

Spiritual child

It is important for children to know that they are loved, loved by God, their family and their teachers.

CURRICULUM

Early Years Learning Framework Links (EYLF):

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

NSW Syllabus Links:

- Communicates ways to be caring, inclusive and respectful of others. PDe3
- Communicates stories of their own family heritage and the heritage of others. HTe-1
- Recognises that there are different kinds of spoken texts with specific language features and shows an emerging awareness of some purposes for spoken language. ENe-6B
- God loves every person infinitely. 'Life and physical health are gifts entrusted to us by God' and it is everyone's responsibility to not only take care of oneself but also look to the needs of others. (Catechism of the Catholic Church - CCC2288)

FAMILIES

READ 2 min

Spirituality is an element of the wellbeing and mental health that makes up the whole child.

In Catholic education we recognise spirituality as one of the elements of the whole child. A child, made in the image of God is a spiritual person, an intellectual person, a social and emotional person, a physical person and a cultural person.

Celebrating the spiritual child involves finding opportunities to nurture their spiritual growth. This includes activities such as praying together, reading bible stories, spending time in nature, discussing religious symbols and reflecting on what they are thankful for and what they feel when they talk about God.

Spirituality can be expressed differently by each child, each family and each community. In Catholic education it connects children in a faith community. It gives them security and belonging, offers wonder and reminds them that they are deeply loved.

"Wellbeing is a state in which the individual realises their own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community." (World Health Organisation 2004)

EXPLORE 10 min

Some ideas for learning in the everyday

- Set up a sacred space at home or outdoors.
- Pray with your children.
- Share Bible stories.
- Talk about God and Jesus.
- Take a walk in the garden and talk about nature – God's creation.
- Model for and encourage your child to act with kindness in the world.
- Say thank you to God for all the wonderful things in the world.

TEACHERS

REFLECT 30 min

Reflect on your knowledge and practice

Consider the EYLF, NSW Syllabus and LPs:

- Where have these children come from?
- Where are you taking them?

Think about the learning that happens in your classroom. How do you complement wellbeing through spiritually in your classroom?

What are some characteristics of the early learner that attribute to being spiritual?

After watching the video, what do you want parents to know and understand about the ethos of Catholic schools?

ENGAGE 45 min

Engage in a learning conversation with parents

Suggested conversation starters:

What did you see in the video that challenges what you think about teaching the 'whole child'?

Note: Opportunity to talk about experiences in your classroom that foster the 'spiritual child'.

How are other elements of the whole child evident across your classroom and school day? (intellectual, physical, social/ emotional and cultural)

What opportunities can you create at home to cater for the 'spiritual child'? Consider the activities in the Explore section.