

continuous improvement framework for catholic schools

The background of the page is a complex, abstract pattern of thin, teal-colored lines. These lines originate from a central white circle and radiate outwards, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lines are arranged in a way that suggests a grid or a series of overlapping planes, with some lines being straight and others curving. The overall effect is a dynamic, geometric composition that fills the page.

Continuous Improvement Framework
for Catholic Schools, Implementation
Version February 2014

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The Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools (*published 2014*) has been informed by the valuable contribution and advice of the Principals of Catholic Schools, the Federation of Catholic School Parent Communities (SA) and CEO staff in South Australia.

The following works have also informed the development of the Framework and those jurisdictions are also acknowledged:

Department of Education, Training and Employment QLD *School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework*;

Catholic Education Office WA *Quality Catholic Schooling: School Review and Improvement Framework*;

Ontario Ministry of Education *School Effectiveness Framework K-12*;

Catholic Education Office Archdiocese of Melbourne 2011-2015 *Directions*;

ACER/QLD Department of Education, Training and Employment *National School Improvement Tool*;

Archdiocese of Brisbane *Strategic Renewal Framework 2012-2016*;

Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission *School Improvement Framework and Process*;

Catholic Education Office, Sydney *School Review and Improvement Framework*;

Michigan Department of Education *School Improvement Framework*;

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (Scotland) *How Good is our School? The Journey to Excellence*.

Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement

Dear Colleagues

It is with much pleasure that we present to you the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools in South Australia. This Framework represents our collective understanding of quality Catholic schooling for our current context. It is grounded in contemporary educational research and draws from our shared experience and knowledge. From its beginning and throughout the development of the Framework we have been committed to extensive consultation with schools and to the goal of developing a simple, aligned and flexible framework that will be a valuable tool for all schools. The Framework will enhance our ability to be a self-reviewing and a self-improving system – it heralds an innovative and increasingly disciplined approach to school improvement which will bring to life the vision and identity of Catholic Education in South Australia

The context of Catholic schools is one that demands innovation, accountability and vision. Our students deserve the best we can provide and by continually improving we can ensure that our schools seek new expressions of Catholic faith and high standards in student learning within an environment that fosters wellbeing, inclusion and creativity.

The content and processes of the Framework aim to stimulate exciting and productive professional dialogue within and between schools. The Framework is designed to align with processes already in place in schools and to accommodate local, church, system/ congregational priorities as well as government accountabilities and requirements. We recognise that all schools are different and ownership of improvement processes properly resides at the school level with school communities being responsible for making the on-balance judgements about their effectiveness and their school improvement goals. We encourage you to customise the Indicators of Effectiveness to reflect the context of your school. Initial implementation of the Framework will occur during 2014 and 2015 and ongoing feedback during this time will enhance its further development.

The ultimate quality of the Framework and its associated processes depends on how well they are used in schools. A concern for value is a shared concern, and commitment at all levels will ensure that the Framework and associated processes are valued by the school community and key stakeholders. We commend this Framework to you in the belief that it will enhance your school community's endeavours to create "opportunities for encountering life to the full – in all its personal, religious, political, ecological and cultural richness" (CESA Mission Statement).



Dr Paul Sharkey
Director, Catholic Education SA



Brenda Keenan
Director, Diocese of Port Pirie



cesa mission, values and vision statement

mission

Animated by our Catholic faith and in partnership with families, our schools are communities which create opportunities for encountering life to the full – in all its personal, religious, political, ecological and cultural richness.

values

We value:

- openness to God's Spirit at work in our midst
- all creation's interconnectedness
- respect for the dignity of each person
- commitment to processes of learning that are formative, challenging, engaging, life-long and life-wide
- inclusivity of those at the edges
- sensitivity, justice and compassion

vision

We create an educational environment which matters to students and their families and which resonates culturally and deeply for them. In each learning area, across the whole life of the school, and in partnership with families, each of us discovers in the Spirit, the love of God which is revealed in Jesus Christ, proclaimed by the Church, presented in the scriptures, celebrated in the sacraments and lived by all people of good will.

purpose

The Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools (hereafter 'the Framework') will assist Catholic Schools to:

- Focus on quality teaching and learning, identifying areas of strength and areas requiring improvement, in order to improve outcomes for all students and overall school performance.
- Support communication with stakeholders to foster increased confidence in, and accountability for, the school's effectiveness and outcomes.

Related to the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools are other associated processes which ensure that schools comply with the requirements of the system, and State and Federal Governments. However, it is not intended that the Framework will directly address all the system and government compliance and reporting responsibilities of schools. The focus of the Framework is fundamentally on improving student learning and outcomes.

The Framework reflects the request by principals to have a Framework that was:

school based

Individual schools can determine how they will be responsible for maintaining quality and continuous improvement.

student centred

Students are at the centre of school improvement. Improved student learning outcomes, faith development and life opportunities are the main goals of all Catholic school improvement processes.

partnership building

School improvement processes are inclusive and collaborative and are characterised by effective partnerships between schools, school communities and system personnel.

capacity building

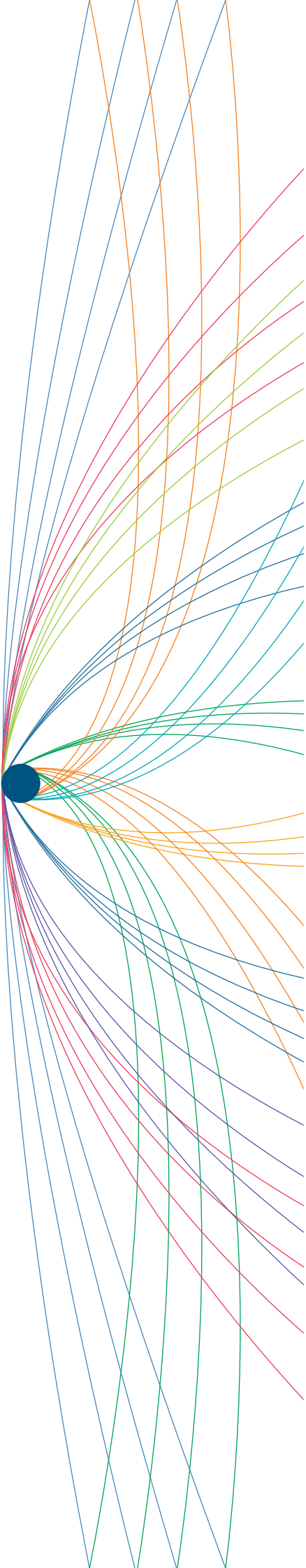
The principal is the lead learner and leads the school community in articulating the school's vision and purpose for improving learning and the pursuit of excellence.

evidence based

Schools engage in evidence-based self-reflection about current practices to identify and plan for the skills and resources required to improve quality and build school improvement capacity into the future.

accountability enabling

An element of external validation will become a key component of the continuous improvement cycle over time.



continuous improvement framework context

The Framework reflects the Mission of Catholic Education SA whereby Catholic schools in partnership with families are communities which create opportunities for encountering life to the full – in all its personal, religious, political and cultural richness.

The Framework is part of a system-wide strategy to promote a culture and practice of continuous improvement in Catholic schools that has the students at the centre¹. Consultation on the Framework will be ongoing as it is a 'living' document that will be refined and enhanced over time as implementation occurs in schools.

The Framework reflects the:

- vision and mission of Catholic Education SA
- CEO strategic priorities: Catholic identity; learning and teaching; leading; and strategic resourcing
- intentions of the Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians
- key characteristics of high performing schools
- improvement and accountability aspects of school performance.

The Framework is organised into nine 'aspirational' Domains which describe the characteristics of high performing, high quality schools. The Framework also includes a cycle of continuous improvement activities which support schools in achieving improved learning outcomes and life opportunities for students. All continuous improvement strategies are underpinned by the mission, vision and charism of each school.

Implementation of the Framework will engage all staff, students, parents, parish, and the wider community of the school to achieve its improvement goals. The expectation at the core of the Framework is that all schools demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement.

