

Our Integrated Curriculum

With the development of the new NZ Curriculum 2009, our school chose to personalise the teaching and learning programme for St Joseph's School students around Integrated Concept Plans. In these our intention is to combine Social Sciences, Science, Technology and some Health outcomes around a concept which provides students with a rich and balanced curriculum supported by appropriate learning experiences and outcomes. To ensure each curriculum area is highlighted annually we have identified concepts which will be Social Science Rich, Science Rich, Technology Rich and Health Rich, and include aspects of Religious Education, English, and Mathematics & Statistics.

The process we follow is at a Teacher Only Day or a series of Staff meetings, teachers...

1. Confirm the year's concepts relevant to our student needs, our local resources, and current events. These become our Key Concepts.
2. Decide on our Enduring Understanding, supported by a RE Enduring Understanding reflecting our concept and our Catholic Character, within these integrated concepts, identifying curriculum areas to strengthen the unit to be "richer"
3. Establish our Essential Questions through which our Enduring Understandings will be explored.
4. Identify possible contexts i.e. topics that will help answer our Essential Questions around the Enduring Understandings, capitalising on local resources/people and learning opportunities.
5. Design curriculum maps, identifying curriculum strands and achievement objectives that "fit" the menu of experiences.
6. Highlight our St Joseph's School Principles and Values that reflect each concept best.
7. Promote all Key Competencies, emphasizing ones that might be more applicable for each concept.
8. Decide on a possible Inquiry Process to be followed for each concept.

Following on from this collaborative planning, the DP develops the annual Curriculum Map based on identified curriculum areas, strands and objectives across the levels. These Maps are compared annually to look at a balanced coverage.

Planning for each concept is done cooperatively in Teaching Teams following a concept menu which has been developed from the process above.

1. Emphasis is always on "Putting the students at the centre of our learning".
2. Use a brainstorming template "What could our Enduring Understanding be in..." for each curriculum area.
3. Identify a hook to catch the student learning by Tuning In/Appetisers; establishing prior knowledge, and identifying what interests are apparent, before personalising the Big Pic for each classroom.
4. Locate variety of teaching resources that will assist with learning experiences, promoting eLearning.
5. Build a menu of Learning Experiences, the process of learning opportunities and experiences taking place, creating a flow of learning ideas through the curriculum areas.
6. Highlight curriculum rich focus.
7. Direct the learning back to the Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions (which are to be displayed in each room).
8. Identify how inquiry tools/processes will be used.
9. Incorporate school value/principle identified.
10. Create Assessment Rubrics as the concept develops, alongside students. These rubrics could differ from class to class across the levels depending on individualised learning pathways.

Each Teaching Team will organise planning content in an agreed way e.g. some bind total concepts with supporting planning and organisation together, while other teams might organise their planning folders around a term's work.

Completed concept plans are collated and bound in an Integrated Concept folder showing the whole school's concept development, across the teaching levels, and its delivery supporting our school vision.