



Strategic Plan 2021- 2025



Future Learning Communities



Brisbane Catholic Education acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land, who have walked and cared for this land for thousands of years, and their descendants who maintain their spiritual connection and traditions.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



Image: The Spirit

Artist: Eric Ellis

Story: Can be found inside back cover.

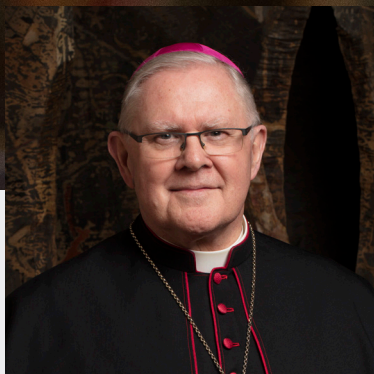
Warning:
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware that this document may contain images or names of people who have passed away.

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Most Reverend Mark Coleridge

Archbishop of Brisbane



We will remember the events of 2020 for a lifetime, and that's not a bad thing as long as we learn from what we recall. As difficult as it was, the drama of 2020 served to remind us what really matters in life. The pace of life slowed or, in some cases, came to a grinding halt, but our appreciation only increased for things we once took for granted, things like worshipping together in person, going to school, enjoying a meal with friends or hugging loved ones.

In his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* on care for our common home, Pope Francis poses the question, "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" That question is central to the mission of Brisbane Catholic Education. The events of 2020 have changed the world, probably forever, and in ways we cannot see clearly at the moment. But we know that it is imperative that as people of faith we prepare our young people as well as possible for what awaits them in a post-COVID world which, the Prime Minister has said, is likely to be "poorer, more dangerous and more disorderly". In such a world the Gospel matters more than ever, and that is the heart of what we seek to teach the young.

The threats may be great but so too are the opportunities. Through its growing network of 144 schools, and its dedicated and Spirit-filled workforce, Brisbane Catholic Education has an extraordinary reach and deep impact not just on school communities but on the community as a whole. Our schools can be proud of their role in shaping lives for the good through the power of education driven by the Gospel; and they can be proud of the immense social capital this generates.

The Brisbane Catholic Education Strategic Plan 2021–2025 will provide clear guidance as we follow the call of the Spirit into the future. Facing the challenges with care, creativity and compassion, Brisbane Catholic Education will continue to honour the past and in an uncertain time to build the future which, as Pope St John Paul II said, "starts today, not tomorrow."





Pam Betts

Executive Director, Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane



This year has presented Brisbane Catholic Education, our teachers, staff, students and community with unprecedented challenges, disruption and uncertainty. Our country has experienced hardships caused by drought, fire, flood and pandemic. While there has been a justified focus on the immediate learning needs of our students, we've also had cause — and opportunity — to critically assess our ability to respond to an increasingly changing landscape. In this environment our mission to teach, challenge and transform has served us well.

It has been 150 years since Mary MacKillop first came to the Archdiocese of Brisbane with her Sisters. We owe a great debt of gratitude to St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and her Sisters.

They were pioneers in the early years of Catholic education and left us a legacy for which we remain deeply grateful. St Mary of the Cross MacKillop's courage and service continues to inspire Brisbane Catholic Education to teach our students wisdom that will last, discover God's will in all things and positively transform the world.

As we celebrate the anniversary of Mary MacKillop's arrival in Brisbane, 175 years of Catholic education in Queensland, and the launch of our first Reconciliation Action Plan, it is timely to pause and reflect on how far we have come and what the journey ahead looks like for our community.

The Brisbane Catholic Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020 was our first whole-of-organisation strategic plan, which brought together educators, staff, students, parents, caregivers, and the

wider community around a single and cohesive framework. This approach has ensured we've been better able to plan new initiatives that shape our thinking and growth across our system of schools.

Today's Prep students will graduate in 2032 and move into earning or further learning. In order to prepare them for the best future they can achieve, we need to constantly challenge our people, practices and perceptions so that we are both focused on today's tasks as well as the challenges our students will face in the future.

I encourage you all, as members of the Brisbane Catholic Education community, to engage and participate in this journey, so we can step forward together with the confidence, enthusiasm and hope to serve the needs of each and every learner.





Our starting point

This strategic plan continues the journey we started in 2017, with our first organisation-wide strategic plan. Our achievements during the period of the Strategic Plan 2017-2020 were foundational to the next steps we take.

