



St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, Norlane

Values Education

Through the explicit teaching of Mercy values we hope to create a safe and supportive environment for all our students, staff and families in our school community. These values will give our children Christian values to live their lives in the traditions of our Mercy heritage and reflect the lives of Catherine McAuley and our patron St Thomas Aquinas.

Definition:

Children are our most precious resource. They are the leaders and decision makers of tomorrow.

It is crucial in the development of a child's character, self-worth and a positive learning environment that they:

- Have suitable role models
- Form positive Christian values
- Learn the 'language of values'
- Make conscious, responsible choices
- Receive appropriate feedback from educators.
- Live lives based on strong values and Christian principles

Belief:

We use the Mercy Education Values because our school was built in the Mercy spirit of Catherine McAuley. The Mercy sisters began our school in 1953 with Sr Bernadette Briggs as the first principal and the Mercy sisters have been a presence and a support in our school ever since.

At St Thomas Aquinas we believe that we need to explicitly teach and articulate the Mercy values that characterise our school. We will identify, examine, discuss and reflect on these values which are fundamental to building positive relationships and a positive environment for teaching and learning in our school.

We believe that values need to be lived and the teaching and learning process needs to provide opportunities within and outside the class for students to practise and enact these values.

Principles:

Compassion

Respect

Service



Aims:

- Children will gain direct knowledge and experience of Mercy values which will produce a positive culture for learning and help encourage them to reach their full potential.
- We will teach and live the Mercy Education Values of Respect, Compassion, Justice, Courage, Hospitality and Service.
- By giving the students opportunities to practice using these values they will develop personal responsibility to empower them to make conscious choices that are respectful to everyone.
- We will also use the Values for Australian School – Building Values Across the Whole School: A Resource Package from the Australian Government to integrate values into the teaching and learning within the key learning areas of our curriculum.
- We will use a student-centred, inquiry-based learning model. This approach fosters student self-confidence, responsibility for own-learning and empowerment. We will integrate all the Mercy values into each unit that we teach and into the daily life of our school.

Our Mercy Values

We will teach and strive to live the six core Mercy Education Values.

They are:

1. Respect
2. Justice
3. Compassion
4. Courage
5. Hospitality
6. Service

They will be taught at each level and reflect the age and understanding of the children.

Respect

“We appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those (who labour) among you.” First letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 5:12

“Three things the poor prize more highly than gold... the kind word, the gentle compassionate look and the patient hearing of their sorrows” Catherine McAuley

Compassion

Respect

Service



Respect is treating each other with dignity and showing a caring attitude to everyone.

It is speaking to and dealing with others in a courteous manner.

Respect encompasses honouring the rules of your family, your school and society.

We show the Mercy value of Respect by:

- Accepting everyone and respecting their age, race, gender, religion, culture and position in our community.
- Speaking politely to everyone
- Being kind to everyone we meet
- Developing an attitude of caring for others
- Treating others with dignity
- Treating people how you would like to be treated
- Respecting the rules of your family, the school and society
- Respecting the right to privacy
- Respecting your own rights.
- Caring for all property and the environment
- Taking responsibility for yourself and your own behaviour
- Taking responsibility for your own learning and allow others to learn beside you
- Using your manners and speaking politely in every situation
- Listening to others and giving them your full attention
- Showing empathy and understanding when others are having difficulties
- Wearing your uniform and speaking about your school and your community with pride.

Justice

“Walk in the way of righteousness, along the path of justice.” Proverbs 8:20

“The poor need help today, not next week.”

Catherine McAuley

Justice is maintaining a balanced and fair relationship with ourselves, each other and everyone in our community.

It is always striving to make a difference in the lives of others because you care.

It is making a contribution to your family, school or society no matter how small.

We will show the Mercy value of Justice by:

- Showing tolerance, empathy, acceptance and understanding in our relationships with others
- Looking for ways to help others rather than waiting to be asked.

