	Policy Name:	Selection and Use of Texts in a Catholic School
	Policy Area:	Education
	Policy Number:	2-B1
	Originally Released:	
	Reviewed:	2014
	Date for review:	2019

Rationale

St Mary's Catholic Primary, as a Catholic school, aims to help students integrate culture, faith and life through engaging in critical thinking and discussion. The values and attitudes at St Mary's are founded upon the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is these values and attitudes which inform the selection and use of texts at St Mary's School. Therefore, the selection and use of texts is a rigorous and careful process.


Principles

- Texts are used to:
 - support and develop the desired outcomes of schooling including the love and appreciation of texts
 - address student diversities in culture, gender, special learning needs and socio-economic background
 - provide students with learning experiences which access a wide, range of knowledge, understandings and skills.
- Texts enable students to:
 - deepen their understanding of the values of Christ including absolute values such as the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person.
 - develop a critical understanding of the diversity of beliefs and values found in society and in human experiences
 - develop their unique potential – physical, emotional, creative, spiritual, intellectual, moral and social
- Texts are not studied in isolation and are related to the contexts of their production and reception.
- Some texts enable students, with assistance, to challenge dominant societal ideas, particularly stereotypes and undesirable models of human behaviour.
- Texts dealing with controversial topics or challenging situations need to be selected with sensitivity to community expectations.
- Texts containing gratuitous or extreme violence, or pornographic material, have no place in a Catholic school.

Definitions

Texts can be written, spoken or multi-modal and in print or digital/online forms. Multi-modal texts combine language with other systems for communication such as print text, visual images, soundtrack and spoken word, as in film or computer presentation media.

The term 'written texts' includes but is not limited to: essays, articles, newspapers, magazines, brochures, books, letters, manuals, transcripts, novels, short stories and poems.

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The term 'audio texts' includes but is not limited to: speeches, radio broadcasts, songs, recited prayers and poems.

The term 'multi-modal' includes but is not limited to: Webpages and e-books.

Procedure


1. Texts selected at St Mary's are previewed and evaluated prior to their use.
2. The Principal and/or Teacher Librarian are the first people to consult for advice on the selection of texts and the Guidelines of the Australian Classification Board for non-print texts.
3. In selecting a documentary, feature film, television program, animated film or short film, for viewing by students, the guidelines set by the Australian Classification Board apply. This classification relates to all school activities.
4. Professional learning will be provided to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and understanding to use the selected text.
5. Where the class teacher and a member of the Leadership Team consider the text suitable (e.g. a documentary on the Holocaust which may contain graphic footage) but its rating is above the recommended age group, then permission must be sought from the parent or guardian by letter and reply slip. If a parent or guardian declines consent, then where possible the student will be provided with an alternative text covering the same concepts.
6. It is not the policy of St Mary's to abridge a text and no text will be censored by the removal of pages or editing of footage because this contravenes the Copyright Act; however, it may be appropriate to use particular sections of the text.
7. If a parent or guardian makes a complaint about the relevance or suitability of a text, the complaint should be made in writing outlining the nature of the complaint.
8. If a member of the general community makes a complaint, the nature of the complaint should be ascertained. The matter should be reported to the Principal.
9. Subsequent to a complaint, the relevant staff member and/or member of the leadership team shall meet the parent or guardian to discuss their concerns.
10. The Principal will have the final say on the removal of a text. In the case of a text having a number of different complaints brought against it, each complaint will be examined independently.
11. St Mary's has safeguards to prevent students accessing materials that are of a dubious nature, inappropriate or offensive.



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G	GENERAL - Suitable for all ages. Suitable for Years K-12
PG	PARENTAL GUIDANCE - Parental guidance recommended for persons under 15 years. Suitable for Years 8-12.
M	15+and over MATURE - Recommended for mature audiences 15 years and over. Suitable for Years 10-12.
MA	MATURE ACCOMPANIED – Restrictions apply to persons under the age of 15. The MA category is legally restricted. Children under 15 will not be allowed to see MA films or hire them on video unless in the company of a parent or adult guardian. Some may be suitable for Years 11 and 12.
R 18+	RESTRICTED - Restricted to adults 18 years and over. The R category is legally restricted to adults. Material, which is given a restricted classification, is unsuitable for those under 18 years of age. Material classified R deals with issues or contains depictions that require an adult perspective. Not suitable for high school students.
X 18+	RESTRICTED - Restricted to adults 18 years and over. Not suitable for high school students.

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Issue With Text Form

Name of Parent: _____

Title of Text: _____

Author: _____

Call Number/Spine Label: _____

Issue with text:

Inappropriate language (Example or Page number)

Inappropriate content (Example or Page number)

Inappropriate themes (Example or Page number)

Unsuitable year level (Example or Page number)

I have returned the text to the Librarian/Teacher and expressed my concerns by completing this form.

I would like to discuss this further.

Signed: _____

Date: _____