every child counts!

What is the curriculum in a systemic Catholic school?

All Catholic primary and secondary schools fulfill the requirements of the NSW Education Act 1990 by following NSW Board of Studies syllabuses. Over the next few years, this will involve implementation of the new Australian Curriculum. This means that teachers in Catholic schools follow the same curriculum as teachers in State and Independent schools. At the same time, Catholic schools explicitly teach Religious Education in all years and students are actively engaged in prayer and sacramental celebrations. In primary schools, the curriculum is divided into Key Learning Areas (KLAs) – Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts, and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

Systemic Catholic secondary colleges offer a full range of subjects to students across the Archdiocese including an extensive range of courses within each of the KLAs of English, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and its Environment, Technological and Applied Studies, and Creative and Performing Arts. They also offer Vocational Education and Training (VET). Religious Education is taught in Years 7–12.

Secondary colleges offer the range of Extension 1 and 2 courses and also offer VET courses which have dual accreditation by the Board of Studies (BOS) and the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). The establishment of Trade Training Centres provides students in Years 11 and 12 the opportunity to gain their Higher School Certificate (HSC) by completing a number of VET courses. Consequently, students in their final year have access to three pathways through which they can complete their senior studies. Students have the opportunity to complete a pathway studying either a full academic program; a blended academic program with one VET course which will provide them with an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) by following NSW Board of Studies syllabuses. The CEO Arrowsmith Program for students from the Archdiocese in Years 9 and 10 with specific learning difficulties, the CEO Allied Health Project and the CEO Sensory Impairment Program (SIP) Resource Centre are also on the EOC site at Lewisham.

What part does Religious Education play in the curriculum?

Religious Education is at the heart of Catholic education, informing and influencing all aspects of school life. Religious Education is provided in many ways. In the classroom, students follow the Religious Education curriculum and the student textbooks ‘To know, Worship and Love’. Students also participate in sacramental programs, reflection days and retreats, in the liturgical and prayer life of the school, and in community service activities and social justice programs. All students are expected to participate in the religious life of the school, including the formal Religious Education curriculum.

What provisions are made for students with diverse learning needs?

Catholic schools in Sydney have a long tradition of commitment to supporting students with diverse needs, particularly those with a disability or sensory impairment and those who are newly arrived in Australia. The mission of the Church calls for justice and equity, and this is a core value for our schools. The establishment of the Eileen O’Connor Centre of Lewisham in 2012 has become a crucial element of the implementation of this mission in Sydney Catholic schools.

The Eileen O’Connor Centre (EOC) supports students with diverse learning needs in Sydney Catholic schools through onsite, online and blended learning with state-of-the-art technology facilities. In particular, the EOC facilitates three programs: the Jean Varser Program, which will support students with disabilities or sensory impairment; the Becket Intensive English Program, which will support new arrival students and those for whom English is an additional language; and the Newman Program, which will support gifted and talented students. The Centre provides support services to students, students and parents through new technologies that facilitate communication and learning within, between and across schools, Regional Offices and homes. The CEO Arrowsmith Program for students from the Archdiocese in Years 9 and 10 with specific learning difficulties, the CEO Allied Health Project and the CEO Sensory Impairment Program (SIP) Resource Centre are also on the EOC site at Lewisham.

Are parents encouraged to become involved in systemic Catholic schools?

As the Church recognises that parents are the primary educators of their children and that the home and the school are bound together in common purpose, parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their children’s education. Parents are invited to participate in school planning and review processes and are represented on the School Finance Committee and Enrolment Committee. Authentic parent engagement is an ongoing strategic improvement goal.

Questions frequently asked by parents about Catholic education in Sydney

FOR 2014

CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE SYDNEY
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Certificate 1, 2 or 3 depending on the level pathway through which they can achieve either a full academic program; a blended academic program with one VET course which will provide them with an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) which is the traditional path to university entry; or a VET program. Educational opportunities are also available for students with disabilities or sensory impairment; the EOC facilitates three programs: the Jean Varser Program, which will support students with disabilities or sensory impairment; the Becket Intensive English Program, which will support new arrival students and those for whom English is an additional language; and the Newman Program, which will support gifted and talented students. The Centre provides support services to students, students and parents through new technologies that facilitate communication and learning within, between and across schools, Regional Offices and homes. The CEO Arrowsmith Program for students from the Archdiocese in Years 9 and 10 with specific learning difficulties, the CEO Allied Health Project and the CEO Sensory Impairment Program (SIP) Resource Centre are also on the EOC site at Lewisham.

Are programs provided for culturally and linguistically diverse students?

Schools with a significant number of students with backgrounds in languages other than English have whole-school structures and processes that help students to develop English language proficiency. This may include specialist trained teachers, mainstream programs that support English language development, and intensive English language support.

Students newly arrived from non-English speaking countries needing intensive tuition who enrol at a Catholic secondary school have provision made to attend the Becket Intensive English Program at the EOC until their English reaches the required level of proficiency. The CEO Sydney also operates an itinerant teacher service to primary schools to help newly arrived students (migrants and refugees) to develop survival English that enables integration into the mainstream class.

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Who can enrol in a systemic Catholic school?

Catholic schools have a unique role in helping families to nurture and develop their Catholic faith, within the context of their parish and regional communities. As inclusive and evangelising communities, they also welcome families from other faith traditions where this is possible. Enrolments are made in accordance with the following criteria.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

1. Baptised Catholic children of regularly worshipping Catholic families with strong demonstrable links to their faith community and who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

2. Siblings of children already attending the school whose families have demonstrated ongoing support for the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

3. Children of families who have ‘special pastoral circumstances’ as assessed by the Enrolment Committee or, where appropriate, the school Principal or/and priests of associated parishes in conjunction with the Principal.

