theme for student leadership based on a Gospel message, celebrating a Thanksgiving Liturgy for graduating students, singing the St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School song, “Courage and Dreams” and ensuring the classrooms and common areas have a sacred space.

The distinctive nature of the religious life of St Joseph’s is organised through our regular practices such as:

- Our school rules and class behaviour support practices are designed to guide relationships based on the teachings and actions of Jesus.
- Our co-founding patron saints that form our two of our school Houses – Steele and MacKillop.
- Implementing our fundraising policy which gives preference to our Catholic agencies.
- Masses and liturgies, which link the classroom teaching of religion to the religious life of the school.
- Artwork including the life and times of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. This includes prints, original paintings, toile, modern art and street art.
- The production of crosses for inclusion in class prayer boxes.
- The production of lady beetles as a symbol blessing for visitors and guests.
- A cross made from the burnt timber recovered from a fire which took place in the school in 2006.
Reconceptualist Approach

Since 2008, the classroom learning and teaching of religion in the Archdiocese of Brisbane has been characterised by a reconceptualist approach. In short, it operates from an educational framework rather than from a catechetical or ‘shared Christian praxis’ framework. In a reconceptualist approach, the classroom religion program becomes a primary arena for dealing with the critical religious issues and concerns of life. There are three key considerations for teachers using this approach: the Avoidance of Presumptive Language, Teaching ‘about’ the Tradition and Powerful Pedagogies.

Avoidance of Presumptive Language

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School teachers do not start with presumptions about students’ faith development. Students come from a variety of religious backgrounds and students can find it alienating and judgemental if teachers assume they are committed, practicing Catholics. Teachers instead use invitational and educational language, allowing students the freedom to respond. Students who can readily identify themselves as Catholics are affirmed by this approach and it allows students from other faith backgrounds to be secure in their own religious identity.

Teaching Sacred Texts with the Three Worlds of the Texts Model

Teaching ‘about’ the Catholic Christian tradition allows students to be critically appreciative of this tradition while developing an empathetic understanding of the traditions of others. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we use the Three Worlds of the Texts Model to develop a deep understanding of the messages contained in the Sacred Scriptures and how they can be used to gain meaning and understanding in one’s life. We do this through staff professional learning around the theology of sacred texts, utilising resources associated with the study of
the texts such as online biblical tools and commentaries. We offer opportunities for students to learn about the language of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. We have explored the connections between the Hebrew tradition and contemporary Christian life. The school is resourced with bibles for student use which are appropriate for their study of sacred texts.

**Focusing on learners and their learning**

While some students at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School come from families strongly connected to their local parish community and are literate in the Catholic Christian tradition, a growing number of our students enter the religion classroom with low levels of religious affiliation and, at best, are not very familiar with many aspects of Catholic life. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School we recognise the trend of enrolments being less involved in Catholic life and Church tradition. Using a reconceptualist approach, our religion teachers acknowledge the reality of students’ lives, identify learners’ levels of thinking and build on the attributes each student brings to the religion classroom. It incorporates a powerful questioning pedagogy, within the context of a community of thinking, that stimulates and supports genuine, active and authentic student engagement.

**Establishing clear learning intentions and success criteria**

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, the starting place for the classroom religion program is the Religion Curriculum P-12. Religion teachers use the curriculum and are beginning to create and make clear and visible the learning intentions and success criteria for all students. In the RE units of work, the school’s approach to learning and teaching in the religion classroom, drawn from the Knowledge and Deep Understanding and Skills of the P-12 Religion Curriculum document, takes account of the capabilities and readiness of students, while at the same time ensuring a classroom that engages and challenges students. Time is made available during planning days to spend with the APRE, at year level meetings, on professional development days, during professional learning team staff meetings, moderation and CTJ to assist teachers to collaboratively reflect on the effectiveness of their planning. Teachers are also asked to reflect on the effectiveness of a taught unit when meeting with the APRE for planning. They are also expected to reflect on the strategies employed and the achievement of students within a learning and teaching cycle so as to inform the planning, resourcing, teaching and assessing of the unit in subsequent years.
Time Allocation and Effective Timetabling

Teachers are required to timetable a minimum of 2.5 hours per week for the teaching of the learning area Religion and are required to plan for engaging, interesting and purposeful teaching and learning activities. A roster and calendar is prepared each year and this coordinates planning for the Religious Life of St Joseph’s School. This allocation for the Religious Life of the School is outside of the timetabled allocation for the classroom teaching of Religion. Staff are responsible for planning and participating in prayer, leading liturgy and major feast days and celebrating liturgical seasons.
Accreditation Requirements

The teaching staff at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School is made up of full-time teachers, part-time teachers and specialist teachers for Music and LOTE. There are also three support teachers without classroom duties. Seventeen teachers have Accreditation to Teach Religion in a Catholic School and eleven teachers hold Interim Accreditation to Teach Religion in a Catholic School.

