

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ASCOT VALE

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE



St Mary's Catholic Primary School provides a Catholic education for children within the Parish of the Ascot Vale and in accordance with the school's enrolment policy.

ENROLMENT PRIORITIES AT ST MARY'S

1. Catholic children who are residents of the parish of Ascot Vale.
2. Catholic children who do not reside in the parish but are recognised as parishioners by the Parish Priest.
3. Catholic children from other parishes (for pastoral reasons).
4. Children from non-Catholic Eastern churches who reside in the parish.
5. Children from non-Catholic Eastern churches who reside outside the parish.
6. Other Christian children who reside in the parish.
7. Other Christian children who reside outside the parish.
8. Non-Christian children who reside in the parish.
9. Non-Christian children who reside outside the parish.

Note: Siblings of children already enrolled in the school are given a priority.

Democratic Principles

St Mary's Primary School aims to promote lifelong learning and active participation as citizens in Australian society. Learning and teaching practice is based on an integrated curriculum and implemented through an inquiry approach. An important focus of curriculum development and implementation is the focus on Community and Citizenship, which is developed and explored in line with the Australian Curriculum Framework (Health and Physical Education and the Civics and Citizenship) and the vision for Catholic Education. *"Our goal is to **enable every young person to be a successful, engaged and purposeful learner**, with the confidence to embrace opportunity and the ability to take responsibility for themselves and their life. Every student will be empowered to become a lifelong learner, able to adapt to the challenges of a rapidly changing world and to commit to authentic action for justice and the common good. To support this goal, we aim to **plan and provide safe, contemporary and effective learning environments**, where students feel comfortable, accepted and motivated to learn and explore. Contemporary learning requires high-quality teaching. We therefore aim to **attract,***

develop and retain the very best teachers and staff, ensuring all staff have a high level of knowledge and skills and employ a suite of contemporary, evidence-based teaching strategies. 2011–2015 **DIRECTIONS for Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne 2011 – 2015.**

The programmes of St Mary's Primary School and the Learning and teaching associated with these programmes support and promote:-

- the principles and practice of Australian democracy;
- the elected government;
- the rule of law;
- equal rights for all before the law;
- freedom of religion;
- freedom of speech and association; and,
- values of openness and tolerance.

This is communicated using a variety of media, through the policies, programmes, documentation and practices of the school. This occurs formally at the enrolment interview on application for enrolment tour of St Mary's; through newsletter items, at regular school assemblies especially those acknowledging key events and occasions in the history and democratic development of Australia.

Governance Structure of St Mary's Primary School, ASCOT VALE

As a Victorian Catholic school, St Mary's Primary School operates under the canonical authority of the Archbishop of the Melbourne Archdiocese and the Parish Priest, Fr Justin Ford.