Strong Catholic identity

Strengthen capacity to lead, engage and teach with a re-contextualised Catholic world-view within each school and office community



- **Delivered** a cohesive system-wide approach to formation to support the holistic shaping of habits of mind and heart that help students and staff engage and participate in our faith and values.
- **Delivered** the embedding of contemporary Catholic perspectives across the curriculum, with the work on relationships and sexuality education, an Australian first.
- **Continuing** to increase the capability of schools to actively understand, and develop goals, to strengthen their Catholic identity through the Dialogue Schools project, delivered in collaboration with the Catholic University of Leuven.
- **Continuing** to grow the percentage of teachers accredited to teach religion or teach in a Catholic school, which increased from 80.5% in 2017 to 89.7% in 2019, with accreditation given in recognition of formal religious study and professional learning.
- **Delivered** a range of events to connect our young people with the Gospel and celebrate their faith, including the Powerhouse of Leaders, PoTEntial: Power of TEN to Inspire and Lead, and a trial peer-to-peer ministry program.

Building a sustainable future

**Build sustainability through people and capability
Ensure stewardship of resources with transparency, accountability and compliance**



- **Delivered** the first Brisbane Catholic Education Reconciliation Action Plan, confirming a commitment to an organisational culture that is welcoming and culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Delivered** the Leadership Capability Framework which broadens the view of leadership, and realigned leadership programs to deepen capabilities across the organisation.
- **Continuing** to develop confident and competent teachers through the Early Career Teachers Program's collaborative delivery of targeted professional learning, guidance and Christ-centred formation.
- **Delivered** a system-wide commitment to a growth mindset and adoption of Michael Fullan's Coherence Framework.
- **Continuing** to use outside insights to review and inform different perspectives and potential approaches to learning and teaching, organisational design and funding structures.
- **Delivered** five new schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane, to provide contemporary Catholic learning communities.





Excellent learning and teaching

Grow engagement, progress, achievement
and wellbeing for each student



- **Delivered** clarity and consistency in leadership at system, school and classroom levels through focussing on the right drivers to lead improvement and sustainable growth in learning. Coherence and nuanced leadership led to clarity in direction, the creation of collaborative cultures, capacity building through deepening learning and securing external accountability by focusing on internal accountability. (Partner — Michael Fullan)
- **Delivered** capacity building that made visible the impact of teaching on each student's learning progress and informed a targeted teaching response. This was achieved through the implementation of high yield strategies within and across schools and effective and expected literacy teaching practices within classrooms. (Partners — John Hattie, Lyn Sharratt)
These strategies resulted in:
 - an increase in students meeting Brisbane Catholic Education benchmarks:
 - Reading benchmarks: 35% (Prep), 21% (Y1) and 29% (Y2).
 - Writing analysis benchmark: between 163-193% (Y3-6) and 291-422% (Y7-10).
 - gains in NAPLAN mean scale scores for both Reading and Writing domains for all year levels which were greater than gains experienced by Queensland or Australian populations.
- **Delivered** the Engage initiative focusing on improving student engagement in learning and student wellbeing:
 - **Continuing** to focus on student attendance in every school, with 74.8% of students, by the end of 2019, reaching the aspirational goal of 90% of students attending more than 90% of the time.
 - **Delivered** the publication of a Student Behaviour Support Plan in all schools to explain positive behaviour for learning strategies and school processes to students, staff and community.
 - **Delivered** the publication and implementation of the Levels of Teaching Response providing the framework and guidance for additional support for student learning needs.
 - **Delivered** a suite of resources to support strong partnerships between school and family as the foundation of learning success.



Our changing world

As the world changes at a rapid pace, we must prepare our students to flourish in a future we can only imagine. The Strategic Plan 2021–2025: Future Learning Communities is our proactive response to emerging challenges and opportunities. It sets our direction for the next five years, and prepares us for the next 20 years.



Reimagining Catholic identity

- Australian society is diverse with over 100 religions practiced.
- Religious affiliation is declining, and most notably amongst young people.
- We remain committed to providing a Catholic education to those who seek it, regardless of their religious background.
- We are, however, challenged to look for new ways to embody our distinct Catholic culture in our schools and the wider organisation as the proportion of Catholic staff and students decreases.



Growing population and sustainable enrolments

- The population of the Archdiocese of Brisbane is expected to increase by 1.95 million from 2016 to 2041, of which 253,000 will be school aged persons (5 to 17 years old). This may represent an additional 30,000 to 50,000 Catholic students.
- Future population growth will dramatically increase the demand for high-quality teachers.
- We must prepare for this growing population while ensuring our schools meet contemporary education needs and community expectations. This challenges us to balance our mission with our long-term sustainability.



Emergence of wellbeing

- Mental health is the largest healthcare burden.
- Mindfulness and mental health programs are expected to be a regular fixture in Australian classrooms.
- Our approach to wellbeing will continue to be holistic and develop the spiritual, mental and physical health of our staff, students and families.
- We will put people at the centre of solutions and grow our focus on prevention and early intervention responses.



