

Integrated
**Integrated
Inquiry
Policy**

Policy No. ?

PREAMBLE:

Integrated Inquiry at Holy Spirit Community School is taught through the content and processes of the Learning areas and General capabilities of AusVELS. Our approach emphasises the inclusion of thinking skills, research skills, social skills, values and attitudes. Significant understandings are developed about the social, physical and scientific world.

In a world where knowledge itself is constantly growing and evolving, students need to develop a set of knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions, or general capabilities that apply across learning area content and equip them to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich, globalised world.

AusVELS.

Students are challenged to explore, question and engage with significant ideas and practices, so that they move beyond superficial understandings to develop higher order, flexible thinking. To support this, teaching sequences should be sustained and responsive and explore ideas and practices. Principles of Learning and Teaching. (4)

RATIONALE:

The Integrated Inquiry Approach to learning at Holy Spirit Community School is based on the interdependent nature of the various learning disciplines required for essential learning. Our planning acknowledges the relationships between those areas concerned with the world around us: Science, History, Geography, Religion, Technology, Health and those areas that explore the world in a meaningful way: Language, Mathematics, Literacy, The Arts and Information Technology. An Integrated Curriculum encourages a holistic view of independent, collaborative learning and rich inquiry. It is central to the whole school curriculum.

We believe an Integrated Inquiry approach enables us to teach and assess skills, values and understandings within a meaningful and connected context, based around topics of relevance, substance and interest to the students. An Integrated Inquiry requires students to actively investigate significant questions, issues and ideas about the way the world works. It invites students to construct deep understandings through rich and strategic learning experiences as well as to act on those understandings in purposeful ways. There is a deliberate effort on the teacher's part to integrate ways of perceiving, processing and communicating ideas. Increasingly we are using inquiry as a means to help students learn about learning: building their confidence and competence as learners, refine **skills** and add to their repertoire of **strategies**.

Holy Spirit staff with Kath Murdoch

Skills and strategies are defined as:

Specific **skills** allow students to participate in tasks and work towards goals. They can be generic or context specific but always relate to a process. They can be physical, mental or social. Many skills are required to carry out a **strategy**. A skill is something that we expect students to USE or DO. It is active. A skill is most often 'demonstratable', developed over time and with practice. Many factors such as learning style, genetics, attitudes, cultural context and other elements will influence skill development. Skills may be consciously or unconsciously used.

Strategies usually involve several skills. They are broader and more complex than a skill.

Holy Spirit staff with Kath Murdoch

Holy Spirit Community School staff define Integrated Inquiry as...



AIMS:

At Holy Spirit Community School we recognise our responsibility to provide rich units of inquiry, which sequentially develop required skills, provide opportunities for learning and investigation, and cater for the specific and individual needs of our students.

Learning & Teaching at Holy Spirit Community School aims at supporting, directing and enabling the learner in the contemporary world. *Curriculum designed to engage students in the contemporary world leads students to develop deep understandings about themselves, others and the world. Building learning relationships within the global and local community creates authentic opportunities for students to learn from and with others. Powerful learning experiences enable students to take responsibility for themselves and commit to authentic action.*

Appendix 4 Contemporary Learning Schema.

Through our integrated units of inquiry we aim to:

- strive to actively involve the students in authentic experiences
- assist students in making connections between the classroom and the broader community
- provide a context for learning content, processes and skills
- develop in our students a passion for learning and a sense of wonder
- provide opportunities for interaction, cooperation and collaboration with others
- empower students to reflect on what they learn and what they want to learn
- cater for individual differences and learning styles
- encourage and expect individual responsibility for learning
- involve students to actively gather and process information
- encourage students to become independent, resourceful and adaptable learners
- cater for a range of different interests, abilities and skills
- foster connections across the school and wider community, where possible making global connections.
- recognise the need to maintain explicit instruction as a scaffold for deeper inquiry

IMPLEMENTATION:

An integrated curriculum is taught from P-6. Each level throughout the school is expected to implement one inquiry unit each term.

Various factors and practices are in place to ensure a quality, well organized curriculum at Holy Spirit.

Specific, sequential and developmental skills are taught at Holy Spirit through a '***Flexible***' ***Integrated 2- year cycle***. This enables levels to select a topic that is interesting and applicable to their current cohort of students or the current/topical happenings in the world. Each selection of topics has been developed around Broad Concept Statements. The content of this '2 Year cycle' has been aligned to AusVELS and developed by the whole staff.

This document is available on the network, Staff T drive, under Integrated Curriculum Odd and Even Year topics and in folders which are provided for all class teachers.