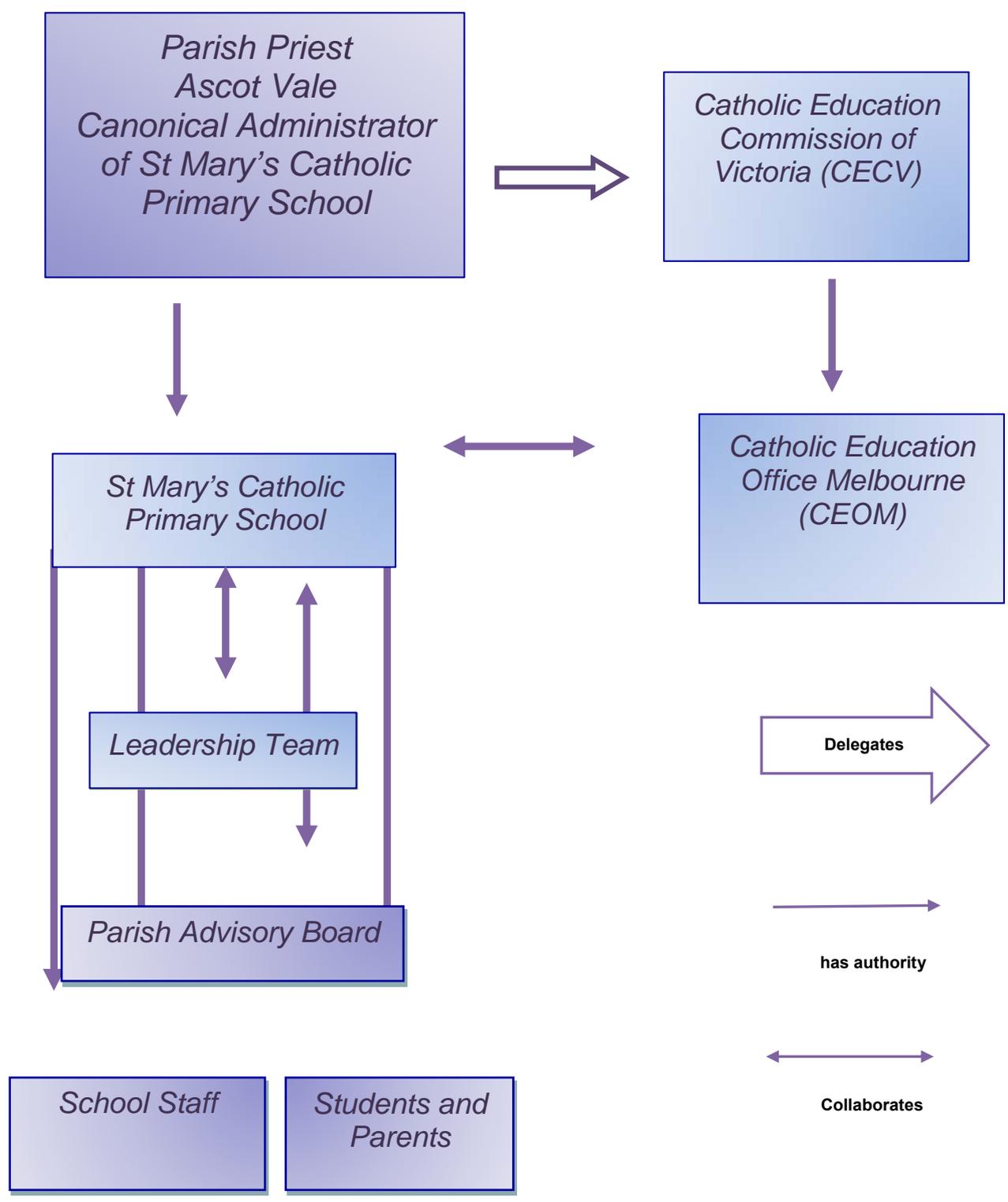
As the canonical administrator, the Parish Priest is the governing authority of St Mary's Primary School and the Principal is his delegate. It is the principal who takes responsibility for the day to day running and management of the school, its community and its facilities in consultation with the parish priest.

The Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM) acts on behalf of the Archbishop to assist St Mary's Primary School to maintain the highest possible standards of learning and teaching.

As the authority of all canonical administrators and therefore the Parish Priest, the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) is delegated authority by canonical authorities to fulfil accountability and reporting requirements to the Australian and Victorian governments, working through the diocesan Catholic Education Offices. St Mary's Primary School ensures it complies with all requirements of the Australian and Victorian governments for Catholic Schools and reports this information to the Catholic Education Office as requested.

St Mary's Primary School utilizes the policies developed by CECV and CEOM in developing its own policies and strategies to meet legal, financial, educational and reporting obligations.

The following diagram demonstrates the structure of St Mary's Catholic Primary School as an entity and within the Victorian Catholic Education sector.



A **Leadership Team** is appointed by the Principal in consultation with the Parish Priest. This Leadership Team has the role of supporting the Principal in decision-making and also the daily running of the school re administrative, pastoral and educational. The purpose of the Leadership Team is to strategically work together to lead the vision of St Mary's Primary School through the implementation of the School Improvement Plan. This team is made up of the **Deputy Principal/Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator, Religious Education Leader, Learning and Teaching Coordinator, Literacy Co-ordinator, Administrator/ICT Coordinator and Mathematics Co-ordinator**. The senior leadership team meets once per fortnight or as required to ensure the learning and teaching practices in all curriculum areas are continually improving and that student learning and well-being is priority.

The Function and Responsibility of the Parish Advisory Board

Governance and Authority

Parish

Within the provisions of Canon Law, the parish priest in consultation with the parish community is responsible for providing for the Catholic education of parish children and young adults as well the catechetical formation of the faithful and outreach to those who are no longer practising their faith or who do not profess the Catholic religion.

The Parish Advisory Board (PAB) provides advice to the parish priest within the context of this Constitution and the vision statement of the parish.

Parish Primary Schools

With the approval and under the direction of the Archbishop of Melbourne, St Mary's and St Margaret's Primary School, have been established to provide Catholic education, according to the precepts, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.