Professional Learning

Religious educators at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School engage in ongoing professional learning focused on enhancing individual and collaborative practices as well as the capacity to improve student learning. Each year St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School engages in the ongoing process of Consistency of Teacher Judgment, a key strategy for implementing the Religion Curriculum and monitoring its effect on students’ learning. Regardless of whether Religious Education is part of the formal CTJ process, consistency of teacher judgment still occurs at each year level in a variety of ways. St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School make time processes for internal moderation and external moderation as required by Religious Education Services and indicated on the Learning and Teaching portal.

Powerful Pedagogies

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, the Model of Pedagogy is embedded into our unit planning templates, including those used for the planning for the classroom teaching of Religion:

- Focussing on learners and their learning
- Making adjustments for learners where required
- Establishing clear learning intentions and success criteria
- Activating multiple ways of knowing
- Responding with feedback to move learning forward
• Evaluate learning with students as activators of their own learning and resources for others

As stated previously St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School supports the Brisbane Catholic Education initiative of Delivering Excellence in Teaching and Learning (DELT). At our school we are guided by the principles of Visible Learning in the planning, learning & teaching and assessment of students.

Further, as part of the school’s commitment to DELT, the Visible Learning approach is becoming part of the learning and teaching of Religious Education, through the use of Data Walls, learning diaries, surveys and walkthroughs. Students are becoming increasingly familiar with articulating responses to the three questions around their progress and achievement:
  • What are you learning about in Religion and why?
  • How will you know when you have learned it?
  • What else do you need to know and how will you get there?

**Effective Assessment**

Underpinning all assessment practices at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School is a growth mindset. Every child is capable of learning and making progress and should be supported to do so. Quality assessment provides the evidence necessary to scaffold learning appropriately for every child in our school.

Assessment of student progress and achievement in Religious Education at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School follows the same principles and practices as all other curriculum areas. Assessment serves a number of purposes. It can be a visible learning process, where children gain insight into their own progress, future needs and achievement. It can also inform future planning and support differentiation of the curriculum to allow for high expectations and progress for every student. Assessment is also used to collect data about individuals and groups for both reporting and evaluation purposes.

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, teachers plan a number of key assessment tasks as a year level professional learning team to promote consistency of teacher judgement. This is an important element of year level planning sessions. The Religion planning template supports this process. Individual teachers can then make decisions about the students in their class and
make adjustments to the assessment task or the assessment conditions if required for a particular learner or group of learners.

The Religious Education Achievement Standards are the basis for comparison when making judgements about learning. The Year Level Description and content areas are further sources of information to be considered when assessing student achievement.

Assessment data should be used in the next planning session to differentiate learning for individuals and groups and to ensure that high, attainable expectations are set for all students throughout the year to promote progress in learning. Class assessment data is collected each term and used by the class teacher for the following planning cycle. The same data is also used by the APRE to look for patterns in student attainment and progress in Religious Education to direct reflection and identify areas of particular need or adjustments required in the school Religious Education Program.

Consistency of teacher judgement is critical to continuity of learning for our students. Each term the teachers of religious education meet to be supported in the process of reflecting on the previous unit of work and student achievement. During that meeting the APRE will facilitate the sharing of work samples and a discussion of the assessment task in relation to the planning and achievement standard.

In Term 4 of each year, our teachers participate in a more formal Consistency of Teacher Judgement (CTJ) process with teachers from other Archdiocesan schools. This process involves professional conversations related to the learning and teaching and assessment of student work.

**Consistency of Teacher Judgement Processes**

Brisbane Catholic Education articulates that consistent teacher judgements are achieved when teachers:

- reference student work against the achievement standards of the Australian curriculum; and
- engage in intra and interschool moderation processes undertaken in supportive professional environments.

