SYSTEMIC CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA: PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING PROVISION, ACCESS & ENROLMENT

Policy Statement

May 2001

Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta
Systemic Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta: principles underpinning provision, access & enrolment

In response to issues which have emerged concerning enrolment to systemic Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta, the following principles of operation have been identified. These principles are intended to provide clarification and guidance for the diocesan system, pastors, school principals, staff and parents, all of whom have a key role to play in the enrolment process.

1. Systemic Catholic schools are established and are maintained by the diocesan Bishop to provide Catholic education for all Catholic children of the diocese.

2. Because the systemic Catholic school strives to be authentically Catholic and faithful to the Church and its traditions, Church teachings and traditions must underpin enrolment practices and procedures in Parramatta diocesan Catholic schools.

3. Each systemic Catholic school is, and must be seen to be, part of the local parish community/communities it serves. The pattern of feeder schools enhances this link with the local parish. The principle of feeder schools and links with the parish is fundamental to Parramatta systemic Catholic schools.

4. Special recognition must be given to the pastor’s role in the process, as indicated in Canon Law and outlined in this document and the document *Catholic Education: Pastors and Principals in Partnership*.

5. The systemic Catholic school strives for strong partnerships between pastors, parents, principals and staff. These partnerships must be demonstrated and strengthened by enrolment practices and procedures.

6. Those who choose Catholic schooling for their children are enrolled on the understanding that they *respect and agree to support* the Catholic identity of the school (see no. 2) and acknowledge the importance of religious education for their children.

7. The systemic Catholic school, of its nature, provides opportunities for evangelisation. Where there is scope for enrolling children whose families have had little contact with the Church, this should occur, providing they are prepared to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of Catholic school life and providing they respect and agree to support the Catholic identity of the school.
8. The diocesan Catholic school is part of a system of schools whose members work in cooperation for the common good of all and recognise that enrolment choices can impact on other schools.

9. The diocesan system and each systemic Catholic school has a particular responsibility to accept and support those who are poor, marginalised and in most need. Our conviction is that no student will be refused enrolment or be disadvantaged because of the inability to meet financial requirements.

10. All systemic Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta are comprehensive and each is resourced to provide the highest quality Catholic education.

11. In making decisions about the provision of schools, and places within schools, the value of access for all Catholic students takes priority over the availability of choice for some.

12. Notwithstanding the above, some provision for flexibility, with respect to pastoral concern and individual children’s needs within systemic Catholic schools, is desirable in the operation of enrolment processes.

Bishop Kevin Manning  
*Chairman*  
*Diocesan Schools Board*

Dr Anne Benjamin  
*Executive Director of Schools*  
*Diocese of Parramatta*

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