Each school is administered by the parish priest of St Mary's, Ascot Vale under the supervision of the Archbishop of Melbourne and is acknowledged as Catholic by his authority.

The governance of each school is undertaken by the parish priest with the support of the relevant school principal.

The Parish Advisory Board (PAB) provides advice to the principal of each school within the context of this Constitution and the school's vision and mission statements.

The parish priest reserves his authority in matters relating to:

- the Catholicity of the school
- diocesan regulations
- employment of staff
- the formation and dissolution of the board
- appointment of board members and office bearers
- the appointment and dismissal of principals
- school finances.

Within the provisions of Canon Law, the PAB is responsible to the parish priest, who in turn is subject to the vigilance of the Archbishop of Melbourne.

The **PAB** has no responsibility for the internal management and administration of the schools, which are the responsibility of the relevant school principal.

1. Definitions

The Archbishop is the Catholic Archbishop for the time being of the Archdiocese of Melbourne or the person duly appointed to administer the Archdiocese.

The **parish** is as defined by the Archbishop of Melbourne in accordance with Canon Law.

The **parish priest** is the parish priest for the time being of the parish of Ascot Vale or the person duly appointed to administer the parish.

The **Parish Advisory Board** (PAB) is the body responsible for advising the parish priest and principal according to the provisions of this Constitution.

Land and Buildings

The ownership of land and buildings thereon is vested in the Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Melbourne, which shall hold such in trust for the parish in accordance with Canon Law.

The costs of all land and buildings, comprising buildings equipped to satisfy the requirements of each parish school, shall be underwritten by the parish.

PAB purposes

The purposes of the PAB are to:

- (a) act as an advisory body to the parish priest and each principal, on matters concerning education in the parish
- (b) act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning education in the parish primary school
- (c) provide a link between the parish priest, principal, teachers and parishioners in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the parish community
- (d) promote community development by fostering a strong interrelationship between parish and the parish primary school, Catholic secondary colleges and pre-schools.

St Mary's Primary School's structures for managing its financial and legal obligations

The Parish Priest is responsible for the financial management and legal obligations of St Mary's Primary School. The Principal is delegated with responsibility for the management of the school's funds by the Parish Priest. The Parish Priest and Principal will engage an accountant whose responsibility it is to ensure the school's finances and legal obligations are carried out.

The School Accountant completes the Annual Financial Statement (AFS), which will be completed in consultation with the Parish Priest and the Principal. The Parish Priest and Principal will sign the completed AFS as being true and correct. Support and advice is systematically given by finance consultants at the Catholic Education Office.

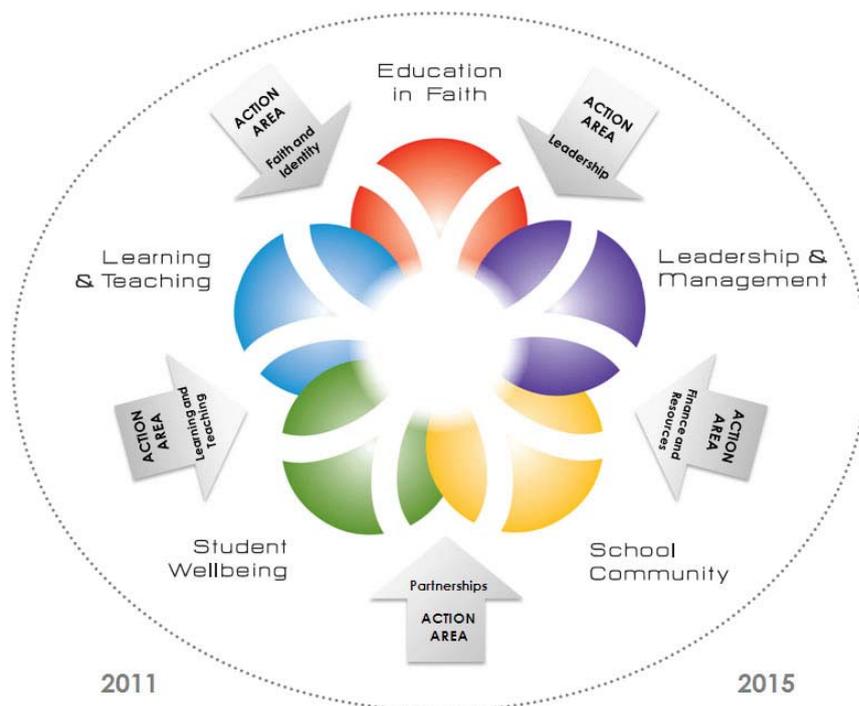
An annual audit will be carried out of the school's finances. The Parish Priest, Principal and School Accountant are expected to be present for the annual audit and subsequent discussions regarding the auditors' findings (exit meeting). The Parish Priest and Principal are required to attest to the honesty, accuracy and integrity of the AFS at the audit exit meeting.