Compassion

Respect

Service



- Doing things for others just to be helpful, not because you expect you will be rewarded for doing so.
- Including others in your games your work and your relationships
- open minded to new possibilities and the ideas and thoughts of others
- treating everyone equally
- empowering others to live bravely
- being just and fair in our discipline and manner to everyone
- Trustworthy
- truthful and honest
- doing what we say we will do
- honouring the commitments we make to others, including maintaining confidences
- avoiding hurtful, rude or negative comments to or about others.

Compassion

“As God’s chosen ones, clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.” First letter of Paul to the Colossians 3:12

“Mercy receives and pardons again and again even the ungrateful.”
Sisters of Mercy, Limerick Manuscript

Compassion is showing empathy and understanding towards others.
It is about having an open heart to the plight of all people and being moved to take action.

We show the Mercy value of Compassion by being:

- Patient with ourselves and others
- Being kind,
friendly
thoughtful
helpful
cooperative
sensitive and
non-judgemental
- understanding that there are three elements to compassion:
feeling
empathy and
action
- Being alert to the circumstances in other people’s lives
- Modelling compassion in our behaviour and nurturing it in others
- Caring for others when they are hurt, sad, lonely, ill and worried
- Showing others that you care by your words and your actions

Compassion

Respect

Service



- Seeing the strengths of others and not their weaknesses
- It is treating everyone and every living thing with gentleness and kindness

Courage

“Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong.”
First letter of Paul to the Corinthians 16:13

“Speak as your mind directs and always act with courage.”
Catherine McAuley

Courage is being brave, strong, thoughtful and taking action in times of difficulty.

We show the Mercy value of Courage by:

- Doing things that need to be done even when they are scary or very difficult
- Seeking assistance from others if you are unable to help eg ring 000
- Taking a deep breath and walk away if our emotions are over taking us
- Speaking up when we see or hear or witness an injustice
- Not standing by and watching when help, support and action is needed
- Asking for help when you need it
- Taking responsibility for your own behaviour and actions
- Being bold, daring and determined even if you are afraid
- Challenging ourselves and trying something new or difficult for the first time
- Being honest and truthful even when it means accepting responsibility and consequences
- Accepting that sometimes that we are wrong and make mistakes too
- Being persistent
- Risk taking

Hospitality

“Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”
Letter of Paul to the Romans 15: 7

“A good beginning is of great importance. You must waste some time with visitors.”
Letters of Catherine McAuley

Hospitality is welcoming everyone by sharing warmth, kindness and courtesy.
It is valuing and respecting everyone we meet.

We show the Mercy value of Hospitality by:

- Greeting everyone with a smile
- Asking “may I help you”
- Making everyone feel that they are welcome
- Offering support and comfort
- Showing respect and kindness to everyone

Compassion

Respect

Service



- Being courteous and having good manners
- Acting in a way with others that helps them feel valued
- Helping others as soon as you know that they need it
- Always having a cheerful and cooperative attitude
- Spending time with others
- Listening to others
- Sharing your time, gifts and talents with others and the community

Service

“Serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.”

First letter of Peter 4:10

“It is for God we serve the poor, not for thanks.”

Catherine McAuley

Service means looking for ways to help others, in your family, your school and your community.

It is taking responsibility for each other, the environment and our world

Working and helping without expecting any reward other than the knowledge that we are doing the right thing.

Service is putting your Mercy values into action in our world.

Living a life as Catherine McAuley did.

We show the Mercy value of Service by:

- Volunteering in your school, parish and local community
- Offering to help when you see that something needs to be done
- Always doing the very best you can in every situation
- Having a caring and positive attitude in all that you do
- Using the gifts and talents that you have and sharing them with others
- Being kind and generous to everyone you meet
- Reaching out to those in need
- Support fundraising and charity events
- “Doing your bit”
- Taking on extra jobs and responsibilities at home and at school

Mercy Resources

www.mercy.edu.org.au/resources

Discover the story of Catherine McAuley & take a walking tour of Dublin through the mind’s eye of Catherine McAuley.

Mercyworld.org/foundress

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed annually and as part of the schools four- year review cycle.

This Policy established in 2015

Compassion

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