This process helps:

- develop shared interpretations of the Australian Curriculum achievement standards and expectations of what constitutes achievement of the standard
• develop reliability in making judgements
• strengthen the value of teachers’ judgements
• ensure that judgements applied across a body of evidence to be used for reporting purposes are fair and comparable.

The moderation of assessment tasks occurs on a number of levels at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School. A degree of moderation occurs during the planning process for units of work: teachers agree on the line of sight between the Achievement Standard, Knowledge, Understanding and Skills, and diverse assessment tasks which are similar in standard. The creation of an achievement standards matrix (criteria sheet) or rubrics for correction also assists teachers to apply the same correction standards to student work. The leadership team gains a commitment from teachers to meet within their year level groups at least every three weeks. It is during this time that teachers would be involved in a moderation process connected to individual tasks. Towards the end of each term teachers are expected to have year level meetings and perhaps utilize the professional learning team staff meetings to moderate a body of student work in each learning area for the purpose of assigning an overall grade for reporting purposes. Both of these processes are an attempt to establish equity in marking through discussion and annotation.

Interschool moderation occurs once per year on CTJ Day, being the third Monday of Term 4. St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School moderates with the other school within our cluster. Prior to interschool moderation activities teachers would engage in intra-school and inter-school moderation dialogue about the standard of student work samples that are to be shared at interschool meetings. A time is scheduled for staff to annotate work samples and to collaborate on the assessment of the student task.

**Reporting of Student Learning**

Student achievement is recognised and celebrated within our school community in a variety of ways including at informal professional conversations; one on one feedback to students; parent-teacher nights; learning team meetings; publication of work on the noticeboards, mentions in the newsletter and on the school website. Formally, St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School uses the Student Reporting System (SRS), which is Brisbane Catholic Education’s online student reporting tool. SRS facilitates the reporting of student achievement to parents and caregivers by allowing teachers and administrators to create, proofread, edit, verify and publish student reports. As has been noted previously and
is evident in the school’s Religion Planning Template, Religious Education is taught and assessed with rigour and is flexible to enable each student to achieve and demonstrate what they have learned. A detailed written report is issued to families twice a year for first and second semester. An electronic copy is kept on the staff portal as well as a hard copy within the students’ record file in the office. At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, teachers are asked to grade a student’s achievement level and effort using the five-point scale, but they also comment in the areas of Religious Education, English and Mathematics. These comments are to provide parents with additional information about the student’s level of achievement.

**Meaningful, Relevant Learning Experiences**

The Religious Education program at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School takes priority among programs and as the cornerstone to framing learning throughout the various years. To assist with the implementation of the program, funds are made available to the Assistant Principal – Religious Education to provide the necessary resources deemed necessary. Priorities are identified; plans and timelines determined and check points established to ensure that the best opportunities, and resources, are available for all our students. To date, much has been achieved to provide for a contemporary, student focused program, supporting the vital work of teachers, and specialists. Teachers regularly access ResourceLink, other on-line resources, weeblies and the Religious Education Portal. A dedicated bank of resources is housed in the Teacher Resources section of the library and this is added to as required. A number of digital resources are being created by staff to specifically address our needs here at St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School. They will be added to the staff portal. Sets of Bibles are available for all classes. The Catholic Children’s Bible is used from Prep to Year 3 and the NSRV Catholic Edition is used in the other grades. Materials that enhance prayer and liturgies are readily available and are being added to each year. The quality of the program is continually reviewed and assessed to ensure that we are meeting the expectations of teachers, opening our children to the wonder of God, making the Gospel real and meaningful and providing for these experiences through appropriate resources.
MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Processes for Evaluating Student Achievement

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Catholic Primary School, planning and evaluating the effectiveness of assessment processes occurs when teachers meet to plan a new unit of work and review the previous unit, including assessment tasks and student performance. Teachers make annotations on the unit or spend time modifying the unit plan for the information of teachers the next time the unit is used.

We will be using data from the BI tool to monitor the levels allocated to students in religion to inform us on the trends associated with classes and initiate discussion around the cycle of planning to reporting and where consistency and judgements may need to be looked at more closely.

It will result in using the BI tool with staff to discuss such topics as diversity of assessment; making tasks more challenging to extend students and assessing students with special needs and evaluate learning and teaching of religion and other curriculum areas in the school. This leads to whole school discussion and more professional learning on assessment and reporting.