Increasingly diverse society

- Our society is becoming more diverse; Australians speak over 300 languages and there are 150 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.
- Approximately 90% of school-age children with disability attend school.
- We will continue to welcome all cultures, languages, abilities and identities, and focus on achieving equity of educational outcomes, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those with disabilities and learning support needs, and those from disadvantaged and at-risk backgrounds.





Changing skills and workforce

- Around 40% of jobs are predicted to be replaced by computers, while many future jobs do not yet exist.
- Nine out of 10 Australians aged between 21-65 years will change occupations at least once.
- Australians will spend an additional three hours per week in education and training. The workforce will increasingly move to a 24/7 model.
- Workers will need to be lifelong learners to meet the changing demands placed on them.
- We must invest in developing the skills of our people and constantly refine and challenge how we work.



Rapid digital transformation and disruption

- Technologies, including artificial intelligence, robotics and disruptive services, are changing the way we learn and work.
- COVID-19 has accelerated the use of online learning and teaching, and introduced significantly more students, families and teachers to learning remotely at home.
- The digital divide is predicted to continue with 1.25 million Australian households without internet access at home in 2016-17.



Governance expectations

- There are increasing government and community expectations in relation to the use of public funds and compliance with legislative requirements, transparency and clear governance.
- Rapid disruption brings risk, but also opportunities for innovation.
- We are challenged to ensure decisions are supported by evidence to deliver the right solutions, at the right time, to where it will have the greatest effects. In particular, resources are to be used efficiently and effectively, and with clear benefits to schools.



Our strategic plan

Vision

We are a faith-filled learning community creating a better future

Mission

Teach, challenge and transform through our service, support and leadership for Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Values

Integrity

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.
1 John 3:18

Justice

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
Micah 6:8

Hope

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Excellence

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. Mark 12:30

Priorities

Catholic identity

- Deepen the spiritual, scriptural and theological capacity of our students, staff and community.
- Celebrate our Catholic story through dialogue, ritual, prayer and action.
- Embed a contemporary approach to our Catholic worldview and identity.

Learning and teaching

- Sustain foundational practices in literacy, numeracy and Catholic perspectives.
- Transform practice to wholly engage each student in deeper learning.

Wellbeing

- Create safe environments that nurture all aspects of wellbeing.
- Advocate for the common good through social justice and ecological action.

Our people

- Build a talented, committed and high performance workforce.
- Invest in the professional and spiritual development of staff.
- Create meaningful pathways and opportunities for leadership.

Diversity and inclusion

- Grow communities that value, celebrate and respond to individual identity and cultural diversity.
- Improve access to education and opportunity.

Enablers

Catholic social responsibility

Knowledge and insights

Sharing our story and partnerships

Sustainable resourcing

Integrated digital technology

Safeguarding

Outcomes

Students

are engaged, successful learners who are faith-filled and positively contribute to the world.

Teachers

are pedagogical experts, who, inspired by 'Jesus as teacher', progress the achievement and wellbeing of each learner.

Staff, families and supporters

connect authentically to innovate and contribute to excellence, equity and wellbeing in learning.

Communities

are safe, inclusive and embrace change.



Our priorities

Priorities

Catholic identity

We believe a distinct Catholic culture is one that is explicitly celebrated, visible, expressive and lived.

We endeavour to realise the potential of being human by developing the Catholic heart, spirit and intellect of our community of students, staff and families. We celebrate our faith, giving witness to God's hope of promoting the dignity of every person, by embodying a contemporary Catholic world-view.

Our areas of focus:

- Deepening the spiritual, scriptural and theological capacity of our community of staff, students and families through learning opportunities that are engaging and which lead participants to greater understanding of their role in Catholic education.
- Celebrating our Catholic story through dialogue, ritual, prayer and action that is joyful and contextual to the community.
- Developing projects and opportunities which facilitate an interaction and fusion of the Catholic story within our contexts.
- Developing a common language and shared understanding of the term 'Catholic identity' and 'formation'.

The key initiatives to deliver on this priority:

- Developing contextualised professional development that enables formation experiences to meet the needs of stakeholders' faith journeys.
- Supporting schools, office staff, and individuals to develop formation plans and goals.
- Continuing to engage with the Enhancing Catholic Schools Identity project (Dialogue Schools project).
- Enhancing opportunities for student engagement with the Catholic story.
- Developing resources and events that support the prayer and ritual life of Brisbane Catholic Education.
- Delivering the Faith Companionship pilot for pre-service teachers.
- Continuing to support graduate teachers through the Early Career Teacher Project by delivering school-based induction, formation, reflection on practice and professional development.
- Investing in a formation research project to better understand Catholic identity, and the integration of formation in staff professional development opportunities.





Learning and teaching

We aim to inspire a love of learning to maximise learning growth through leadership and teaching practices that engage each learner in deeper learning.

A continuing focus on leadership and teaching practices at system, school and classroom, provides the foundations for further action to transform learning and teaching that creates excellence, equity and wellbeing for each of our students.

