



**St Mary's College, Wellington**

## **The NZ Curriculum Working Document for St Mary's College, Wellington**

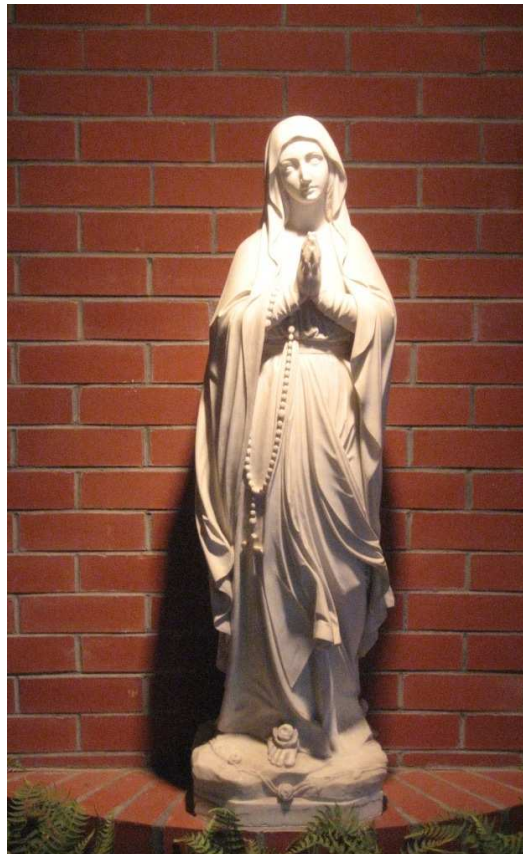


*"In discharging the great duty of teaching...labour as strenuously as if great efforts were necessary to ensure any degree of success, yet with an abiding consciousness that only God can fructify what His servants plant and water"*

**Catherine McAuley**

At St Mary's College  
 we want each girl  
 to be  
 a woman of faith  
 who can demonstrate by her day to day actions  
 that she is

- ❖ resourceful and resilient,
- ❖ considerate and positive
- ❖ aware of justice issues and has social values
- ❖ healthy and well balanced
- ❖ independent and has self-respect
- ❖ a creative thinker
- ❖ socially able in a variety of environments
- ❖ a life long independent learner



- ❖ able to show perseverance,
- ❖ confident
- ❖ kind, caring and empathetic
- ❖ adaptable
- ❖ able to care for self, others and the environment,
- ❖ brave and courageous,
- ❖ able to demonstrate a healthy cynicism,
- ❖ financially and socially literate,
- ❖ enterprising,

- ❖ caring and helpful,
- ❖ socially aware,
- ❖ a contributor to society,

- ❖ a multi-faceted thinker
- ❖ pro-active
- ❖ a flexible thinker,

## VISION

The VISION of the NZ Curriculum is defined as *“Young people who will be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.”*

The Mission Statement for St Mary’s states that *“St Mary’s College provides an excellent Catholic education for young women.”*

### **Our Charter identifies our Special Character as follows:**

*“St Mary’s College is a Catholic school in which the whole College community, through the general school programme and in its religious studies observances, exercises the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ. These values are as expressed in the scriptures and in the practices, worship and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, as determined from time to time by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Wellington”.* (Integration Agreement).

The Proprietors of the College are Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy. As a Catholic Mercy College the Mercy tradition is at the heart of education at St Mary’s College.

The School motto, *“Misericordia et Sapientia”* (Mercy and Wisdom), expresses the commitment of the school community to the vision of Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, *whose values incorporate* respect for human dignity, charity, justice, compassion, faith, hope and service.

## PRINCIPLES

*“The principles are the foundations of curriculum decision making....they relate to how curriculum is formalised in a school; they are particularly relevant to the processes of planning, prioritising and review.”* NZ Curriculum Document Page 9.

### **High Expectations**

As identified in our Mission Statement we have high expectations of personal excellence for every student. This includes all areas of the curriculum and co-curriculum.

