



Question	Response
Why has <i>Vision for Instruction</i> been developed?	<p>Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) aims to become the benchmark for excellence in teaching and learning, through a coherently integrated, academically competitive and distinctively Catholic educational offering.</p> <p>The Flourishing Learners position statement, <i>Vision for Instruction</i>, is a key document aligned with the MACS 2030 strategic plan. The <i>Vision for Instruction</i> has been crafted to communicate MACS' preferred system-wide approach to achieving teaching and learning excellence. It is firmly grounded in the evidence of how students learn most effectively and efficiently, offering explicit guidance for MACS schools on instructional best practice.</p> <p>The <i>Vision for Instruction</i> provides a shared vision for teachers, students, leaders and stakeholders, outlining the principles and values that underpin our approach to teaching and learning.</p> <p>It is intended to help clarify the purpose of education within our system, ensuring alignment with broader educational standards and fostering consistency and coherence in our teaching practices. It serves as a foundation for continuous improvement, encouraging the ongoing refinement of instructional methods to better meet the evolving needs of our students.</p>
Will all schools be expected to implement the <i>Vision for Instruction</i>?	<p>It is an expectation that all MACS schools will adopt the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> into their teaching and learning practices, as this outlines our preferred pedagogical approach.</p> <p>We expect familiarisation and integration to occur over time and in stages, as school readiness will vary from school to school. 'The How' section of the position statement offers advice and support for school leaders, who wish to build on existing good practice in their schools and implement the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> in stages. These stages, as part of the implementation model, are based on the principles of effective implementation: Exploring, Experimenting, Expanding and Embedding.</p> <p>MACS will support schools with resources, research summaries and opportunities for professional learning. School alignment will be supported with extensive support through school improvement networks for school leadership teams.</p>
What if our school currently endorses a different instructional model, e.g. project-based learning or inquiry-based learning?	<p>Explicit instruction is MACS' preferred practice for teaching. Instruction that is explicit involves fully explaining and effectively demonstrating what students need to learn. This approach to instruction supports what we know about how the human brain works (i.e. that learning happens most efficiently when teaching is clear, systematic and does not leave students to construct or discover information without guidance).</p> <p>However, once proficiency is achieved and key curriculum knowledge and skills are acquired, students may be engaged in other learning experiences to demonstrate their learning. At this point, other instructional methods may be considered as part of a suite of pedagogical approaches to engage students with content that they have already learnt.</p>



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<p>Do teachers still have autonomy?</p>	<p>Yes, having a <i>Vision for Instruction</i> and shared common resources does not diminish teacher professionalism, autonomy or creativity. Teachers sequence tasks to meet students where they are in their learning.</p> <p>Standard 1: ‘Know students and how they learn’ and Standard 2: ‘Know the content and how to teach it’ of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) <i>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</i> reinforce that teachers retain the flexibility to tailor their teaching methods, approaches, and classroom strategies to best meet the needs of their students in their classrooms (AITSL n.d.).</p> <p>The <i>Vision for Instruction</i> promotes the development of coherent, knowledge-rich teaching and learning programs, and many of our schools are already well underway with this goal with highly effective curriculum design teams in place.</p> <p>Coherent and deliberate planning of knowledge and deliberate sequencing of tasks has been shown to positively impact student learning. The explicit instruction model provides a framework for teacher-designed lessons that begin with teacher-guided instruction and gradually shift responsibility for learning to the student with modelling and guided practice. It is critical that teachers refine and continually enhance their practice as research evidence emerges that aligns with the professional standards for teachers.</p>
<p>What about other curriculum areas?</p>	<p>While all eight key learning areas are important, establishing a robust foundation in reading, writing and mathematics is crucial for students to access broader learning. The <i>Vision for Instruction</i> deliberately concentrates on building a strong knowledge base, recognising the strands of the English curriculum (Literature, Language and Literacy) as the gateway to meaning-making and fundamental to acquiring other forms of knowledge and skills over time. This emphasis is evident in our prioritisation of the Vision for reading instruction, Vision for writing instruction and Vision for mathematics instruction.</p>
<p>What about students with additional learning needs?</p>	<p>The <i>Vision for Instruction</i> has been developed to support schools and teachers with advice and guidance on best practice for Tier 1 lesson development, as evidence-based instruction is underpinned by research to be the most effective for all students.</p> <p>To successfully meet the needs of all learners, we endorse Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). The MTSS framework is a systematic continuous improvement framework that utilises high-impact evidence-based pedagogical practices to ensure every student receives the appropriate level of support, instruction and adjustments to be successful across the domains of learning, behaviour, health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Multi-tiered systems of support should be included to provide the necessary instruction and intervention for all learners.</p>
<p>What about gifted students?</p>	<p>The instructional practices and research outlined in the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> are designed to create more able learners in every classroom. Teachers will have the flexibility with curriculum design to ensure students have access to curriculum content that provides opportunities for all children to flourish. High achievers, or students who already have the necessary knowledge and skills, may require differentiated support to ensure they continue to master additional knowledge and skills and receive the learning entitlement they deserve.</p>