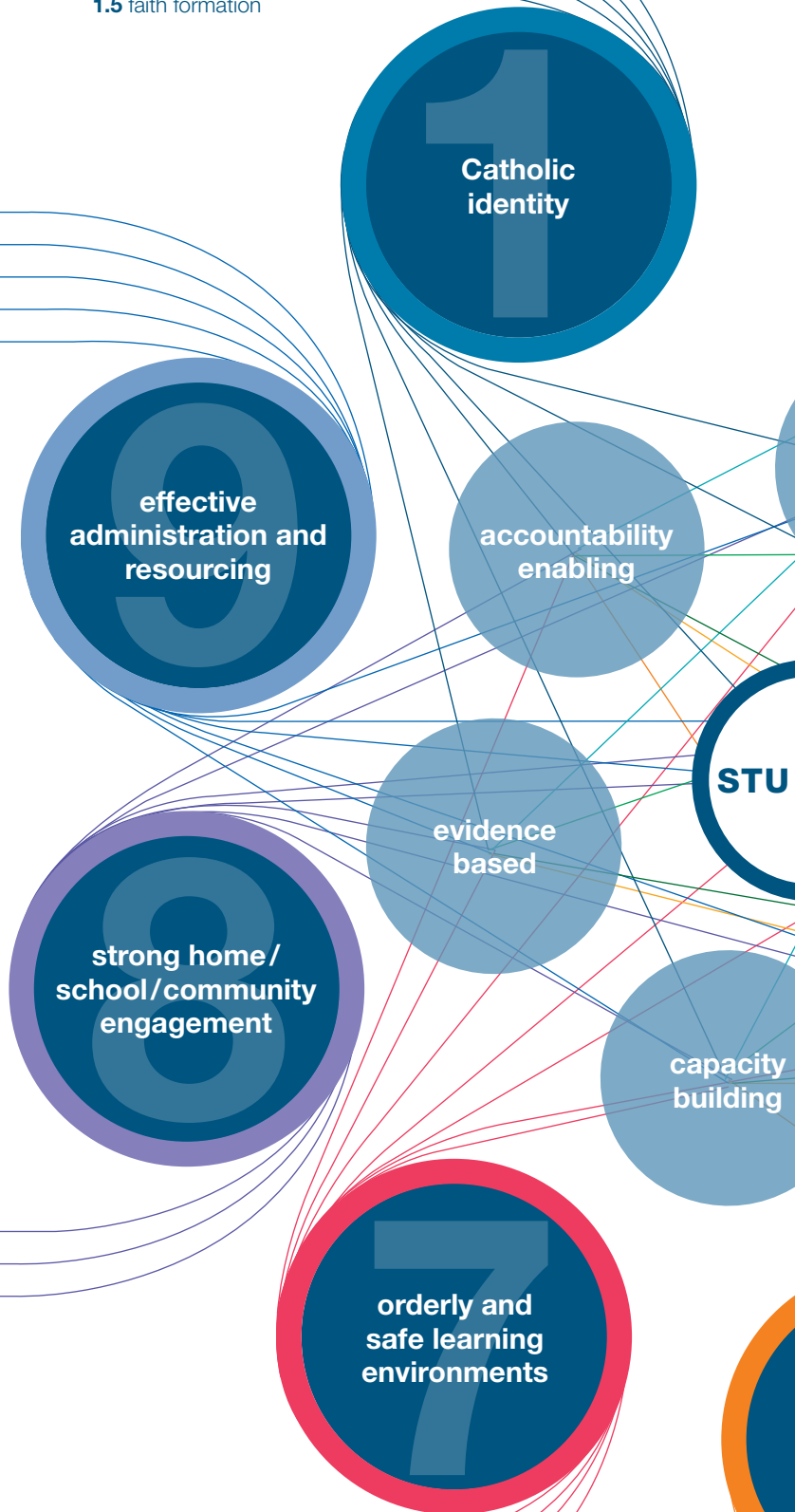
¹ Catholic Education SA Strategic Plan 2010-2014

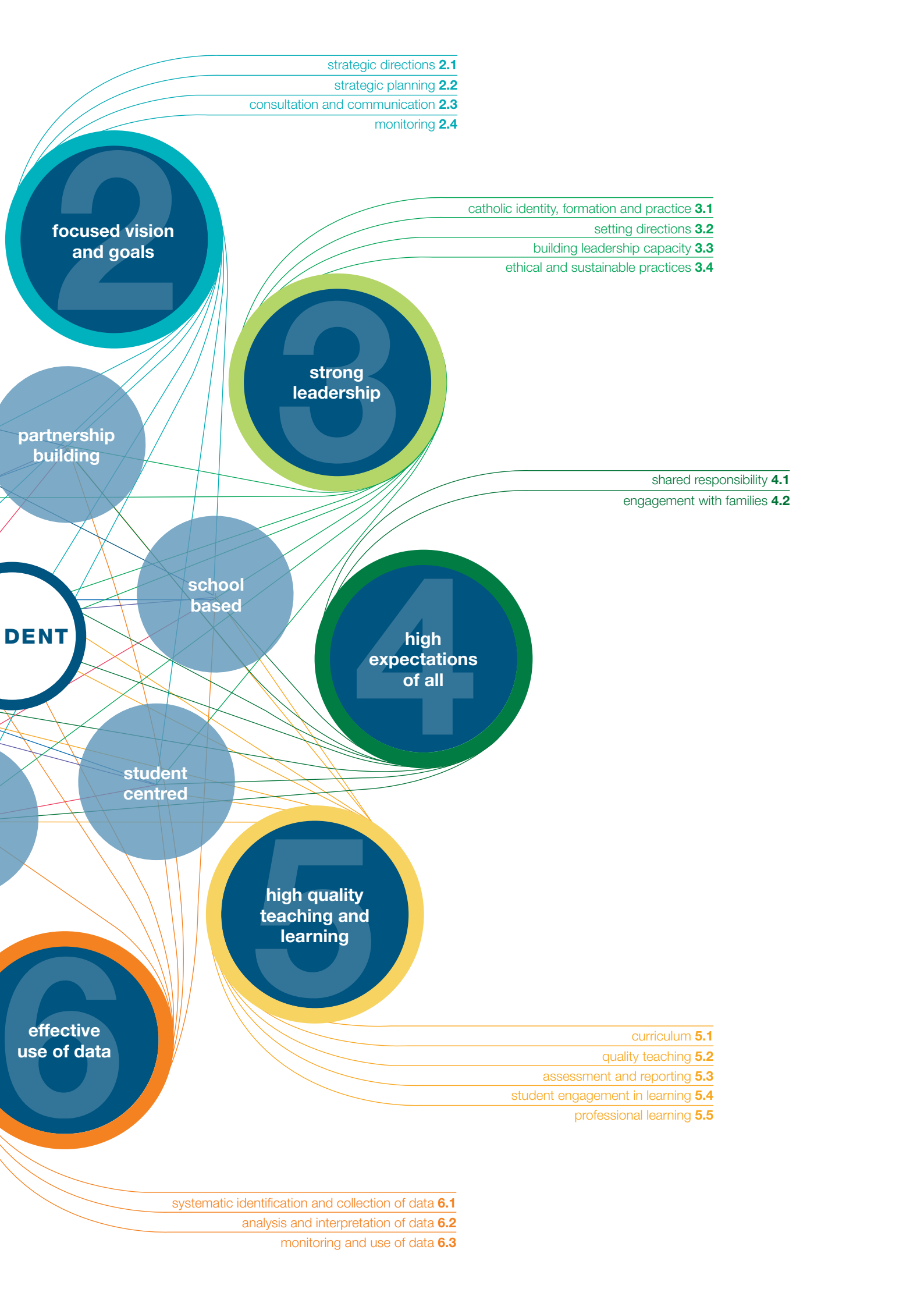
- 1.1 doing theology
- 1.2 catholic social teaching
- 1.3 prayer and liturgy
- 1.4 religious education
- 1.5 faith formation

- 9.1 administration
- 9.2 finance
- 9.3 infrastructure and physical resources
- 9.4 human resources
- 9.5 environmental sustainability

- 8.1 family engagement
- 8.2 community engagement
- 8.3 consultation, collaboration and decision making

- 7.1 relationships
- 7.2 positive behaviours
- 7.3 identifying and responding to issues
- 7.4 school policies and practices





strategic directions **2.1**

strategic planning **2.2**

consultation and communication **2.3**

monitoring **2.4**

catholic identity, formation and practice **3.1**

setting directions **3.2**

building leadership capacity **3.3**

ethical and sustainable practices **3.4**

shared responsibility **4.1**

engagement with families **4.2**

curriculum **5.1**

quality teaching **5.2**

assessment and reporting **5.3**

student engagement in learning **5.4**

professional learning **5.5**

systematic identification and collection of data **6.1**

analysis and interpretation of data **6.2**

monitoring and use of data **6.3**

the framework

The starting point for using the Framework will differ between schools depending on what stage of the school improvement process they are at. Many schools will commence at the self-assessment and review stage using a range of school performance data that has been collected over time. This initial self-assessment and review will enable schools to assess their current performance and plan their key improvement goals for the short and longer term. Other schools may be more advanced in the improvement process and may commence at a different point, particular to their needs.



The Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools outlines a number of Domains that a school reflects upon in its continuous improvement journey. These Domains together with a set of associated activities are also underpinned by the mission, vision and charism of each school. Each integrated component of the framework is designed to support schools in achieving improved learning outcomes and life opportunities for students.

Each Domain has a number of elements or components that describe its scope. Each Element has a set of indicators of effectiveness. A Rating Scale helps school leaders assess how well they are progressing against each Domain and to identify areas for further improvement.

Associated with the Domains and Elements, the continuous improvement activities further inform and support the school in its ongoing improvement. These activities include:

- The development of the *school strategic plan*
- The planning of the *annual school improvement plan* (linked to the strategic plan)
- The presentation of the *annual report to the school community*
- The *annual self-assessment and review*
- Participation in the *external validation*

domains

A Domain represents a key area in which school improvement can take place. The Framework is organised into nine 'aspirational' domains that describe the characteristics of high performing, high quality schools. Collectively, the Domains form a structure against which schools can review, analyse, assess, and monitor their systems and processes and identify long and short term key improvement goals.

