ST MARY’S CATHOLIC PRIMARY,  
ASCOT VALE  
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING POLICY  

JULY 2016

St Mary’s School has a strong commitment to child safety as is reflected in our Vision Statement: “Each child has the right to feel happy, safe and valued”. We continually strive to ensure that every child is safe from harm including all forms of abuse. We exercise zero tolerance to abuse.

RATIONALE: -

We believe at St. Mary’s that Professional Learning is about personal and professional growth and career path opportunities. It allows for reflection; and the undertaking of small changes to improve teaching and learning practices. We also acknowledge that expert teachers make a difference at our school and by participating in a Professional Learning Programme all teachers can improve their teaching and learning practices and student learning outcomes.

We also believe that Professional Learning is fundamentally concerned with assisting teachers and non-teaching staff to promote the knowledge, understandings, skills and attitudes considered vital for a teaching profession. It takes place at various times and at different levels. e.g. collaborative planning times, peer support, in-services, workshops, conferences, network meetings, team teaching situations and tertiary courses. At all times we encourage that it takes place within a non-threatening environment which favours a supportive leadership and collaborative peer approach.

We value our professional approach to others, by our willingness to work as a team, encouraging and supporting one another, being ready to share our gifts and ideas.

At St. Mary’s, Professional Learning is based on the following principles:

- Professional Learning is reflective of our Vision Statement.
- Professional Learning is reflective of the life long process of learning.
- Professional Learning is an important component of our School Learning Plan.
- Professional Learning is seen as a collective responsibility, based on the understanding that its effectiveness increases when individuals take part in the planning, organization and evaluation of their own professional Learning.
- Teachers are a major resource in our school. It is important to recognize, affirm and value their work.
- The professional Learning of teachers must contribute to improving students’ learning outcomes and the professional standards of teachers.
- Professional Learning needs to be accessible to the shared needs of our school and the needs of specific groups or individuals.
• The School Learning Committee/Leadership team make recommendations regarding how to use pupil-free days, taking into account the school’s priorities for the year and budget available.
• Teachers are expected to report back to the rest of the staff regarding Professional Learning they have undertaken.

• *This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year review cycle.*