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<p>What about assessment?</p>	<p>MACS supports the use of evidence-based assessment practices for a range of purposes.</p> <p>MACS schools are expected to utilise early years curriculum aligned assessments, such as the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) Insight Assessment Platform English Online Interview and Mathematics Online Interview, to provide early data in relation to students in the early years of schooling, alongside a range of other assessments used for different purposes.</p> <p>In later years, all MACS schools and teachers have access to the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) PAT Reading and Maths system-wide assessment tools.</p> <p>Built into the MACS Teaching for Impact in Mathematics (TIM) Series, schools will also undertake a number of pre and post formative assessments for tracking of outcomes.</p> <p>MACS continues to evaluate and analyse our assessment approaches to ensure we have a suite of assessment tools available to schools to provide greater insight to teachers and leaders on student ability and needs.</p>
<p>What do we mean by evidence-based practices?</p>	<p>Evidence-based practices are educational approaches that are backed by research evidence. This means there is broad consensus from rigorously conducted evaluations that they work (AERO 2022).</p>
<p>What do we mean by Science of Learning?</p>	<p>The Science of Learning (Deans for Impact 2015) summarises existing cognitive-science research on how students learn and connects this research to practical implications for teaching. The Science of Learning underpins our 'The What' section of the <i>Vision for Instruction</i>, connecting the evidence from cognitive-science and offering practical guidance for teaching practices based on this evidence.</p>
<p>What does this mean for my Annual Action Plan (AAP) and School Improvement Plan (SIP)?</p>	<p>MACS schools are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraged to engage with the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> to reflect on current pedagogies and opportunities to strengthen their practice • asked to identify Mathematics in their 2024 AAP, aligned with the MACS Mathematics uplift, and consistent with MACS 2030 and the Flourishing Learners strategic theme • asked to consider their existing plans, data and evidence, and decide how alignment with Mathematics can be strengthened in the 2024 AAP • encouraged to explore the Mathematics curriculum resources being developed with Ochre Education and to consider how these can be included in planning for their 2024 AAP.



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<p>What does this mean if my school is in review this year?</p>	<p>The MACS School Improvement Framework (SIF) School Review will proceed unchanged in 2024.</p> <p>Training on the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> and the broader Flourishing Learners program has been provided to school reviewers to ensure that there is coherence and alignment with the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> and the school review program.</p> <p>As we are always seeking to improve, MACS is currently undertaking a review of the current School Review program to consider and find opportunities for greater precision and alignment with the <i>Vision for Instruction</i> and Flourishing Learners program.</p> <p>MACS will continue to liaise with schools and school reviewers in relation to any proposed enhancements or changes to the SIF and/or the school review program.</p>

References

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2022, 'Use of evidence-based practices in schools: a national snapshot', AERO, accessed 22 February 2024
<https://www.edresearch.edu.au/research/research-reports/use-evidence-based-practices-schools-national-snapshot>.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) n.d., *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*, AITSL, accessed 22 February 2024 <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/standards>.

Deans for Impact 2015, *The Science of Learning*, Deans for Impact, accessed 22 February 2024
<https://www.deansforimpact.org/files/assets/thescienceoflearning.pdf>.