The Domains address the key areas of teaching and learning together with other aspects of school life such as school management, finance and resources.

- Catholic Identity
- Focused vision and goals
- Strong leadership
- High expectations of all
- High quality teaching and learning
- Effective use of data
- Orderly and safe learning environments
- Strong home/school/community engagement
- Effective administration and resourcing



elements

Each Domain has a number of Elements. An Element is a core area of activity within each Domain. Whilst the Elements are discrete items, they are inter-related within the Domain area and even across Domains. Each Element has a set of indicators of effectiveness which are used in conjunction with a range of other sources of evidence of school improvement. They are not intended as definitive descriptions. However they can assist schools in planning for improvements in student learning; evaluating the effectiveness of the improvements achieved; and determining capacity for further improvement.

evidence

Evidence is a range of data that can be used to evaluate the school's progress in relation to the achievement of its improvement goals. "Data" may be defined as 'factual information from which conclusions may be drawn; or organised for analysis; or used to reason or make decisions'. Effective use of data ensures that evidence-based judgements are made to evaluate and rate the effectiveness of the school.

Schools will systematically collect and use a wide range of school performance data to inform judgements on the rating of its effectiveness against each of the Domains of the Framework. The three rating scales of the Framework will support school leaders to make evidence-based and informed 'on balance' judgements of their progress towards the school improvement goals at a given point in time. There is no expectation that all schools would be at a particular rating on any given component. Rather, the process of agreeing on a particular rating for a Domain enables the school to identify specific areas for continuous improvement into the future.

rating scales

Performance ratings have been developed at three levels: *needs developing*; *developing*; and *highly developed*. The Rating Scale is a tool to assist Principals in leading their schools to make evidence-based, on-balance judgements regarding the current levels of school quality, achievement and effectiveness against each of the Domains. A school's self-assessment indicates its achievement at a 'point in time' and should be used as an 'indicator' of the school's progress towards its improvement goals.

The benefits of using the Rating Scale are to identify strengths and opportunities; evaluate the effectiveness of the improvements achieved; and determine areas for further development or improvement.

It is not intended that the school's ratings would be aggregated or analysed at a system level or used to rank schools.

needs developing = Many Elements of the Domain require targeted intervention.

There are positive trends in some Elements of the Domain however limited provision in many areas is having an impact on the quality of students' experiences. There is little evidence of periodic review and there is an inconsistent approach to continuous improvement. Whilst there are a number of strengths, there are some areas that will be sufficient either individually or collectively to diminish the student experience in significant ways.

developing = Positive trends across the Domain but limited provision in some Elements is impacting on the quality of students' experiences.

There is evidence of strengths in most Elements of the Domain and these strengths outweigh some areas of limited provision. A mostly proactive approach is evident. There are well-established systems for regular review and improvement and a systematic approach to innovation and continuous improvement. Provision is characterised by strengths but one or more areas of limited provision reduce the overall quality of students' experiences.

highly developed = Major strengths evident across all Elements of the Domain.

This rating is intended to be achievable by all schools over time.

It indicates that there are major strengths across all Elements of the Domain. Major strengths indicate that it is appropriate for the school to continue its provision without significant adjustment. The Domain is totally integrated into the normal operations and planning of the school. Proactive approaches are evident and regularly reviewed and improved. There is widespread evidence of innovation and continuous improvement.

1

catholic identity

This domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in expressing and witnessing our Catholic identity by bringing faith, life and culture together into a coherent synthesis. We do this through strong partnerships with the wider Church community, provision of high quality Religious Education and ensuring that our Catholic Vision and Mission permeates the life of the school.

elements

1.1 doing theology

indicators of effectiveness

- The school creates an atmosphere of trust and listening which enables the sensitive exploration of issues through theological reflection.
- The school draws from relevant research and collects appropriate data that informs the discernment of issues under discussion.
- The school draws sensitively and effectively from the Catholic faith tradition to discern issues.
- The school takes action in response to what has been discerned.
- The school's Catholic identity is strengthened by consistently reflecting theologically and doing theology together.

1.2 Catholic social teaching

- The school demonstrates a mission which is inclusive by reaching out to those who are marginalised and ensuring this outreach is reflected in its policies, procedures and programs.
- The school has a planned and structured approach to charitable works, aligned to the mission of the Church and the local community context.
- The school addresses equity and justice through its policies, procedures and programs.
- The school demonstrates a commitment to ecological conversion and sustainability.
- The school gives agency to staff, students and families in its decision-making and this agency is reflected in its policies, procedures and programs.

1.3 prayer and liturgy

- The school community prays together to promote the Catholic identity of the school, to honour the Catholic Tradition and to respect the faiths and religious backgrounds of all students.
- Prayer services and liturgies occur regularly and staff, students and parents actively prepare and participate in them.
- There is an appreciation and understanding of formal and informal prayer, and contemporary and traditional prayer.

1.4 religious education

- Religious education is underpinned by an articulated vision and is designed and mapped to meet all learning entitlements.
- Religious education has sufficient time allocated to support quality learning.
- Religious education is assessed, reported and regularly evaluated and reviewed using contemporary methods.
- A variety of faith formation approaches across the life of the school complement the religious education curriculum.

1.5 faith formation

- Staff spiritual and religious formation is evident in the school's strategic plan.
- Opportunities exist for staff to build their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith, including Scripture and Theology.
- Prayer is central to the school community with opportunities provided for all to experience and use different forms of prayer.
- School leadership fosters a nurturing and supportive environment.

At the centre of Catholic faith is the experience of a God who is love and every aspect of school life provides opportunities for deepening our appreciation of this mystery. The person of Jesus and the significance of his life, death and resurrection are at the centre of the school in its prayer, liturgy, right relationships and actions which are expressed in the school's pastoral care and commitments in areas such as social justice and ecological conversion.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

There is a strong commitment across the school community to the school's vision and mission with opportunities to engage in activities that develop the Catholic identity of the school. The school's Catholic identity is continually strengthened by doing theology – a process that takes action after reflecting on issues, policies, decisions and relationships in the light of Catholic faith.

School policies, decision making and practices are just and equitable and comprehensively express the beliefs and values of Catholic Faith. The pastoral care and relationships within the school community reflect a deep appreciation of the dignity of the human person. The principles and practice of Catholic social teaching are essential elements of the school curriculum and underpin all social justice activities undertaken. A commitment to ecological conversion permeates all school policies and programs.

There are highly effective structures for the leadership, organisation, accountability and delivery of quality teaching and learning in religious education. Staff understand the religious education curriculum and have a strong grasp of Catholic theology, supported by high quality resources and ongoing professional learning.

The school community has a deep understanding and appreciation of the parish and local church communities. The school provides timely and regular opportunities for all members of the school community to engage in ongoing reflective practice and faith formation through prayer, liturgy and the Eucharist.

developing

Most staff support, foster and contribute to the expression of the Catholic faith and the vision and mission of the school. Attempts are made to strengthen the school's Catholic identity by reflecting theologically and to discern issues by drawing sensitively and effectively from the Catholic faith tradition. The fundamental beliefs of the Catholic faith are expressed in meaningful and practical ways and are being integrated into school policies, decision making structures and processes. Staff have some understanding of Catholic social teaching and are beginning to effectively integrate this into classroom practice. The school has a structure for the leadership, organisation, delivery and accountability of quality teaching and learning in religious education. Teaching and learning resources for religious education programs are adequate and there are some opportunities for collaboration and communication between staff. The school has structures and processes to support the involvement of most parents in the religious education of their children.

The school provides opportunities for most members of the school community to engage in ongoing reflective practice and faith formation through prayer, liturgy and the Eucharist. The school is well-integrated with the life of its local parish(es).

needs developing

Catholic social teaching is evident in the school's vision and mission but does not permeate school policies, planning and practices. The school endeavours to foster and promote Catholic faith, tradition and culture. Limited attempts are made to strengthen the school's Catholic identity by reflecting theologically and issues are not usually discerned by drawing sensitively and effectively from the Catholic faith tradition. Prayer, liturgy and Eucharist are included in the religious life of the school but would benefit from more effective planning, co-ordination and engagement. A limited range of social justice activities restricts the engagement of the school community in making a difference.

Religious education programs generally demonstrate an understanding of the curriculum. There are a limited range of religious education teaching and learning practices to support the developmental needs of students and relevant and stimulating resources for students and teachers are inadequate. The school provides few opportunities for members of the school community to engage in ongoing reflective practice and faith formation through prayer, liturgy and the Eucharist.

There is minimal collaboration between the school and the life of its local parish(es).

2

focused vision and goals

This Domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in establishing a shared vision of Catholic education that focuses on an educational environment which resonates with students and their families both culturally and deeply.

elements

2.1 strategic directions

indicators of effectiveness

- School board, principal, staff and school community are committed to the vision of the school.
- The school has developed a Strategic (School Improvement) Plan based on its Mission and vision of Catholic education.
- The strategic plan identifies key directions, improvement goals and targets and is futures oriented, flexible, dynamic and responsive to changes over time.
- A small number of long and short term improvement goals are identified from the strategic plan.
- Strategic directions align with system priorities and government legislative requirements.
- The school's mission and vision acts as a constant point of reference for achieving the improvement goals of the school.

