Values Education

Through the explicit teaching of human values we hope to create a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff in our school community.

Definition:

Children are our most precious resource. They are the leaders and decision makers of tomorrow. It is crucial in the development of a child’s character, self-worth and a positive learning environment that they:

- Have suitable role models
- Form positive values
- Learn the ‘language of values’
- Make conscious, responsible choices
- Receive appropriate feedback from educators.

Belief:

It is our role as educators to ensure that all children have every opportunity to fully participate in all the learning experiences available to them.

At the base of every culture is a set of values that determine how people behave towards each other. These values create the framework that set the tone of the environment.

At St Thomas Aquinas we believe that we need to explicitly teach and articulate the values that characterise our school. We will identify, examine, discuss and reflect on the values which are fundamental to building positive relationships and a positive environment for teaching and learning.

We believe that values need to be lived and the teaching and learning process needs to provide opportunities within and outside the class for students to practise and enact these values.
**Principles**

**Aims:**

- Children will gain direct knowledge and experience of values which will produce a positive culture for learning and help encourage them to reach their full potential.

- By giving the students opportunities to practice using these values they will develop personal responsibility to empower them to make conscious choices that are respectful to everyone.

- To use the Values for Australian School – Building Values Across the Whole School: A Resource Package from the Australian Government to integrate values into the teaching and learning within the key learning areas of our curriculum.

- We will use a student-centred, inquiry-based learning model. This approach fosters student self-confidence, responsibility for own-learning and empowerment.

The following is a list of values that are explicitly taught and promoted in our school community.

**Values**

We will adopt the Mercy values as the five core values for our school.

1. Respect
2. Justice
3. Compassion
4. Integrity
5. Excellence

They will be taught at a level that reflect the age of the children.

**Respect:** Treating each other with dignity and showing a caring attitude to everyone. It is speaking to and dealing with others in a courteous manner. Respect encompasses honouring the rules of your family, your school and society.

We show respect by:

- Speaking politely to others
- Developing an attitude of caring for others
- Treating others with dignity
- Treating people how you would like to be treated
- Respecting the rules of your family, the school and society
- Respecting the right to privacy
- Respecting your own rights.
- Caring for all property and the environment
- Taking responsibility for yourself, your behaviour and your learning

**Justice:** Maintaining a balanced and fair relationship with ourselves, others and everyone in our community. It is wanting to make a difference in the lives of others because you care. It is making a contribution to your family, school or society no matter how small.

We will show justice by:
- Showing tolerance, empathy, acceptance and understanding in our relationships with others
- Looking for ways to help others rather than waiting to be asked.
- Doing things for others just to be helpful, not because you expect you will be rewarded for doing so.
- Including others in our games our work and our relationships
- Open minded to new possibilities and the ideas and thoughts of others
- Treating everyone equally
- Empowering others to live bravely
- Being just and fair in our discipline and manner to everyone

**Compassion:** Is showing empathy and understanding towards others. It is about having an open heart to the plight of all people and being moved to action.

We show compassion by being:
- Patient with ourselves and others
- Kind
- Friendly
- Thoughtful
- Helpful
- Sensitive and non-judgemental
- Understanding that there are three elements to compassion: feeling, empathy and action.
- Being alert to the circumstances in other people’s lives
- Modelling compassion in our behaviour and nurturing it in others.

**Integrity:** To be accountable for all our actions, and to be honest, open and truthful in everything we say and do.

We show integrity by being:
- Trustworthy
- Co-operative
- Enthusiastic
- Loyal
- Truthful and honest
- Doing what we say we will do
- Honouring the commitments we make to others, including maintaining confidences
- Avoiding hurtful, rude or negative comments to or about others.
- Treating each other with respect and celebrating our gifts and strengths

**Excellence**: Is giving your absolute best to any task that you do.

- We show excellence by
- Not trying to be better than anyone else just the very best you can be.
- Practising excellence by being and doing your best with big and little things
- Striving to continually improve yourself
- Learning from your mistakes so that you can do the same task better next time
- Settling realistic goals and new challenges for yourself
- Plan and be prepared to practise things
- Develop and celebrate your own and others talents
- Being Persistent
- Risk taking
- Taking Pride in all we do