Processes for Monitoring Planning

The most obvious form of monitoring teacher planning occurs when the APRE and CST attend planning meetings and, as part of the process, data on student achievement is used to inform learning intentions and success criteria and opportunities for diverse learning experiences and assessment tasks. At a class level, the planning allows for both general cohort and specific year level data, with some teachers also adding individual student data as well. Teachers are required to make and record adjustments for student in this planning document. This data may include student learning support, cultural background, religion and behavioural support.

On the planning template there is a section which requires teachers to record their Reflection and Evaluation comments for future units. This ensures that review of previous units is complete and adaptations are made and that completed units are uploaded to the portal by certain date for the CST and APRE to review. The school and system moderation process
(including CTJ) ensure that the effectiveness of year level planning is monitored, evaluated and reviewed.

**Processes for Monitoring the Religious Life of the School**

At St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School, both formal and informal processes are used to monitor how well the components of the RLOS are being addressed and taught. Formally, this occurs when the codified elements of each component being addressed in units of work are recorded in the Unit Plans and drawn from the Scope and Sequence Tables for each year level. This monitoring also occurs as part of the ongoing formal and informal school renewal processes throughout the school year. The APRE and Principal meet with the Parish Priest to review and plan for school and parish combined events, liturgical celebrations and prayer rituals in the school. Our Parish Priest is very active in the religious life of St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School in terms of celebrating Masses for classes, feast days and whole school celebrations. Each year the APRE plans and organises the school’s prayer and liturgical calendar which helps informs the teacher’s planning.

In recent years St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School has undertaken a renewal of our understanding and commitment to the charism of our founding religious institutions, in particular the St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph’s. These important elements of our history have been woven into many RE units of work and a number of resources have been created in support of this. The Leadership team, in conjunction with the Student Representative Council, meet to discuss and plan St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School’s involvement in mission and outreach activities and how they align to the RLOS and are being connected to the RE curriculum across relevant year levels. Specifically, we support Caritas’ Project Compassion; St Vincent de Paul’s Winter and Christmas Appeal and Catholic Mission Month. Each year teams of staff members liaise with each other and where appropriate with students, parents and the wider community to evaluate and review the 5 components of the Mission and Religious Education priority that are part of the Cyclical Review. St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School generally rates highly in these components as they are greatly valued within the school community. These ratings and evidence then goes on to inform the External School Review. With the school taking on Positive Behaviour for Learning as a way of encouraging Christian ethics and moral choice.
We have developed in to match it to our core values and school respect rules. School policies and procedures are reflective of the school’s charism and mission statement. Informally, we also receive regular positive feedback from our parish partners, parents and wider community about the strength of our vibrant religious life of the school. Many parents value the commitment we place on ensuring an authentic Catholic Christian faith is a lived reality within St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School.
St Joseph’s
Tobruk Memorial School
APPENDIX 1
Evidence for Element 1
Appendix 1

The school marches each year in the Beenleigh RSL Anzac Day March honouring all who have served in the defence forces but especially the men known as The Rats of Tobruk, whom co-founder Monsignor Steele was a member.

Rat of Tobruk, Gordon Wallace, speaking with parents and staff after attending the school’s Centenary of Anzac commemoration service in 2015.
The school celebrates Holy Week each year in a meaningful and creative way for students and the community.

The school hosts an art show every two years and staff and students contribute pieces which reflect spirituality and the charisms of the school. Senior students create crosses which become an important element in their graduation/thanksgiving liturgy.
The school celebrates liturgies and Masses such as this celebration of the Feast of St Joseph throughout the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Life of the School 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEEK BEGINNING</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TERM 1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TERM 2</strong></td>
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<td>11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

There is a plan for all staff, students and the wider community to be involved in prayer, liturgy and other special celebrations.
The school contributes to important social justice initiatives such as the purchase of a new Orange Sky Laundry van by Brisbane Catholic Education.

Excerpt from St Joseph’s Tobruk Memorial School Mission Statement

May the spirit of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop infiltrate our hearts and transform us. May the courage and camaraderie of the Rats of Tobruk embolden us to face the challenges that lie ahead and give character and depth to our friendships. May the generosity and simplicity of St Joseph keep us humble in our service.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop - Pray for us
Rats of Tobruk - We will remember them
St Joseph - Pray for us

A slide from our assembly slide show which acknowledges our co-founders and the charisms we use in our school.
The school community supports special appeals for people in need such as the Nepal Earthquake Appeal in 2015.