2.2 strategic planning

- School leadership keeps the improvement goals in the forefront of the school's activities.
- The annual school improvement plan identifies the key improvement goals for the year, based on the school's Strategic Plan.
- Key actions and strategies to achieve the improvement goals are implemented.
- Quantitative and qualitative data is identified for collection and analysis to assess progress on achievement of the improvement goals.
- Adequate resourcing is applied to each of the improvement goals.

2.3 consultation and communication

- Improvement goals are communicated to students, parents and families and the wider school community.
- The school vision and improvement goals engender broad stakeholder commitment.
- The school consults with the community, reflects on its data, and reviews improvement planning processes.
- Progress towards improvement is formally communicated to staff, students and families on a regular basis.

2.4 monitoring

- Improvement goals are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis to gauge the effectiveness of the planned strategies.
- School monitors performance against the improvement goals to identify any changed conditions, needs or priorities that require adjustments to the Plan.
- The school collects and analyses the identified performance data to measure progress and to plan future actions.
- The school reports regularly to the school community on its progress.
- The school identifies improvement goals, targets, actions and strategies for the following year.

The school's vision is dynamic and responsive to changes in society to drive improvement, innovation and excellence. Staff and the broader school community have a clear vision for improving the learning outcomes of all students and overall school performance. School improvement is based on evidence from research and practice. The school's strategic plan sets out the future directions for the school. Improvement goals are communicated to parents and families, students and teachers.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

The school board together with the school leadership group have developed a contemporary vision for learning and are driving a strategic and detailed continuous improvement agenda that reflects the school's mission and vision and meets system and government requirements. The school's vision is dynamic and futures-focused and is expressed in terms of the specific improvements sought and informs all aspects of school life. Staff, students and families know the school's vision and goals and are committed to its continuous improvement strategies.

The school has an annual school improvement plan that is focused on specific areas of school improvement and aligned to the school's strategic directions. Resources are available for staff professional learning which will support implementation of the annual plan. The school has a systematic and strategic approach to planning and monitoring. The major areas of improvement and achievement are regularly monitored and communicated to the school and broader school community.

developing

The school board, principal and other school leaders are developing an agenda for continuous improvement including a strategic plan which outlines a school-wide strategic approach to improvement. The annual school improvement plan reflects the school's mission and vision and is linked to its Strategic Plan.

Staff understand the improvement goals and are finding ways to improve student learning outcomes and overall school performance. Professional learning priorities are established and sometimes reflect the school's improvement goals.

The broader school community has some understanding of the school's improvement goals.

needs developing

The school has a mission and vision statement but does not have a clearly established set of documented strategic directions. There is not a strong focus on continuously improving the school or communicating future directions for school improvement to the staff or parents and families and the broader school community.

Use of performance data is limited to standardised test outcomes and other school performance data is not used to measure school improvement over time nor is this information communicated to parents and families.

There is little emphasis on targeted and ongoing professional learning for staff that is linked to the school improvement goals. The school tends not to reflect on current practices and lacks innovative approaches to change.

3

strong leadership

This Domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in leading purposefully for sustained, high quality, student-centred school performance and a culture and practice of continuous improvement.

elements

3.1 catholic identity formation and practice

indicators of effectiveness

- Leadership that promotes the religious and spiritual formation of the community is evident.
- A vision that prioritises and reflects Catholic Tradition in a contemporary context is co-constructed and shared.
- A strong moral purpose together with strategic action is a central element of leadership in the school.
- Ongoing formation of a strong Catholic identity that is made tangible and visible within the school community is actively pursued.
- A commitment to the common good with a special concern for those who are vulnerable and marginalized is evident.

3.2 setting directions

- An agreed and shared understanding and application of contemporary learning theory, pedagogies and instructional leadership is evident.
- Collaborative and purposeful professional learning across the school community improves outcomes for all students.
- Authentic learning opportunities for students are provided within safe, orderly and contemporary learning environments.
- The effectiveness of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated through observation, feedback, analysis and use of relevant data.
- A culture of high expectations, innovation, inquiry and improvement is developed.
- Parent and student voice in learning is actively encouraged.

3.3 building leadership capacity

- A positive learning environment across the school community is built and sustained through contemporary leadership structures.
- Effective strategies for staff development; staff induction; succession planning; professional learning; faith formation; leadership development and performance review are developed and implemented.
- Relationships are fostered and promoted so as to nurture mutual respect and the wellbeing of all staff, students, parents and wider school community.

3.4 ethical and sustainable practices

- Resources are prioritized and aligned to the school improvement goals to maximise the impact on teaching and learning.
- Effective organizational and administrative structures are in place to ensure sound management of the school.
- School programs, policies and practices are based on Catholic moral and social teaching and embedded with ecological conversion.
- Policies and practices meet system, Church and government compliance and accountability requirements and are regularly evaluated.

Strong leadership of the school promotes excellence and equity in education and entails holding steadfast to the school's mission and vision. It is a shared endeavour that encompasses religious, spiritual and educational leadership and includes school leaders, teachers, students, families and the wider school and parish community working together and sharing responsibility for improving the school so that all flourish and learn. Ultimately it is the principal who has the responsibility for leading school improvement.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

The school Board and leadership team have developed a clear vision for continuous improvement based on the school's mission and vision of Catholic education. School leaders have built an inclusive, collaborative culture that develops the Catholic identity of the school. The school ethos is built on high expectations and a commitment to excellence. Data on student outcomes is systematically collected, analysed and reported.

The school has a well-developed culture of professional learning and all staff engage in professional learning based on contemporary research and reflective practice. The school gives high priority to supporting emerging leaders through regular coaching, mentoring and constructive feedback.

The school has highly effective organisational and administrative structures that lead to sound management. School resources provide stimulating learning environments that engage and challenge students in their learning.

The school leadership has a well-developed culture of compliance and a shared understanding of, and responsibility for, meeting system and government accountability requirements. School resources are well managed and maintained in a sustainable manner.

developing

The school Board and school leaders have a shared commitment to continuous improvement and are developing a school-wide approach based on the school's Catholic traditions and charism. School leaders use data to identify areas for school improvement and are refining data collection and analysis processes.

The school has developed a professional learning culture and all staff has access to professional learning opportunities. However, these opportunities are not always coherent with the school's approaches and key improvement goals.

The school's organisational and administrative processes are generally implemented to ensure compliance with local, system and government requirements. The school community supports environmental sustainability and eco-friendly practices.

needs developing

The school is working towards a culture of continuous improvement. There is no explicit school improvement plan in place and communication with the school community is limited. Student performance data is not used to inform decisions and directions on continuous improvement.

Scope exists for staff to learn more about the range of school and student performance data types and how they can be used for diagnosis, reflection and self-evaluation and for informing improvement in student learning.

Staff is engaged in professional learning and reflective practice, however the school is yet to develop a coherent school-wide approach to professional learning that builds staff confidence, capacity and skills.

There is a need to build effective internal organisational and administrative infrastructure to ensure sound management and accountability. The school community is rarely challenged to develop and maintain a sustainable environment.

4

high expectations of all

This Domain addresses our Catholic school's deep belief that every student is capable of successful learning and that all staff and families have a shared responsibility for the learning and success of all students within a culture of continuous improvement.

elements

4.1 shared responsibility

indicators of effectiveness

- The school has high expectations of all teachers and students.
- The school communicates clearly to families that it expects all students to learn successfully and has high expectations of all staff.
- The school has established policies and structures that meet the needs of all students and recognise families as valued and active partners in their students' learning.
- Teachers have shared responsibility and accountability for the care and successful learning of all students, particularly those who have additional educational or pastoral needs.
- Teachers promote and maintain an environment reflective of high and explicit expectations that all students will learn successfully.
- Students have opportunities to reflect, self-assess and monitor their goals, and develop insights into their own capabilities and learning progress.
- Students are explicitly informed about how to demonstrate achievement and how to improve.
- Students have the opportunity to engage with teachers in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.
- The focus on student achievement is evident and is celebrated in an inclusive way throughout the school and with families.

4.2 engagement with families

- The school values the varying cultural backgrounds of families and works to build the cultural competence of school staff.
- Families are integral members of the school community who share responsibility for student achievement and wellbeing.
- Families are consulted and engaged in ongoing collaborative decision making for student learning.
- Relationships between staff, students and families are caring, polite and inclusive.
- Families receive effective and timely feedback on their children's learning progress.
- Families provide feedback on a range of school matters through formal and informal structures.
- Staff understand that their personal example can give witness to the presence and activity of God.

The school has established a strong culture of high expectations, accountability, and review and promotes a culture of inquiry and innovation. The school has built a professional team of highly able teachers who take shared responsibility for the successful learning of all students. The school maintains a learning environment that promotes intellectual rigour. This culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

The culture of the school supports the belief that every student will learn and achieve positive outcomes and successful pathways. Staff and parents have high expectations and are committed to high levels of achievement for all students. School attendance and retention, student engagement and student wellbeing are sustained at high levels.