Functions and Duties of the Governance of St Mary's Primary School

The Parish Priest, Principal and Leadership Team have the responsibility to (*but not limited to*):

- develop, review and assist in implementing a vision and mission for Catholic education for St Mary's Primary School, ASCOT VALE, from which policy will be developed; this is done with input from representatives from the whole school community
- ensure there is consultation and collaboration with representatives of the school community, staff, students and parents in developing school policy where it is appropriate
- develop review and implement the School Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plan
- lead the school in its cyclical review process, (every four years) which is completed by representatives of the whole school community and involves input by an independent reviewer appointed by Catholic Education Office Melbourne
- ensure the CEOM *Financial and Administrative Procedures Manual* is used as guide for the schools finance management
- ensure the completion of the *Annual Financial Statement* and the completion of the Australian Government's online *Financial Questionnaire*
- utilize the *Legal Issues In Schools* (CECV 2003 *currently under review*) document for advice on a wide range of legal issues, in particular those related to use of the internet, enrolment, employment of staff, sexual harassment, and mandatory reporting
- refer to the CEOM and CECV policies in developing school based policies, practice and procedures.
- ensure teaching staff are registered with the *Victorian Institute of Teaching* and have a current *Criminal Record Check*.
- ensure non-teaching staff and parent/community helpers and volunteers have a *Working With Children Check*.
- obtain professional advice on employment and industrial relations matters from the CECV Industrial Relations Unit as required and ensure that workplace requirements and agreements are adhered to.
- determine the School's Enrolment Policy.
- encourage close relationship between the Parish and St Margaret's Primary School.
- prepare an Annual Report to the Parish Community.
- oversee promotional activities of the school.
- set the level of school fees and levies annually is consultation with the Parish Priest.

Development of the School Improvement Plan for St Mary's Primary School (the school's structures and plans for developing its strategic direction)



The School Improvement Framework, diagrammatically represented above, forms the basis of the development of school policy and practice in the *spheres* of Education in Faith, Learning & Teaching, Leadership & Management, Student Wellbeing and School Community. Central to each of the overlapping spheres is the Catholic School Vision. School Improvement in this context refers to:

“A systematic approach to effective organisation within a school to ensure improvement of the learning opportunities and outcomes for all students. Within a Catholic school context this should reflect the true nature of Catholic schooling to educate in faith and knowledge. Effective school improvement is an approach which values students and the importance of preparing **all** students to value themselves and to be valuable members of society in this millennium.” (*Catholic Education Victoria Network, School Improvement Framework Glossary 2007*)

In order to plan strategically for school improvement a School Improvement Plan is developed as part of the four-year cyclical review process of the school. The School Improvement Plan is defined as:

A document that draws on evidence and analysis generated by the review processes. It should be developed in the context of the Strategy Plan for Catholic Education within the Melbourne Archdiocese and should identify the strategic planning for the next four years, expressed through goals and intended outcomes with clearly identified targets. (*Catholic Education Victoria Network, School Improvement Framework Glossary 2007*)

The Parish Priest, Principal and Leadership Team of St Mary's Primary School will develop the School Improvement Plan, with input from staff, students and parents where appropriate, utilizing the School Improvement Framework as outlined above.

The Vision Statement of St Mary's Primary School will inform all areas of the School Improvement Plan and subsequently all its policy, practices and procedures.

The School Improvement Plan for a period of four years. At the culmination of this process a School Improvement Plan for the following four-year period will be developed with input from the whole school community (Parish Priest, Principal, all staff, students and parents), CEOM Regional Principal Consultant and the independent Reviewer appointed by CEOM.

Each year an Annual Action Plan will be developed from the School Improvement Plan. This will detail the strategies and timeline for the implementation of the particular aspect of the School Improvement Plan in that year.

It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal and Leadership Team to ensure the School Improvement Plan is developed with input from all school community representatives, where appropriate, and that the Annual Action Plan which is developed from the School Improvement Plan, is executed.