### **Treaty of Waitangi**

St Mary’s College acknowledges the Treaty of Waitangi and the bi-cultural heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand as an integral part of our tradition. Bishop Viard, who founded St Mary’s College in 1850, worked closely with Maori peoples around New Zealand. He was working in New Zealand at the time of the signing of the Treaty. Bishop Viard recognised the importance of education for Maori and Pakeha in the development of the new colony and ensured that St Mary’s provided an education for all. The Sisters of Mercy, who took over the running of St Mary’s in 1861, have continued in this tradition. As Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa, the Sisters of Mercy of New Zealand the rights and dignities of the tangata whenua are paramount.

All students at St Mary’s College have the opportunity to be taught Te Reo Maori. The curriculum acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bi-cultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand with units of work incorporating te reo Maori me ona tikanga where possible.

## **Cultural Diversity**

The curriculum reflects the cultural diversity of our community and values the histories and traditions of its peoples. The major cultural groups attending St Mary's College are NZ Pakeha, Maori, Samoan, and Filipino students. Students from Fiji, Tokelau, Kiribati, Tonga, Korea, China, Japan, India, Africa, Europe and South America also attend the College. In the past there have been close associations with other immigrant groups including Irish, Polish, Dutch, Italian and Greek families. With this long cultural history, the College respects all these diverse cultural threads.

## **Inclusion**

*“The curriculum is non-sexist, non-racist and non-discriminatory. It ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed.”* NZ Curriculum Document Page 9.

## **Learning to Learn**

*“The curriculum encourages all students to reflect on their own learning processes and to learn how to learn”* NZ Curriculum Document Page 9. St Mary's College encourages this reflective ability through formative assessments, self-review and self-evaluation. Teacher guidance is an integral part of this reflective process.

## **Community Engagement**

The curriculum has meaning for students and connects with their wider lives. It is a living document in which all learning areas are encouraged to connect with students, families and communities e.g. contributing to missions, encouraging a greater awareness of social justice issues.

## **Coherence**

St Mary's College wants students to be able to have a broad education which opens up pathways for future learning through a curriculum which has links across all learning areas. The College works hard to ensure that transitions between different stages in education eg Year 8 to Year 9 are positive and that students in Years 12 and 13 are well prepared for tertiary or workplace.

## **Future Focus**

The curriculum encourages students to look to the future by exploring such significant future-focussed issues as sustainability, citizenship, enterprise and globalisation. St Mary's College focuses on assisting students to become resilient learners who are flexible and able to embrace change. Students who will have a sound basis for multitasking and the ability to move between different careers, some of which may not have been developed as yet. Students with confidence and awareness of the needs of the society in which they live so that they can make a positive difference in the best interests of all concerned.

## Special Character

As a Roman Catholic Mercy College, special character is an important principle in the curriculum of St Mary's College. The special character underpins all that we do and defines us as a state integrated school. As a Catholic school we follow the teachings of Christ Jesus. This is further articulated in the Mercy charism which identifies the corporal and spiritual works of Mercy as defining our special character. As a Catholic Mercy College we maintain the right to have Religious Education taught at each level of the curriculum as the cornerstone for ethical and moral issues. We encourage dialogue and debate, reflection and prayer in all aspects of life and in decision making.

## VALUES

*“Values are part of the everyday curriculum – encouraged, modelled and explored”*  
NZ Curriculum Document Page 9.

### Value Statement

*“The Catholic character of the College, including the Mercy values of respect for human dignity, charity, justice, compassion, faith, hope and service are deeply held beliefs which are modelled in all activities of the College. They are evident and supported in all aspects of teaching and learning. Students and staff will respect each other as individuals, with diversity valued and celebrated.”* Charter St Mary's College, Wellington

As a Mercy College we aim to educate following the Mercy characteristics of education which are expected to underpin the curriculum taught at St Mary's College:

- Cultivate in young women a respect for self, others and the earth.
- Develop a sense of social justice in the spirit of the Gospel and of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Promote a concern for and willingness to reach out to those in need.
- Foster a commitment to service.
- Encourage the development of strong, confident Christian women, who have a life-giving affiliation with the Mercy tradition and values and particular love for our Lady of Mercy.
- Touch the lives of students, their families, staff, local communities and the wider Catholic Church.
- Offer spiritual formation and pastoral care according to Gospel values, Catholic tradition and Mercy charism.
- Achieve standards of excellence and provide a pathway to a wide range of educational and vocational opportunities.
- Empower, enable and affirm the development of the whole person, encouraging each young woman to realise her full potential.
- Offer clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and sound discipline.