The school community is engaged in maximising learning outcomes and life opportunities for students. Highly effective structures, programs and practices are in place to encourage students' engagement with learning and skill them to be successful learners. Student achievements are consistently acknowledged and celebrated.

Parents and families are valued as partners in student learning and the school community is characterised by mutually respectful relationships. The school climate demonstrates a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school. Teachers are committed to the improvement of teaching through collaboration, ongoing review and feedback on their performance.

developing

The school community is focused on improving learning outcomes and life opportunities for students. Structures, programs and practices are in place to meet the needs of all students and to encourage them to be successful learners. Achievements are generally acknowledged and celebrated across a range of curricular and co-curricular activities. A school culture of accountability, review and improvement informed by use of data and other information is developing.

Improvement goals and other relevant benchmarks are generally utilised to assist in assessing overall school effectiveness and to inform whole-school improvement in teaching and learning. Non-attendance is an issue for a small number of students.

The school fosters and evaluates its partnerships with families and acknowledges them as valued and active partners in their students' learning.

needs developing

The school has a limited focus on improving learning outcomes and life opportunities for students. Few structures, programs and practices are in place to meet the needs of all students and to encourage them to be successful learners. Achievements in curricular or co-curricular areas are rarely acknowledged or celebrated. A school culture of accountability, review and improvement, informed by use of data and other information is emerging but is yet to be developed.

Annual improvement goals and other benchmarks are not used to assess overall school effectiveness. Student attendance is an issue for many students.

There is little evidence of collaboration among teachers and staff tend not to value or engage parents as partners in student learning.

There are limited opportunities for meaningful collaboration with families.

5

high quality teaching and learning

This domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in providing high quality teaching and learning through the design, implementation and delivery of contemporary and engaging curriculum and educational practices.

elements

5.1 curriculum

- The school has developed a common and agreed understanding of effective teaching, learning, assessment and pedagogical practices that reflect its mission and vision for Catholic education.
- The school's mission and vision informs and inspires the curriculum.
- The curriculum provides for breadth and depth of learning with adjustments to ensure access for all.
- Teachers plan for differentiated learning that is both developmentally appropriate and challenging.
- There are clear curriculum/learning standards and goals at class and school level.
- The curriculum is designed and sequenced to develop successful learners, creative individuals and responsible citizens.

5.2 quality teaching

- The design, planning and evaluation of teaching programs are based on research, student assessment data, student feedback, curriculum and appropriate pedagogy.
- The school promotes a culture of teacher reflection, action, collaboration and teamwork that results in early intervention to support students.
- Teachers are experts in their field and receive ongoing feedback on their performance.
- Teaching practices are data-informed and evidence-based.

5.3 assessment and reporting

- Assessment practices are aligned to the curriculum and are designed to clarify, diagnose and monitor students' learning progress over time.
- Teachers have a clear understanding of standards for assessment and participate in moderation activities which support consistent and comparable judgements of student learning.
- Reporting practices align with system and government requirements.
- Reporting practices are aligned to the curriculum and provide specific, accurate, constructive and timely feedback to students.
- Reporting practices support improved learning outcomes by developing partnerships between school, students and families.

5.4 student engagement in learning

- Students participate in discussions about ownership of, and engagement in, learning.
- Students participate in challenging, rich and differentiated learning opportunities that engage them and promote deep learning.
- The school has processes in place for the design, planning and evaluation of programs and learning experiences based on students' needs, feedback, interests, pathway destinations and prior knowledge.
- Students provide teachers with constructive feedback about the teaching and learning.
- Student teamwork, resilience, responsibility and self-discipline are fostered.

5.5 professional learning

- The school has a culture of professional learning, inquiry and improvement, accessing school-based and external professional learning opportunities.
- The school provides professional learning that is timely, high quality and related to identified school goals and student needs and an associated budget supports this learning.
- All teachers have documented professional learning goals and are supported in achieving them.

The school has a shared vision for curriculum practice and a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations across all year levels. The use of research-based teaching and assessment practices are encouraged and all teachers understand and use effective teaching methods to maximise learning for all students. Students are active participants in their learning, what and how they learn, and the conditions of learning.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

The curriculum plan reflects the school's shared vision for learning and its continuous improvement goals. The curriculum is a constant focus for discussion and collaboration between teachers, students and families and there is a whole-school approach to the principles and practices of assessment of and for learning. Curriculum delivery is designed to meet the diverse learning needs of all students including those from varying backgrounds and teaching and assessment practices are differentiated to meet those diverse needs. Opportunities are provided for student input on school climate, curriculum and school improvement strategies.

Teachers are experts in their specialist fields and are highly effective in their pedagogical knowledge and skill. Teachers work collaboratively to plan, review and assess the curriculum, share best practice, analyse student work and participate in group moderation of standards across the school. Student and school performance data is analysed to identify achievement gaps, to inform the teaching and learning processes and to establish continuous improvement goals for whole school, cohort and individual student performance. A wide range of high quality resources support the teaching and learning programs.

All teachers are committed to high quality, ongoing professional learning and to the development of a school-wide culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning. The school has highly effective structures and processes in place for parent and family engagement in their child's learning.

developing

The school has a curriculum plan that meets system and government requirements which is periodically reviewed. The curriculum provides learning experiences that meet the learning needs of most students, and enable most but not all students to be successful.

Some staff are collaborating to plan, review and assess the curriculum, share best practice, analyse student work and participate in group moderation of standards but this is not yet part of a whole-school strategy. Teachers have documented professional learning plans and the school provides opportunities for professional learning that may in some instances be linked to the school's improvement goals. The school provides opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles outside the classroom.

Students are provided with a wide range of relevant and motivating learning resources and opportunities to provide input into some aspects of school life.

There are strategies in place to recruit and retain staff especially those with particular expertise, and to train staff to address present and future school needs.

needs developing

The school has a plan for curriculum delivery but is yet to develop a whole-school understanding of effective teaching that is based on recent research. Teachers do not yet have a shared view on the characteristics of highly effective teaching.

There is little evidence of student-centred, flexible learning environments and limited opportunity for students and families to provide feedback on curriculum, assessment or reporting practices.

A coordinated approach to professional learning that is linked to school improvement goals is yet to be developed. The school does not have a formal process for providing feedback to teachers on their performance and development or for regular professional reviews.

Appropriate resources are lacking or not readily available in some areas to support implementation of teaching and learning programs. Opportunities for parents to be involved as partners in their child's learning are few or inadequate.



effective use of data

This Domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in gathering and interpreting data to identify strengths, challenges, trends, and patterns to assist in improving student outcomes and overall school performance.

elements

6.1 systematic identification and collection of data

6.2 analysis and interpretation of data

6.3 monitoring and use of data

indicators of effectiveness

- School identifies the range of data to be used to inform strategic decision making
- The school systematically collects data for planning, decision-making, problem-solving and accountability at the classroom, school, system and government level.
- The school collects appropriate data for identified groups and uses it in the planning process.
- The school has policies, procedures and systems for the generation, collection, storage and retrieval of its data.
- Teachers build their skills in analysing and interpreting a broad range of student achievement, wellbeing, assessment and achievement data.
- Teachers regularly analyse and interpret data.
- Teachers have time for in-depth discussion of achievement data and of strategies for continuous improvement.
- School leaders work with teams to review achievement data relating to their teaching areas.
- Outcomes of school-wide data analysis are communicated to families and the school community.
- The school uses data to inform school-level decisions, interventions and initiatives and to identify areas for overall school improvement.
- Teachers use data continuously, collaboratively and effectively to improve teaching for learning.
- Student outcomes data including national, school and classroom assessments together with other performance data is used to track growth in student learning and overall achievement.
- The school builds a culture of self-evaluation and reflection through the use of data.
- The school monitors school-wide achievement and progress.
- The school implements a series of targeted improvement strategies.

A high priority is given to the school-wide analysis and interpretation of systematically collected data on student outcomes, including academic, attendance and behavioural outcomes, and student engagement and wellbeing. The school has established a cycle for using data for school improvement that includes identifying, gathering and observing data; evaluating and interpreting the data; and planning for continuous improvement.

self-assessment rating

highly developed*

The principal and other school leaders clearly articulate their belief that reliable data on student outcomes are crucial to the school's improvement agenda. The school has established and is implementing a systematic plan for the collection, analysis and use of a range of student achievement and wellbeing data. Test data in areas such as literacy, numeracy and science are key elements of this plan.

Data are used throughout the school to identify gaps in student learning, to monitor improvement over time and to monitor growth across the years of school. A high priority has been given to professional development aimed at building teachers' and leaders' data literacy skills. Staff conversations and language reflect a sophisticated understanding of student assessment and data concepts (eg, value-added; growth; improvement; statistical significance).

Teachers are given assessment data for their classes electronically and are provided with, and use, software to analyse, display and communicate data on individual and class performances and progress, including comparisons of pre- and post-test results. Teachers routinely use objective data on student achievement as evidence of successful teaching.

developing*

School leaders pay close attention to data provided to them about the performance of the school (eg, NAPLAN results; Year 12 results) and identify areas in which the school is performing relatively poorly or well. Student assessment data is used by some teachers, but generally are not used as part of a whole-school assessment strategy.

