

St. Therese's School, Essendon

Learning Philosophy



At St Therese's, as our Vision Statement outlines, we aim to develop life-long learners who are committed to building positive relationships and to shaping the world for the common good. This Vision sits alongside the Vision for Education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne (Horizons of Hope) which states:

All members of a Catholic school community are learners who:

- Honour the sacred dignity of each person, supported to see their lives as shaped by God
- Search for truth, continuously critiquing and re-imagining themselves in dialogue with Catholic tradition
- Embrace difference and diversity as the context for deeper understanding of self, others and God
- Build a culture of learning together through collaboration, partnerships and life-giving relationships
- Engage with the deep questions of life, opening up spaces of meaning which engage Catholic faith
- Honour equitable access and opportunity for all, committed to those most in need
- Commit to achieving the highest standards possible, based on reflection, evidence and research
- Make a difference in the world, inspired by the Gospel to act for justice and the common good.

To support these statements, we have committed to the principles of Visible Learning. Visible Learning draws on John Hattie's International research meta - analysis about what educational leaders and teachers think and do that has the most positive impact for each student's learning, progress and achievement. This research has been used to develop the following Principles of and the Mindframes for Visible Learning. As a staff, we commit to these principles and mindframes.

The Visible Learning Principles that all classrooms engage in are:

1. Clear Learning Intentions and Success Criteria:

Students achieve better results when they understand what it is they are meant to be learning and what it looks like if they are successful. If they know where they are going, it is more likely that they will end up there! Visible learners see themselves, peers and teachers as co-teachers and co-learners. Teachers use the curriculum to develop learning intentions (what learners are expected to know, understand and do as a result of learning) and deconstruct these with the learners to build understanding of what will be learnt. Teachers help students to understand what is required of them to be successful - success criteria (what learners will do to demonstrate they have met and achieved the learning intention). Teachers create opportunities for students to co-construct success criteria.

2. Descriptive Feedback:

Feedback moves student learning forward and helps both students and teachers to know what to do next to improve learning. For feedback to have the maximum impact learners must be given time to act on it. For this to happen it should be given against the success criteria for the lesson. Teachers use information from student assessments as feedback about the effectiveness of their teaching.

Students learn to give and receive feedback from their peers and their teachers to improve learning. Teachers teach their students to give and receive feedback. Teachers give and receive feedback from their students in a variety of forms and at the appropriate instructional level. We promote a culture where errors are welcome and seen as opportunities for learning.

3. Formative Assessment:

Formative assessment strategies are used to collect evidence of achievement to identify where our learners are, where they need to go and how to get them there.

Teachers collect evidence of student learning prior to or at the beginning of a unit, identify appropriate impact and analyse results so they can identify next steps necessary for students who have not reached competence.

Teachers systematically use data and evidence to plan their lessons and next learning steps. Teachers routinely analyse the impact they are having on students. Staff take a shared responsibility for student learning and plan collaboratively.

The Mindframes:

- I am an evaluator of my impact on student learning
- I see assessment as informing my impact and next steps
- I collaborate with my peers and my students about my conceptions of progress and my impact
- I am a change agent and believe all students can improve
- I strive for challenge and not "doing your best"
- I give and help students understand feedback and I interpret and act on feedback to me
- I engage in dialogue much as monologue
- Success criteria is critical
- I build relationships and trust so that learning can occur in a place where it is safe to make mistakes and learn from others
- I talk about learning, not about teaching

<https://thinkingpathwayz.weebly.com/10-mindframes-visible-learning.html>

"Staff deliberately and accurately create a climate of trust in their learning spaces to develop positive relationships between all stakeholders."

Becoming an effective learner is essential in the world we live in today. Things change quickly, and we need to be able to adapt so that we can thrive in this ever-changing world. At St Therese's, we are keen to develop our students as effective learners. Therefore we ensure that they are clear about the characteristics that lead to effective learning. These characteristics are discussed with students regularly and are displayed in each classroom. Research has shown that the most effective learners have the following qualities:

The Learning Characteristics that all learners aspire to develop are outlined in the poster below.

OUR LEARNER PROFILE

A ST THERESE'S LEARNER..

IS INQUISITIVE

We are curious, we ask questions, we wonder..

HAS A GROWTH MINDSET

We are resilient, we take risks, we are persistent,
we make mistakes and learn from them..

COLLABORATES

We construct knowledge, we build and
share understanding..

IS SELF AWARE AND AWARE OF OTHERS

We recognise personal passions/talents and
pursue these, we recognise learning needs, we
are able to 'walk in someone else's shoes'..

IS CREATIVE

We build, we make, we design, we produce..

IS REFLECTIVE

We seek, accept and act on feedback, we also learn
from successes and mistakes..

THINKS

We think critically, we think flexibly, we articulate our
thinking, we transfer knowledge..

IS INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED

We are self-motivated, we are enthusiastic and passionate, we
recognise purpose in learning, we set our own learning goals..