SECONDARY COLLEGES

1. Baptised Catholic children of regularly worshipping Catholic families with strong demonstrable links to the local designated Catholic feeder parish or parishes.

2. Siblings of children already attending the college whose families have demonstrated ongoing support for the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

3. Children of families who have ‘special pastoral circumstances’ as assessed by the Enrolment Committee or, where appropriate, the school Principal or/and the Parish Priest in conjunction with the Principal.

4. Children of Catholic families not covered above or who are outside the local designated Catholic feeder schools/parishes.

5. Children of regularly worshipping families from other Christian denominations who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

6. Children of families who have ‘special pastoral circumstances’ as assessed by the Enrolment Committee or, where appropriate, the school Principal or/and priests of associated parishes in conjunction with the Principal.

7. Children of Orthodox families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

8. Children of families from other faith traditions or non-religious backgrounds who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

9. Children of regularly worshipping families from other Christian denominations who have strong demonstrable links to their faith community and who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

10. Children of siblings of children already attending the school whose families have demonstrated ongoing support for the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

11. Children of families from other faith traditions or non-religious backgrounds who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

12. Children of families who have special pastoral circumstances as assessed by the Enrolment Committee or, where appropriate, the school Principal or/and priests of associated parishes in conjunction with the Principal.

13. Children of families not covered above or who are outside the local designated Catholic parish.

14. Children of families from other faith traditions or non-religious backgrounds who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

15. Children of families from other faith traditions or non-religious backgrounds who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

16. Children of families who have ‘special pastoral circumstances’ as assessed by the Enrolment Committee or, where appropriate, the school Principal or/and priests of associated parishes in conjunction with the Principal.

How and when do I enrol my child?

All Catholic systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney are responsible for their own enrolments. So if you are interested in enrolling your child, you need to contact the school’s Principal or Enrolment Secretary, who will advise you of the procedures to follow.

The enrolment period usually commences in March and continues until the end of May. By law students must commence schooling before they turn six years of age. School entry age is no longer restricted but students must be able to demonstrate a capacity to move to Year 1 the following year. Generally students in NSW start school around the age of five. In June 2009, the NSW State government legislated to raise the minimum school leaving age from 15 to 17, unless they meet the alternative criteria of undertaking approved education or training or participation in work for at least 25 hours per week. Students therefore do not need to be re-enrolled for Year 11.

Parents/carers are usually interviewed by the Principal or delegated staff member before the enrolment is finalised. Documents needed at the interview include the completed enrolment form, parish reference, birth certificate, baptismal certificate, immunisation records, and passport if you are newly arrived in Australia.

Secondary schools may also require academic results or reports from the student’s previous school, a reference from the parish priest or another prominent citizen, and medical records, if needed. Most schools arrange an Orientation Day in Term 4 for children starting school the following year. Many schools also hold Information Nights for parents in Term 4 or in Term 1 of the year of commencement.

How much are the school fees?

Systemic Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney are administered by the Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Schools (SACS) Board and the Catholic Education Office (CEO) Sydney. The sources of funds for schools are government grants, school fees, subject levies, parish grants, and fundraising by Parents & Friends Associations. Annual tuition fees for children are set by the SACS Board. It is the policy of the SACS Board and the CEO to keep fees to a minimum. Tuition fees are charged for the first three children in a family. Fees for the first child are charged at 100 per cent, for the second child at 75 per cent, and the third child at 50 per cent. Fourth and subsequent children are exempt from tuition fees. The tuition fee includes emergency ambulance transport and Student Accident Insurance cover. This covers students for school activities only during school hours, and other approved school activities such as school camps, school sport, work experience, and travelling to and from school. To ensure sound financial stewardship each school also has a Building Levy. This levy services debt, capital works and repairs and maintenance of school facilities. Schools also charge local fees.

The building levy is charged proportionately for families with children attending more than one systemic Catholic school. Parents should enquire about discounts at the relevant school. Families who have a genuine inability to pay tuition fees or other charges are invited to speak to the school Principal.

Annual tuition fees 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary: K-6</th>
<th>1st child (100%)</th>
<th>2nd child (75%)</th>
<th>3rd child (50%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>$946.00</td>
<td>$709.50</td>
<td>$473.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary: 7-8</td>
<td>1,326.00</td>
<td>994.50</td>
<td>663.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>1,470.00</td>
<td>1,102.50</td>
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<td>11-12</td>
<td>1,599.00</td>
<td>1,249.25</td>
<td>799.50</td>
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School year calendar

2013

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 SCHOOLS OPEN</th>
<th>SCHOOLS CLOSE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1: Mon 29 January (Term 1)</td>
<td>Fri 12 April (Term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 30 January (Students)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2: Mon 29 April</td>
<td>Fri 28 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 29 July (Students)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3: Mon 15 July</td>
<td>Fri 30 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 4: Fri 8 October</td>
<td>Fri 20 December</td>
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2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 SCHOOLS OPEN</th>
<th>SCHOOLS CLOSE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1: Mon 28 January (Term 1)</td>
<td>Fri 11 April (Term 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 29 July (Students)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2: Mon 28 April</td>
<td>Fri 27 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3: Mon 14 July</td>
<td>Fri 19 September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 4: Fri 7 October</td>
<td>Fri 19 December</td>
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