Software may be used for the analysis of school results, including the performances of priority groups, but analyses generally do not extend to monitoring student growth over time.

School data are presented to staff in meetings, but presentations tend to be 'for information' rather than a trigger for in-depth discussions of teaching practices and school processes. Information about the school's performance is communicated to the school community, but may lack explanation or analysis.

needs developing*

The school has an inconsistent approach to the collection, analysis and monitoring of data on student achievement and overall school performance. Student achievement data is rarely used effectively to monitor and review student progress, set targets and make adjustments to teaching and learning programs, resource provision or staffing.

There is either no annual data collection plan for the school or the plan is not being implemented effectively. Teachers are not skilled to systematically analyse assessment and other data for their classes, nor make use of data to reflect on their teaching.

The school is yet to use data in meetings with parents to discuss student achievement levels and to plan strategies for continuous improvement.

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orderly and safe learning environments

This Domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in creating a safe, respectful, tolerant and inclusive learning environment that is centred on the values of love, compassion, justice, reconciliation and hope thus supporting and encouraging successful learning for all students.

elements

7.1 relationships

- Positive and trusting relationships exist among staff, students and families.
- Interactions between all members of the school community reflect a sense of justice, dignity and respect.
- School-wide programs are in place to promote positive relationship building.

7.2 positive behaviours

- The school's policies and practices are followed to ensure that coordinated and consistent practices exist within classrooms and across the school.
- Teachers establish clear expectations of students and deal promptly, fairly and respectfully with behaviour issues.
- Students demonstrate an understanding of the school's behaviour policy and approach and act accordingly.
- Teachers have a common understanding of learning strategies that develop positive behaviours.
- Teachers establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create a learning environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.
- Students are affirmed and rewarded for positive behaviours.

7.3 identifying and responding to issues

- Staff have access to professional learning that supports positive student behaviours, and social and emotional wellbeing.
- Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in reporting incidents and responding to emergencies.
- The school has processes in place to identify and evaluate the needs of students, staff and families.

7.4 school policies and practices

- The school has policies and practices in place to meet system and government requirements.
- There is flexibility to adjust the school policies and practices to meet the needs of all students.
- A whole-school positive behaviour policy and approach supports and ensures an orderly and safe learning environment for students and staff.
- The school's policies and practices are constantly evaluated to ensure that the wellbeing of staff and students is addressed.
- The school's policies and practices are communicated widely and made available to students and families.
- All members of the school community are aware of and support the school's behaviour policies and approach.

The school has clear strategies to promote positive behaviours and provides safe, supportive and engaging learning spaces that are conducive to effective teaching for learning. It has policies and procedures in place that ensure that staff and students have a safe and orderly environment where they feel physically and emotionally secure. The school's policies and procedures satisfy all government and system laws and requirements. Staff, students, families and the wider school community promote and sustain student wellbeing and positive student behaviour in safe and supportive learning environments.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

The school through its practices and procedures demonstrates a commitment to creating and sustaining an orderly and safe environment that supports student learning, student engagement and student wellbeing and that enables relationships across the school community to be positive, ethical and founded on mutual respect. Learning environments are consistently well-ordered, supportive and safe for both students and staff.

Staff and students uphold the policies and practices of the school which are designed to value and protect the rights and responsibilities of each person. The rights and responsibilities of students, teachers and families are clearly articulated in school policies, procedures and practices which are implemented consistently and updated regularly. There are very high rates of school attendance and student engagement.

The school implements highly effective processes for seeking and acting on the views of students to build a collaborative and safe teaching and learning environment.

developing

There is a commitment to creating and sustaining a safe and orderly environment that supports student learning and student wellbeing and that enables relationships across the school community to be positive, ethical and founded on mutual respect. Staff uphold policies and practices designed to value and protect the rights and responsibilities of each person.

The rights and responsibilities of students, teachers and families are reflected in school policies, procedures and practices which are usually implemented, reviewed and updated. Learning environments are generally orderly and safe, although this may not be consistent across the whole school. The school effectively identifies and provides a range of educational programs and opportunities to address the needs of all students however, some students are not fully engaged in productive learning.

The school is developing effective processes for seeking and acting on the views of students in order to support a safer and more collaborative teaching and learning environment.

needs developing

The school community does not appear to have a shared commitment to creating and sustaining a safe and orderly learning environment that supports student learning and wellbeing and that enables relationships across the school community to be positive, ethical and mutually respectful.

School policies and practices that have been designed to value and protect the rights and responsibilities of each person are inconsistently upheld. Few practices are in place to safeguard quality teaching time. Procedures which ensure safe and orderly learning environments are yet to be developed. The rights and responsibilities of students, teachers and families are not always evident school in policies, procedures and practices.

The school has few processes for seeking and acting on the views of students in order to develop safe and collaborative teaching and learning environments. Disengagement and non-attendance are issues for a significant number of students.



strong home, school, community engagement

This Domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school in engaging with our families, parish and community in its mission to be a dynamic faith community.

elements

8.1 family engagement

- School builds strong partnerships with parents and families by creating a culture of welcome, inclusion and a shared responsibility for student learning and wellbeing.
- The school actively seeks ways to work collaboratively with families to enhance student learning and wellbeing.
- The school uses a variety of two-way communication methods to seek and share information between home and the school.
- Opportunities exist to support parents and families to participate in their student's learning and the life of the school community that are inclusive of diverse needs.
- Inclusive structures and protocols to facilitate parent and family engagement are documented, implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Parental contribution is regularly acknowledged and celebrated

8.2 community engagement

- School establishes ongoing strategic relationships with the parish, government and non-government agencies, community groups, businesses and other educational providers to enhance learning opportunities and outcomes for all students.
- The school seeks opportunities to be involved in the key celebrations of the parish.
- Social justice opportunities are developed collaboratively with the parish.
- The school celebrates and promotes its achievements

8.3 consultation, collaboration and decision making

- Parents and families are active contributors to school decision making and planning processes that support learning; school policy and practice; and community building initiatives.
- Adequate resources are committed to facilitate strong home/school/community engagement.
- School collects evidence to evaluate the impact of strategies established to strengthen home/school/community engagement.

Meaningful partnerships between school, family and parish are consistently fostered and evaluated. The school acknowledges the primary role of parents and families in faith development and student learning and recognises them as members of the school community and valued partners in their children's education. The school creates a range of opportunities to facilitate parish, parent and family engagement that reflects and respects the diversity within the school community. Partnerships with other education and training institutions, local businesses and community organisations enhance learning opportunities and pathways for students.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

School leadership has created a sustained culture of shared responsibility for faith development, student learning and wellbeing within the whole school community. Structures and protocols that build collaborative partnerships between the parish, home, school and community to strengthen family and community engagement in learning and schooling are systematically planned, resourced, embedded into practice and regularly evaluated.

There is effective two-way communication between home and school and a range of opportunities to build on the capacity of parents and families to support their student's learning, actively contribute to decision making and planning processes and in the life of the school. The school establishes networks and partnerships with a broad range of businesses and community organisations to gain mutual benefit for the organisations as well as the school, its students and the wider school community. The school has a positive image in the local community. Ongoing assessment of the strategies designed to strengthen home/school/community engagement is conducted regularly.

developing

School leadership is building a culture of shared responsibility for faith development, student learning and wellbeing within the whole school community. The school engages with the parish and the local and wider community. Some structures and protocols to build collaborative networks and partnerships for mutual benefit are in place but are not yet systematically planned or embedded into practice across the whole school.

There is some communication between families, parish and the school which is predominantly school initiated and some opportunities are created to build on the capacity of parents and families to support their student's learning. The school is developing strategies to better reflect the diversity of its community. More regular assessment and review is required to ensure that strategies designed to strengthen home/school/community engagement are being effective.

needs developing

There is little evidence of a culture of shared responsibility for faith development, student learning and wellbeing within the school community. There are some structures and protocols to build collaborative partnerships to strengthen parish, family and community engagement in learning and schooling but these are dependent on the efforts of a small number of individuals and have limited impact and little mutual benefit.

There is mainly one-way communication from the school to families and few opportunities are created to build the capacity of parents to support their children's learning and to actively contribute to decision making and planning processes in the school. There is limited use of government and non-government agencies and community groups to enhance learning opportunities, outcomes and pathways for students.

The efficacy of the established networks and partnerships are not assessed and reviewed regularly.

9 effective administration and resourcing

This Domain addresses the effectiveness of our Catholic school to administer the school's human and physical resources, finances and infrastructure equitably to maximize student outcomes.

elements

indicators of effectiveness

9.1 administration

- The school Board is an effective structure that supports the delivery of the school's vision and mission and its strategic priorities.
- The school has up-to-date policies, procedures, systems and practices that include monitoring and communication strategies to provide evidence of compliance with all system and government requirements.
- The school has adopted policies and practices that clearly identify delegations, responsibilities and accountability.
- The organisational structure of the school is responsive to the needs of the community and realistic in terms of available resources.