The 8 broad topic areas are:

Odd Year Cycle broad topics: Building Positive Relationships, Building Positive Communities
Our Earth and Beyond
Life and Living
Technology and the Power of Thinking

Even Year Cycle broad topics: Health and Wellbeing (with a Drug Education focus)
Sharing the Planet (Resources)
Australians within the Global Community
Physical World

The broad content of each year is planned on an annual, *'Future Planning and Curriculum Perspectives Day'*. This content is quite broad and where possible links all curriculum areas to the Integrated Inquiry topic. The overview also includes RE units and dates, literacy/genre foci, ICT links, the Visual Arts focus and any relevant excursions and incursions.

Skills and strategies foci have been suggested for inclusion in each unit of work. Refer to definitions listed in the Rationale of this document.

Level Planning:

Each term, levels are released for 3 hours, with the Learning and Teaching Leader, to plan a unit of work for the following term. Prior to planning, time for unit reflection, evaluation and collegial discussion regarding a pre assessment task is provided.

At each planning meeting:

- Topics are audited against AusVELS to ensure all learning areas and general capabilities have been taught and can be assessed.
- Topic resources prepared by the Learning and Teaching Leader are unpacked and used in the planning process
- Possible resource books are selected by the Librarian and Literacy Leader
- Topics are brainstormed and planned where integrated inquiries are developed around rich tasks.

Assessment:

We assess students to inform our teaching and improve student learning. A wide range of assessment forms should be incorporated into each inquiry. By using a variety of forms of assessment (Assessment **as**, **of** and **for** learning), we ensure rigorous collection and analysis of data about students' progress. There are a range of assessment strategies available on the Learning and Teaching blog, accessible through Holy Spirit desktop.

These include:

- Pre and post assessments
- Rubrics
- Concept and mind mapping
- Self and group assessment
- Peer assessment
- Reflective learning logs
- Teacher-student interviews
- Diagrams, drawings, graphic organisers and other visual representations
- Statements of generalisation and summary at the beginning and end of a unit

Assessment processes should be inclusive of the assessment of skills, attitudes and values, as well as knowledge.

Assessment should take place throughout the unit of inquiry.

Refer to <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/tools.aspx> for assessment tools.

Integrated Inquiry units are evaluated each term through collegial discussion. There are 2 forms of unit evaluation to be completed: a school based evaluation and an evaluation designed from the Schema for Contemporary Learning within the Context of the Catholic School. Appendix 2

Appendices:

1. Model for developing Units.
2. Evaluation formats
3. Blank unit planner.
4. Contemporary Learning Schema

Appendix 1

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Model for developing units.

Our Model for developing inquiry units (set out below) is based on the principles of inquiry learning as promoted by educational expert Kath Murdoch.

Our model for developing units is based on the principles of inquiry learning. The teaching and learning strategies we implement reflect the different stages of inquiry – tuning in, finding out, sorting out and making conclusions and taking action. The following skills and strategies are examples of those that may be used at each stage of inquiry.

Stage of Inquiry	Some possible strategies which can be employed at this stage	Sample skills often required for effective use of these strategies
Tuning in	Concept and mind mapping, Brainstorming, Drawing, Making diagrams, Listing questions, Listing statements, Class and small group discussion, PMI, Graffiti, Poetry, Stories, Videos, Mystery Bag.	Questioning, Organising, Representing ideas visually, Sharing ideas with others, Hypothesising, Listening, Planning, Predicting, Estimating, Goal setting.
Finding out	Watching videos and films, Interviewing guest speakers, Surveying, Reading books, Observing real events, Experiments, Questionnaires, Searching the internet, Concept attainment, Data Chart, Newspaper searches, Excursions, Simulation games, CD ROMs	Observing, Summarising, Questioning, Locating and selecting relevant information Note-taking, Listening, Comparing and contrasting, Reading , Viewing, Inferring Recognising bias, Restating, Active listening.
Sorting out	Classifying key words, pictures etc. Artistic representations, Role play, Representing statistics using graphs, Preparing factual texts, Classifying and sorting, Data charts, Modelling, De Bono’s Thinking Hats, PMI, Flow charts, Story maps, Writing in different genres, Timelines, Multimedia presentations.	Organising, Classifying, Seeing patterns, Representing ideas in a range of ways, Working cooperatively, Presenting ideas to others, Interpreting information, Analysing, Making choices, Explaining, Reporting, Persuading, Testing and checking, Designing
Making conclusions	Writing statements of generalization, Constructing consequence wheels, Constructing concept maps, Revisiting early work, Flow charts, Ranking, Cause and effect wheels, Cloze, Similes and metaphors, Future wheels	Synthesising, Interpreting, Generalising, Reflecting, Self-assessing, Revising, Restating, Ordering events, Providing feedback, Summarising, Elaborating
Reflecting and taking action	Self-assessment, Peer assessment, Learning logs, Learning maps, Mini campaigns in the local Community, Informing others – oral presentations, Making posters, Writing letters, Displays, Special days.	Working to a timeline, Considering options, Reflecting, Responding to the work of others, Speaking clearly, Working independently Performing, Justifying

Adapted from Holy Family, Mount Waverly

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