**ST MARY’S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

At St Mary’s we recognise that the hallmark of any great educator is their capacity to build nurturing, productive and professional relationships with students. We understand that the relationship between child and educator is of profound importance. A positive, nurturing and respectful relationship builds a child’s self-esteem which is a critical factor in helping children achieve high levels of success. We work hard to create a culture in which our staff foster positive relationships with students.

We place a focus on the wellbeing of students, in their work, in the relationships with their peers and in their relationships with the wider community. Our staff ensure that we continually place significant attention on the wellbeing of our students.

We recognise that each person is blessed with a unique blend of gifts, talents and interests that they can use to grow as a person and contribute to the development of the community. This is a core tenet of our Catholic identity; God made each person the way they were intended. This belief helps us focus on the attributes of each person.

Our school culture focusses on the development of the whole person; *spiritual*, *academic*, *physical*, *emotional* and *creative*. We work to create a **holistic** learning environment that enables every child to succeed. We recognise the critical importance of the core skills of literacy and numeracy but also acknowledge that children possess a wide variety of capabilities and our learning process must enable every child to experience success.

We encourage our students to be creative and innovative in their learning in this manner. We promote opportunities for students to work collaboratively and develop the specific skills they require to work   
effectively with their peers. These are the skills they will need to be productive contributors to 21st century Australian society.

St Mary’s is a Catholic school and we are proud of our Catholic identity and the positive impact that this can have on the development of caring, critically thinking young Australians. Our educational culture seeks to integrate our faith with the education of the children; to help our students connect *faith to life* and *life to faith*. We focus on making the teaching of Religious Education meaningful and relevant and encourage our students to be both critically reflective in matters of faith and to be in   
dialogue with those of other faith perspectives.