9.2 finance

- The school has highly effective processes that lead to enhanced financial management.
- The school budget aligns to the school's improvement goals.
- The school budget meets system and government requirements.
- The school demonstrates effective stewardship of finances, resources and facilities focused on meeting identified needs and future demands.
- Financial management is compliant and financial reserves are effectively maintained.
- The school Board regularly reviews and monitors the school's budget and financial performance.

9.3 infrastructure and physical resources

- The school uses its physical environment and facilities to inspire and maximise learning.
- The school provides a well-maintained safe, secure, stimulating and welcoming environment.
- Programs and resources are available for students requiring additional or specialist support.
- The school plans effectively for future infrastructure needs which support student learning and stewardship of the school site.

9.4 human resources

- Staff expertise is utilised to address the identified learning needs of all students.
- The school has flexible curriculum arrangements to enable staff to meet the needs of individual learners.
- The school plans effectively for future human resource needs including management, training, professional learning, succession planning, attraction and retention of staff.
- The school Board actively monitors and reviews work health and safety practices and procedures.

9.5 environmental sustainability

- The school has policies and practices in place to ensure that staff, students and families understand the importance and implications of environmental stewardship in the context of Church teachings and social responsibility.
- The school Board actively looks for opportunities to incorporate environmental and sustainable initiatives.

The school has a governance structure which ensures that it can execute its responsibilities effectively. The school's operational policies, practices and programs align with its vision, mission and goals. Structures and processes enable the school to respond to the current and future needs of all learners, to comply with system and government requirements, and to operate in a just, sustainable and ethical manner. The school manages its finances effectively to benefit the school community and allocates its resources in a targeted manner to maximise the learning and the wellbeing of all its students.

self-assessment rating

highly developed

The School Board is highly effective in its systematic monitoring of the school's progress towards achieving its continuous improvement goals. The Board and school leadership are strategic in their planning, administration, and resource allocation to ensure financial sustainability. Budget development and monitoring, accountability procedures, future facilities planning and risk management are comprehensively documented, highly organised and reviewed regularly.

A high priority is given to identifying student needs and the school facilities and resources are effectively deployed to support them. There are strategies in place to maximize effective use of all the available resources in the school and the school community has an understanding of how those resources are allocated. Decisions about resource allocation are well-informed and considered through broad consultation.

The school proactively promotes itself to attract and retain high quality staff. The culture of the school enhances the wellbeing of staff. Innovative retention strategies are in place to ensure staff are challenged and committed in their work. Staff are encouraged to develop their career pathways and are provided with leadership opportunities.

The school community understands the importance and implications of environmental stewardship in the context of Church teaching and social responsibility. Environmentally sustainable principles and practices are consistently incorporated and monitored.

developing

The overall management of the school is effective with School Board and school leadership being involved in resource allocation, budget development and financial and accountability procedures. Budget development includes some analysis and a generally sound understanding of the school's financial performance.

Individual learning needs are addressed in most classrooms, but there is not a school-wide approach for using the existing facilities and resources to creatively address the individual needs of students.

The school has effective processes for recruitment of staff and has strategies in place that ensure staff remain challenged and engaged in their work. There is a developing approach to environmental stewardship which is being documented in policies and programs and a whole-school approach is beginning to emerge.

needs developing

The overall management of the school does not appear to address the identified needs of the school community with little involvement of school leadership in resource allocation and financial management. Budget development lacks accurate analysis and demonstrates limited understanding of the school's financial performance.

The school provides a safe and secure physical environment. However, more regular reviews would identify areas for updating and aligning of the physical environment to the contemporary curriculum

There are few school-wide policies or programs to address individual student needs.

Staff are rarely encouraged to develop their career pathways and have few leadership opportunities. The school approach to setting strategic directions and priorities for environmental stewardship and management is yet to be developed.

using the framework

Schools will systematically collect and use a wide range of school performance data to evaluate the effectiveness of the improvement strategies against each of the Domains of the Framework. The Rating Scales assist schools in using evidence to make informed ‘on balance’ judgements of progress towards their school improvement goals at a given point in time. There is no expectation that all schools should be at a particular rating on any given component - rather, the process of agreeing on a rating enables identification of specific areas for continuous improvement into the future.



School leaders and their staff will need to develop the capacity and skills to effectively use data to inform school improvement planning and policy, and to rate the school's effectiveness in achieving its improvement goals.

Data is evidence that is:

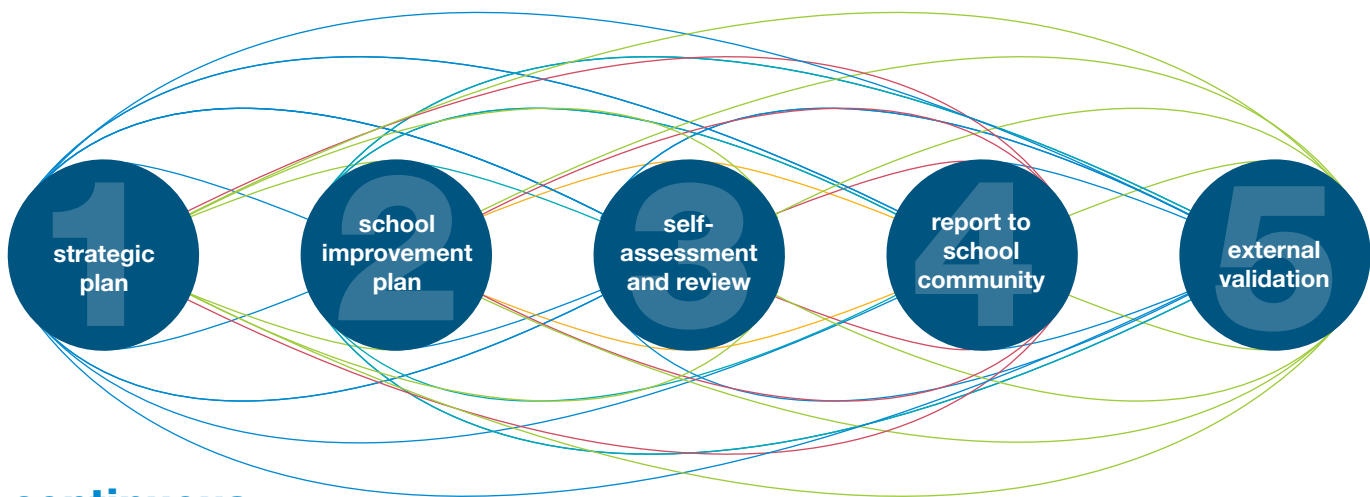
- gathered systematically
- organised for analysis
- used to draw conclusions and make decisions.

Using data ensures that evidence is used to evaluate and rate the effectiveness of the school. However, principals, school leaders and staff need to be able to read, understand and interpret data so that they can collaborate to make sense of it. High levels of data literacy will enable them to select and gather useful data and interpret it meaningfully. Triangulating

data, by examining evidence from more than one source, provides a richer and, often, more accurate evidence base.

Data is usually collected in cycles. It is then assessed and reviewed to identify progress to date and plan areas for improvement for the next year (or cycle). Data can come from a range of sources: much of this data is already available in schools, but may not be currently used as part of the continuous improvement process. Many schools will commence the continuous improvement process at the self-assessment and review stage using a range of school performance data that has been collected over time. Below is a possible model for a data collection cycle linked to the continuous improvement activities.

data collection cycle		continuous improvement activities
gather	collect and observe data	self-assessment and review
evaluate	assess, triangulate, interpret data, draw conclusions and make decisions	self-assessment and review
identify	progress to date and report regularly to the school board, staff and school community on key achievements	annual report to community
plan	collaborate to set long term goals, targets and objectives and identify strategies and actions	strategic plan
act	collaborate to research best practice; update operational aspects; align school plan to system policies and priorities; implement school improvement strategies	annual school improvement plan
monitor	progress towards improvement goals and targets	annual school improvement plan
present	summative data to external panel and incorporate validation outcomes into the next cycle	external validation



continuous improvement activities

1. strategic plan

Most schools develop a Strategic Plan which, among other things, identifies the key long term improvement goals that will be achieved over a specified time frame against the Framework Domains and Elements. The improvement goals and associated strategies are situated within the mission, vision and charism of each Catholic school. When preparing the Strategic Plan schools could address the following:

- *What is our mission and vision as a Catholic school? To what do we aspire?*
- *Where are we now? What are we doing well? How could we do better?*
- *What are some future directions and new priorities for our school?*
- *What future do we intend to create for our school in 3-5 years?*
- *How will the domains and elements be addressed over the 3-5 years?*

2. school improvement plan (annual)

A School Improvement Plan records the annual key improvement goals the school intends to achieve to improve student outcomes and overall school performance against specific domains and elements of the Framework.