- Provide an environment that affirms Gospel and family values, where girls are exposed to good role models.
- Celebrate uniqueness and diversity while recognising the special place of tangata whenua o Aotearoa.
- Encourage participation and leadership at all levels.

## KEY COMPETENCIES

The NZ Curriculum identifies the following five key competencies as the basic keys to learning in every learning area. They are intrinsic throughout all aspects of the curriculum, as are the college values:

- Thinking
- Using language, symbols and texts
- Managing self
- Relating to others
- Participating and contributing

It is expected that the key competencies will be

- articulated in planning
- linked into our school philosophy and built into unit plans and assessment practices
- evidenced in classroom practice
- modelled to our students
- taught to our students through all teacher practices and interactions to enable each student to monitor and demonstrate their own development

***In reality the key competencies are capabilities for living and life-long learning.*** In the tradition of St Mary's we have expected our students to be able to demonstrate these competencies clearly. However in the development of the NZ Curriculum Document it has been seen fit to articulate and to include them because it has been recognised that changes in New Zealand society, due to a number of factors, has eroded the more traditional family and local community influence.

St Mary's College is committed to the five key competencies of the NZ Curriculum. These are outlined below from the NZ Curriculum Document Pages 12-13:

### **Thinking**

Thinking is about using creative, critical, and metacognitive processes to make sense of information, experiences, and ideas. These processes can be applied to purposes such as developing understanding, making decisions, shaping actions, or constructing knowledge. Intellectual curiosity is at the heart of this competency.

Students who are competent thinkers and problem-solvers actively seek, use, and create knowledge. They reflect on their own learning, draw on personal knowledge and intuitions, ask questions, and challenge the basis of assumptions and perceptions.

### **Using language, symbols, and texts**

Using language, symbols, and texts is about working with and making meaning of the codes in which knowledge is expressed. Languages and symbols are systems for representing and communicating information, experiences, and ideas. People use languages and symbols to produce texts of all kinds: written, oral/aural, and visual; informative and imaginative; informal and formal; mathematical, scientific, and technological.

Students who are competent users of language, symbols, and texts can interpret and use words, number, images, movement, metaphor, and technologies in a range of contexts. They recognise how choices of language, symbol, or text affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond to communications. They confidently use ICT (including, where appropriate, assistive technologies) to access and provide information and to communicate with others.

### **Managing self**

This competency is associated with self-motivation, a "can-do" attitude, and with students seeing themselves as capable learners. It is integral to self-assessment.

Students who manage themselves are enterprising, resourceful, reliable, and resilient. They establish personal goals, make plans, manage projects, and set high standards. They have strategies for meeting challenges. They know when to lead, when to follow, and when and how to act independently.

### **Relating to others**

Relating to others is about interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts. This competency includes the ability to listen actively, recognise different points of view, negotiate, and share ideas.

Students who relate well to others are open to new learning and able to take different roles in different situations. They are aware of how their words and actions affect others. They know when it is appropriate to compete and when it is appropriate to co-operate. By working effectively together, they can come up with new approaches, ideas, and ways of thinking.

**Participating and contributing**

This competency is about being actively involved in communities. Communities include family, whānau, and school and those based, for example, on a common interest or culture. They may be drawn together for purposes such as learning, work, celebration, or recreation. They may be local, national, or global. This competency includes a capacity to contribute appropriately as a group member, to make connections with others, and to create opportunities for others in the group.

Students who participate and contribute in communities have a sense of belonging and the confidence to participate within new contexts. They understand the importance of balancing rights, roles, and responsibilities and of contributing to the quality and sustainability of social, cultural, physical, and economic environments.