The school raised funds for a neighbouring family who suffered tragically after a house fire in 2015. We also provided food and water for them at the site directly after.
The school’s Core Values and Respect Rules are on display on the walkways on either side of our school hall.
Each year students are nominated to become a Mary’s Mate. This award is for students who live the virtues of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop in their school life.

There is a schedule of planning days each term to allow teachers to review the previous term’s units and then to develop the next term’s unit for RE with the APRE and CST.
St Joseph’s
Tobruk
Memorial
School

APPENDIX 2
Evidence for
Element 2
Appendix 2

With courage, faith and love
53 Kokoda Street Beenleigh Qld 4207
PO Box 719 Beenleigh Qld 4207
Telephone (07) 32872788
Facsimile 38074532
ptbeenleigh@one.catholic.edu.au
14th March 2015

Dear Families,

It is our hope that you will have several opportunities to view/experience and discuss your child’s learning and development throughout this first semester through class and year level information sessions, samples of work sent home, informal catch-ups with the class teacher, ‘celebration of learning’ sessions, formal reports and interviews.

As we approach the end of Term 1, the class teachers of St Joseph’s would like the opportunity to discuss with you the progress for your child at this relatively early point in the school year. The purpose of this interview is to summarise trends in student academic achievement, effort and application, social skills and behaviour during the first term from both the teacher’s and parent’s perspectives. Teachers and parents meet together to identify what is going well and where there might be room for improvement. The occasion of the interview is an opportunity for purposeful discussion and to develop the partnership between home and school. In early years’ classes, teachers will create age appropriate ways for children to reflect on their learning, behaviour, effort and social skills during the term.

In order to provide this opportunity, we have set aside time in the final two weeks of the term.

Each year parents are invited to meet with their child’s teacher to discuss their academic, social and spiritual development in Term 1 and also at the end of Term 2 to support the Semester 1 report card.

![Weekly Timetable Image]

Each teacher has a timetable with 2.5 hrs of time allocated for the teaching of religion.
Students connected their maths unit to a worthwhile social justice issue. They will run a fair and the money donated is being put towards the BCE initiative of purchasing another Orange Sky Laundry van.

Each classroom has a dedicated sacred space used as a focal point for classroom prayer and meditation.
There is a sacred space in the staffroom which is the focal point for staff prayer and reflection
APPENDIX 3
Evidence for Element 3
Appendix 3

Teachers are using data such as the religion of students in their class to guide their planning and teaching. It is also used to guide the planning of activities related to the religious life of the school.

Our school uses the lady beetle as a symbol of St Mary MacKillop. These ceramic beetles are made by the students. They are given to visitors to the school as a gift. As they are placed in the hand of the recipient a blessing is made based on the charism of St Mary of the Cross.
Our hall reflects the images, sayings and spirit of St Mary of the Cross and the charism of the Sisters of St Joseph. With a sister still working in the school our link is a direct one.

Sr Jenny Scari works with the students and families in her role as a Pastoral Worker. She uses a “Providence Bag” in the way St Mary MacKillop did to assist families in need.
Student reporting in religion uses the BCE Student Reporting System to communicate achievement to parents and for record keeping.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Achievement</td>
<td>At the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
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</table>

Blaze participates regularly in religious events. He can soundly identify people and messages in the Bible to express ideas about God’s relationship with humanity and harmony amongst creation. He can identify Jesus as the Messiah and recognise the importance of the Sacraments of Initiation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Achievement</td>
<td>At the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptive Modes</td>
<td>At the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productive Modes</td>
<td>At the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Blaze is reading and comprehending texts at the expected year level. He uses a variety of spelling strategies when writing simple sentences. Blaze can also apply grammar, punctuation and editing with written texts. He should focus on making wider vocabulary choices and expanding his sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Achievement</td>
<td>Above the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and Understanding</td>
<td>Above the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills (Problem Solving and Reasoning)</td>
<td>Above the expected standard</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blaze has demonstrated a solid understanding of mathematical concepts taught this semester. He solves problems involving time, money and metric measurement. He can complete addition and subtraction problems to 5000, apply place value, recall addition number facts and construct 2D shapes.