When preparing the School Improvement Plan schools could address the following:

- *What key improvements do we intend to make this year?*
- *Which domains and elements will be addressed?*
- *Who will lead this? What are the timelines?*
- *What strategies and resources will we use?*

3. self-assessment and review (annual)

The annual self-assessment and review process is an opportunity for a school to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its school improvement journey against the specific domains and elements using a range of school and student performance and achievement data. When undertaking the self-assessment and review schools could address the following:

- *How are we doing? (monitoring and evaluation against the specific domains and elements).*
- *How do we measure our progress?*
- *How do we know? (making evidence-based judgements).*
- *How often do we monitor our progress?*
- *Are we meeting our key improvement goals?*

4. report to school community (annual)

The Annual Report to the Community is an important tool for effective communication and may also meet system and government accountability requirements. The report to the school community:

- *Celebrates the achievements of the school.*
- *Provides the school community with information about overall school performance against the key improvement goals.*
- *Gives parents and other members of the school community a clear sense of how students are progressing.*
- *Includes the data required by governments and systems.*

5. external validation (every 3-5 years)

An external validation process enables a school to engage in a reflective and collaborative process to review its improvement journey, to be supported and challenged in this process, and to build capacity for ongoing improvement in the future. When undertaking an external validation schools could address the following:

- *Where are we now in our improvement journey and how did we arrive here?*
- *Have we met our targets?*
- *What are some future directions for our school and how might we get there?*
- *What domains and elements are we going to address now? (identifying further improvement goals).*

data sources

The gathering, analysis and interpretation of school performance data is an essential part of the school's self-assessment and review process. The relevant performance data is used to make 'on balance' judgements against the Ratings Scales for the particular Domain. There is a considerable amount of performance data already available in schools which may not be currently used as part of a continuous improvement process. There are many different models for grouping school performance data and the one outlined below is an example only and is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.



What is the purpose of our school?

- School purpose
- School vision and mission
- School values
- School context
- Quality and range of school facilities
- School income/expenditure

Who are we?

- Student profiles
 - Gender
 - Socio-economic status
 - Religious composition of student body
 - Cultural background/ethnicity
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 - Language background and ESL
 - New Arrivals
 - Refugee visas
 - Language acquisition disorder
 - Sensory impaired students
 - Students with disabilities and/or special needs
 - Gifted and talented students
- Staff profiles
 - Number of teachers and support staff
 - Attendance rate and retention
 - Qualifications (by level eg PhD, BA, Highly Accomplished, Lead)
 - Professional learning
- Parents, parish and wider community profile
 - Socio-economic composition
 - Religious composition
 - Language background, New Arrivals and Refugees

How do we operate?

- Teaching and learning
 - Curriculum
 - Teaching programs
 - Timetable
 - Assessment policy and practice
 - Pedagogy
 - Running Records
 - Number of classes, class size, structure and organisation
 - Special education programs
 - Teaching resources
- Student behaviour
 - Detentions, suspensions and expulsions
 - Incidents of bullying/harassment
 - Classroom behaviour
 - Incidents/referrals
- School organisation
 - School strategic plan
 - Data supporting budget preparation
 - Policies and procedures
 - Auditor's Report
 - Reports to School Board
 - Progress in meeting targets
 - Marketing and promotion
 - Staffing levels
- Physical facilities
 - Access to ICT
 - Resources for all learning areas
 - Future building plans
 - Maintenance plans and schedules
 - Facilities – staff, student
- Decision-making
 - Budgeting decision making
 - Representation of students, staff, parents and parish
 - Leadership structures



How do we know students are achieving?

Student learning outcomes
Teacher formative/summative classroom assessment
NAPLAN and other standardised tests eg PAT-R, PAT-M
Running Records
Pre- and post- intervention tests
Trend data/comparative data
Learning gain
Class profiles (collections of student work at a point in time)
Year 12 completion
Year 12 SACE attainment/results
VET outcomes by certificate level
Student destination data: tertiary/employment/apprenticeship
Student logs
Student competitions/external activities
ReLAT (Religious Literacy Assessment Tool)

Student engagement
Attendance/absenteeism
Retention/attrition rates
Completion rates
Student leadership programs
Participation in co- and extra-curricular activities

How do we meet our school community needs?

Meeting student needs
Student choice and voice
Special education programs
Student feedback/surveys
Student representation
Student morale
Student safety
Connectedness to school
Behaviour management support

Meeting staff needs
Professional development
Meeting structures and protocols
Professional standards
Staff collaboration/mentoring programs
Feedback on performance

Meeting parent needs
Engagement with parents
Parent organisations/events
Attendance at parent-teacher meetings/information sessions
Reporting to parents
Annual report to the community

Community and parish needs
Meetings with parish priest/school chaplain
Invitations to parish agencies to visit the school
Parish programs integrated into the life of the school

How do we canvass feedback and opinions?

Whole school and wider community
Student, staff and parent surveys
SRC feedback
Interviews, focus groups and informal feedback
School tours and open days
Assemblies and staff meetings
Parish priests/chaplain feedback
Feedback from professional and 'critical friends'
Wider community feedback
Survey outcomes

Schools may find the following resources useful in implementing the Framework.



supporting documents for Catholic schools

- CESA Mission, Values and Vision Statement
- CESA Leading Learning Statement
- CESA Leadership Development Statement
- CESA Services Review and CEO Restructure, Interim Report, July 2011
- Strengthening Family and Community Engagement in Student Learning
- Charter for Staff in Catholic Schools SA
- Charter for Parents in Catholic Schools SA
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useful links

ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority)

<http://www.acara.edu.au/default.asp>

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

<http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au/>

Australian Council for Educational Leaders

<http://www.acele.org.au/>

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/brief-guide-disability-discrimination-act>

Disability Standards for Education 2005

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/disability-standards>

Equal Opportunity Commission SA

<http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au>

Equal Opportunity Act 2009

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (Scotland)

<http://www.hmie.gov.uk/>

International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement

<http://www.icsei.net/>

Ontario Ministry of Education

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/>

Michael Fullan

<http://www.michaelfullan.ca/>



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glossary

Accountability the process by which the school is held responsible for its performance and outcomes. These expectations can be set at the classroom, school, system and/or government level.

Adjustment a measure or action (or a group of measures or actions) taken by an education provider that has the effect of assisting a student with a disability. (See Section 3.3 of Disability Standards for Education 2005)

Annual School Improvement Plan is a tool for creating and managing change. It documents the school's improvement goals for the particular year and how the school intends to achieve these goals. It includes the specific Domain and Elements the school is focussing on together with strategies, indicators of effectiveness, timing and evaluation and resourcing.

Community involvement the community at large is supportive and actively engaged in student learning and other school activities.

Data is factual information from which conclusions may be drawn; organised for analysis; or used to reason or make decisions.

Data-based decision making analysing existing sources of information such as: class and school; attendance; grades; test scores; and other data including portfolios, surveys, interviews to make decisions. The process involves organising and interpreting the data, creating action plans, and monitoring the effect actions have when implemented.

Domain represents a key area in which school improvement can take place.

Element is a core of activity within each Domain.

Evidence is data (information) which the school identifies to support its conclusions about its effectiveness and progress in relation to the achievement of its key improvement goals. Data can be derived quantitatively or qualitatively.

Evidence-based refers to strategies or practices that are supported by empirical research and/or inquiry and experiences in classrooms, schools and school boards that have been validated over time.

Equity is about removing barriers and opening up opportunities. It is not about treating everyone the same. It recognises that to be treated equitably some people may need more or different supports. (Saskatchewan Education "Our children, Our Communities and Our Future – Equity in Education: A Policy Framework")

Family engagement is a shared responsibility of families, schools and communities for student learning and achievement; it is continuous from birth to young adulthood; and it occurs across multiple settings where children learn. (Weiss, Lopez & Rosenberg, 2010)

Goal based on a careful analysis of data, a goal defines the priority area(s) of a school's improvement initiatives.

Indicators of effectiveness are examples of high quality practice in the respective Element. They are derived from literature, research, practical experience and expertise. These have been collaboratively developed for each Element and are located in each Domain of the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools.

Mission statement is an expression of the purposes, identity and values of the school. It describes the educational beliefs and priorities of the school and its reason for existence. A mission statement would usually be implemented for a long term period.

Rating the school's self-perceptions of its effectiveness in a specific Domain based on the Rating Scale described in the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools.

School improvement team develops and implements the school's annual improvement plan and manages the processes involved in achieving sustainable continuous improvement within the school.

Self-assessment and review a formative, systematic and transparent process conducted within the school with the aim of improving student, individual and organisational learning through the achievement of the school's key improvement goals. Sound judgements are based on evidence which can be provided in a number of ways eg quantitative data; people's views; observations, etc.

Strategic plan sets out the school's strategic directions for a period of time (usually 3-5 years). It includes the school's Vision, Mission, purpose and school profile, together with long term priorities and strategies including key improvement goals, targets and improvement strategies.

Student voice describes the ways in which students might have the opportunity to participate in school decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of their peers. It can be a powerful tool for improving student engagement and performance.

Validation is the objective evaluation of how effectively the school has identified, planned and implemented relevant sustainable school improvement initiatives.

Targets represent improvement in student learning. They are achieved by the focused efforts of staff, parents and students themselves. A wide variety of data are used to set the targets.

Triangulation of evidence is a comparison and analysis of one source of evidence with a second and a third (or more) source.

Values are the guiding principles and beliefs that reflect and shape the culture of the school and inform how it will operate and work together as a school community.

Vision the aspirations and intention of the school for its students and what the school hopes to be doing in the future. A vision statement is a clear description of the kind of system that will be needed to deliver the Mission of the school.

