



# 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.*