



St Joseph's & Parent/Carer & Community Engagement Plan

St Joseph's – Kempsey Vision Statement

St Joseph's is a parish school community of students, parents, priests and staff who strive to:

- Provide an environment where all individuals celebrate God's sacred presence, have opportunities to grow in the Catholic faith and witness Gospel values in their daily lives.
- Provide every opportunity for each individual to grow and achieve their personal best in a happy, safe and accepting environment.
- Interact comfortably and cooperatively in order to accept their rights and responsibilities in promoting and maintaining the life and growth of the school.

PURPOSE of the St Joseph's & Parent/Carer & Community Engagement Plan

St Joseph's parents/carers and the broader Macleay Valley community play a critical role in supporting successful learning outcomes for our Indigenous children (whether or not these outcomes are academic, cultural, social or community based). This framework is about our school engaging with parent/carers and the Macleay Valley's Indigenous organisations to work together to capitalise on student learning outcomes. It is our goal to participate in the Federal initiative of 'Closing the Gap'.

This Engagement plan recognises ways in which St Joseph's can strengthen learning outcomes for Indigenous students (through effective partnerships between the Principal, Assistant Principal, Teachers, Students, Parents/Carers and local Indigenous community organisations). Working together we can all help shape our Indigenous student's approach to learning.



Effective and appropriate communication between St Joseph's, Parents/Carers, the Community and Students is key in forming a positive and lasting partnership. It is this partnership which will enable Indigenous students to approach learning in a more contextually appropriate way.

Considerations

- How is student progress communicated to parents in a positive and meaningful way?
- How is it clear, what teachers and parents need to discuss?
- How is there a shared language of learning between teachers and parents to explore the learning development, challenges and successes of the students?
- How can schools work with parents and the community to establish a shared set of expectations about schooling?
- How do working parents or parents with language barriers communicate with the school?
- How does the school communicate with industry and business partners?

Potential Strategies

- Provide information sessions to assist parents with the language of schooling, including the nature of today's classrooms, how to speak with teachers and how to talk to their children about their schooling experiences.
- Use a range of communication tools and channels, including newsletters, websites, e-mails, assemblies, parent/teacher interviews, P&F meetings and text messages.
- Develop a school transition calendar outlining key points in the school year where engagement of parents and the community is vital and the specific activities to be used to engage them.
- Provide professional development for teachers to effectively communicate with parents.
- Share consistent and ongoing messages of high expectations for all students and their learning.

*** **Considerations & Potential Strategies** sourced from Parent and Community Engagement Framework: Working together to maximise student learning – QLD Department of Education, Training and Employment***



COMMUNITY COALITION

At present, St Joseph's liaises with different Indigenous organisations to holistically care for and address the needs of Indigenous student's learning (while in school). Some of these organisations include Durri ACMS, Macleay Valley AECG, Dhunghutti Elders Council and Burrun Dalai – out of home family care and support. How can these partnerships (and potentially others) develop, for the benefit of our Indigenous students?

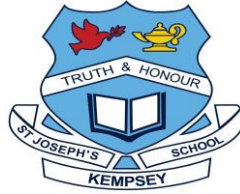
School & Parish Considerations

- What are the key characteristics and strengths of the community (Indigenous and Non-Indigenous)?
- What can the community do to support the school in areas such as drug education, anti-bullying, civic responsibility and the development of social skills?
- What does the Indigenous community expect from the school? How can they help student learning?

Potential Strategies

- Generate and maintain contact with relevant health professionals in the area to support referrals.
- Develop a school alumni group and other marketing materials such as school banners and fence signs.
- Build networks to establish a community integrated student support/health/early childhood services hub, including Child and Family Centres.

*** **Considerations & Potential Strategies** sourced from Parent and Community Engagement Framework: Working together to maximise student learning – QLD Department of Education, Training and Employment***



GALVINISING PARTICIPATION

In a community where parents, carers and families lead busy lives it becomes essential that opportunities to participate in their child's school life and learning direction become readily and consistently available. The involvement of parents, carers and families in a student's schooling life shows a value of education, which in turn sends a powerful message to all.

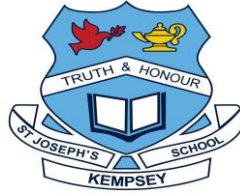
Some Considerations

- How do parents and community members participate in school activities?
- How does the school community recognise and support volunteers?
- How can volunteers contribute to teaching and learning?
- How are parents notified about major events well in advance so they can plan ahead?
- Does the school celebrate significant cultural days?

Potential strategies

- Load events, meetings and assessment calendars on the school website at the start of each term, semester or year.
- Develop a database of parent and community skills, talents and availability to draw on when required.
- Engage community members and business in designing learning experiences and extracurricular activities.
- Invite parents and community members to become involved as guest teachers and speakers.
- Build parent engagement and/or involvement into staff meetings to strengthen commitment, knowledge and skills.

*** **Considerations & Potential Strategies** sourced from Parent and Community Engagement Framework: Working together to maximise student learning – QLD Department of Education, Training and Employment***



PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strong family and community engagement, with a school, is central to an effective partnership. Recognising and acknowledging different roles in a student's learning is crucial to develop strong parent and community trust.

Some Considerations

- Parents are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the school, are acknowledged as the first teachers of their children, and engage as partners in their children's learning.
- Communication with parents provides information about where students are up to in their learning, what progress they have made over time and what they might do to support their children's further learning.
- Respectful and caring relationships are reflected in the ways in which staff, students and parents interact and in the language they use in both formal and informal settings.
- Schools have regular and ongoing practices, when finding out what parents need to do in order to engage with their child's learning.
- Parents can list the school's key expectations for behaviour, attendance, homework.
- The Principal and the teachers use many styles of communication appropriate for parents' cultural backgrounds, availability, working conditions etc.
- The principal and teachers regularly connect with the parent/s of every Indigenous child in the school.
- There are mechanisms to build relationships with relevant members of the community.

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