



Understanding how the curriculum is agreed to, developed, structured and taught in schools can be confusing for parents. At the end of every semester parents receive a Report detailing their child's progress in the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) using an A-E coding system with supporting comments and other school developed descriptions. The following information will assist parents to understand the links between the curriculum and the end of semester student Report .

Who's who in the development of the curriculum

The process of development of the Australian Curriculum content has taken 3 years to allow robust, independent and balanced consultation. Significant teacher professional learning, training, writing, monitoring and evaluating of programs has occurred during this period and teachers in our schools are now confident in their current implementation of the new K-10 curriculum.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), in collaboration with states and territories, has developed an agreed Australian curriculum for English, Mathematics, Science and History.

In NSW, the Board of Studies has worked closely with teachers and key education stakeholders to further develop areas of study that include the Australian curriculum content and further detail that clarifies learning. As a result of this work, Kindergarten to Year 10 curricula provide teachers with direction to ensure greater consistency across all NSW schools.

Catholic schools as part of a broad educational landscape and by the nature of our funding agreements must teach the prescribed curriculum. In our diocese there are 45 different schools employing over 1000 teachers. Part of the Catholic Schools Office role is to support principals and teachers in understanding and implementing the curriculum materials. This has required considered professional effort and the allocation of resources and time during the past three years. It is an ongoing process and something we take very seriously.



Our implementation plan for Secondary schools, supported by the Board of Studies, is as follows:

Years 7 - 10

2011–2012	Curriculum and support material developed by December 2012 Diocese plan implementation support
2013	Familiarisation and planning
2014	Years 7 and 9 - English, Mathematics, Science and History
2015	Years 8 and 10 - English, Mathematics, Science and History

So what's different for parents in 7-10?

The new areas of study build on the strength of the existing NSW curriculum. Many features of the new K–10 English, Mathematics, Science (incorporating Science and Technology K–6) and History curriculum are retained. Literacy and numeracy remain important areas of focus in K–6, where essential foundation skills are developed.

The curriculum identifies essential knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to develop in each learning area. They are designed to provide flexibility so that teachers can develop teaching and learning programs to meet the needs of their students.

The table overleaf provides an overview of the important elements in each curriculum. Your child's report will have these same headings. All diocesan teachers use a special Board of Studies developed software package called 'Program Builder'. For the first time there is a consistent method of programming across all schools that ensures all the important elements are included.

English

- ✧ Students build on and refine their language skills through activities involving speaking and listening, reading and writing, and viewing and representing.
- ✧ They learn about language and literature through working with a wide range of print, spoken, visual, media, multimedia and digital texts.
- ✧ Students interpret and express their views on what they hear, see and read.
- ✧ They create written and digital texts, and deliver formal and informal presentations.
- ✧ Students study a wider range of texts that give them experience of quality literature, Australian works, multiculturalism, Aboriginality and Australian identity, and Asian perspectives.

Mathematics

- ✧ Students develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of learning experiences across:
 - Number and Algebra, eg financial mathematics, ratios and rates, and equations
 - Measurement and Geometry, eg angle relationships, trigonometry and Pythagoras' theorem
 - Statistics and Probability, eg data collection and representation.
- ✧ They develop their problem-solving skills and mathematical reasoning and communication.
- ✧ Students develop a deeper understanding of Statistics and Probability.

Science

- ✧ Students develop their skills in science inquiry through hands-on practical experiences, including student research projects.
- ✧ They further develop their understanding about how evidence-based scientific knowledge explains the Physical World, Earth and Space, the Living World and the Chemical World.
- ✧ Students learn more about the importance of the contribution and influence of science in their own lives and in finding solutions to personal, social and global issues.

History

- ✧ Students gain a broad understanding of world and Australian history from ancient to modern times through the teaching of historical overviews.
- ✧ They gain a deeper knowledge of history through depth studies such as Ancient India, the Ottoman Empire and Japan under the Shoguns.
- ✧ Students learn about 20th century Australian history through the Australians at War and Rights and Freedoms depth studies.
- ✧ They experience an inquiry-based approach to learning, developing key historical skills in research, source analysis and communication.

Reporting to you by the school

One of the most important tasks of a teacher is to report to parents on student progress. There are many ways for this to happen, formally and informally. As a parent you have every right to ask the principal or teacher about your child's progress at any point during the year. All schools formally report to parents twice per year through the end of semester report. The school will have an Assessment and Reporting policy which you can ask for at any time.

The report must meet the Federal Government requirements which the CSO monitors as part of our funding agreements. Each semester teachers assign an A-E grading against the different divisions in each KLA (for example in English: speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing and representing) and provide you with an overall A-E grade for the subject.

This style of reporting is called 'standards referenced' because the A-E code has a very precise definition. Teachers are supported with various resources so they can provide an accurate grade representative of an A or a C etc. The definition for each grade is on your child's report. Within the school, teachers cross check their grading to ensure consistency, and the system monitors consistency across the diocese. You can ask your child's teacher for a comparison to see how many other students received a similar grade to your child.

How do we support teachers with assessment and reporting?

The Catholic Schools Office plays an important role in the support of principals and teachers with the assessment and reporting cycle. It is a complex professional area that requires constant attention. As the system authority we run different professional development sessions, support networks of teachers, upgrade our own knowledge and skills by working with other dioceses and work directly with teachers in their schools. There is a team in the CSO that employs a number of consultants and officers who are responsible for the delivery and monitoring of this area of school life. In each school the Leader of Curriculum and Leaders of the different KLAs are provided with time, professional development and resources to ensure teachers are able to translate the curriculum documents into class work and then report to you accurately on your child's progress.

Catholic Schools Office
Diocese of Lismore