The key initiative to deliver on this priority is the Learning and Teaching Strategy which aims to inspire a love of learning that actively and wholly engages students as they live and learn in the world around them. In a constantly changing world, the strategy creates the opportunity to reimagine education in our time. The areas of focus include:

- Connect: Sustained foundations for learning
- Transform: Engaged deeper learning.

Connect: Sustained foundations for learning

Embedding and sustaining foundational practices in literacy, numeracy and Catholic perspectives through coherence in action.

The central focus of Connect: Sustained foundations for learning is developing leadership and teacher practices that impact positively on the learning progress, achievement and wellbeing of each student.

Essential foundations for each student to access and engage in learning will be developed through an ongoing focus on responsive, differentiated and engaging pedagogies.

Transform: Engaged deeper learning

Transforming practice to wholly engage each student in deeper learning that is rich, rigorous, relevant and responsive.

The central focus of Transform: Engaged deeper learning is transforming leadership and teaching practices that wholly engage students in learning.

Sparkling passion and purpose in learning will support the development of capabilities and changed practices needed to create a hope-filled future.

Forging new partnerships beyond the classroom and school will engage students in new and expanded opportunities as connected and contributing global citizens.





Priorities

Wellbeing

At the heart of our Catholic faith is the understanding that every human being is made in the image of God. We know that people thrive when their holistic growth is supported, and that student wellbeing and learning are inextricably linked and must be embedded in the life of the school. That is why we are committed to creating environments that have a positive effect on the wellbeing of our students, staff, and families.

Our areas of focus:

- Creating safe environments that nurture holistic wellbeing is the cornerstone to supporting students, families and employees realise their potential. Our approach to wellbeing encompasses spiritual, psychological, physical, social, emotional, financial, and cultural wellbeing. Each component of wellbeing is promoted through our Catholic values and mission, providing a healthy, safe, and productive environment to support every individual's growth.
- Advocating for the common good through social justice and ecological action. The Church teaches that creation is a gift from God. We care for creation because of the relationship between the environment and our wellbeing, a relationship known as human ecology. We aspire for all schools and the office to embed the messages of Laudato Si' into our day to day activities.

The key initiatives to deliver on this priority:

- Establishing a whole-of-organisation wellbeing framework to create a common language and understanding across schools and offices, and achieve improved outcomes for our people.
- Connecting schools, student protection, Guidance Counsellors, education officers, and key health and wellbeing agencies to enable a proactive, coordinated and impactful response to manage risk and increase wellbeing.
- Continuing to deliver the Student Voice Initiative to facilitate a system-wide approach to engaging student voice across all levels of the organisation to shape safe, inclusive, engaging, and innovative school communities.
- Build organisational capacity to advocate for best practice and innovative wellbeing solutions.





Our people

Our people are our greatest strength. We strive for an authentic workplace in a localised and global Catholic context through attracting and retaining committed and talented people who are called to nurture each other to improve young people's learning experiences. As the nature of work itself rapidly changes, we must invest in opportunities for professional, personal and spiritual development, and create career pathways to ensure our mission is fuelled by an engaged workforce.

Our areas of focus:

- Building a talented, committed and high performance workforce through attracting, supporting, promoting and retaining high-achieving employees.
- Developing a thorough understanding of the skills, knowledge, attributes and roles needed amongst our workforce to deliver on strategic and operational goals, now and in the future.
- Investing in the professional and technical development of staff.
- Prioritising ongoing faith formation for staff that is appropriate to their personal formation journey.
- Creating meaningful pathways and opportunities for leadership which are focused on student outcomes.

The key initiatives to deliver on this priority:

- Implementing a workforce strategy to optimise the skills and experiences of our employees to achieve quality learning outcomes.
- Launching a comprehensive Employee Value Proposition that articulates our unique value to current and future employees.
- Developing a future teacher strategy to ensure a sustainable talent pool, and an early career teacher strategy to develop this cohort.
- Implementing the Onboarding Cohort Journey Project to improve the enculturation and experience of joining Brisbane Catholic Education, with an initial focus on early career teachers and school leaders.
- Supporting teachers aspiring to Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher (HALT) certification, and employees seeking accreditation as HALT Assessors.
- Designing a new professional learning framework which ensures the strategic alignment of all professional learning activities and the meeting of professional standards.





Diversity and inclusion

Being inclusive is about building communities that value, celebrate and respond to diversity, and are underpinned by respectful relationships. Diversity within our community ensures that different qualities, skills, perspectives and experiences are brought together to provide an enriched learning and working experience. Education is recognised as the key pathway to improving equitable economic and social, emotional, and wellbeing outcomes.

Our areas of focus:

- Growing communities that value, celebrate and respond to individual identity and cultural diversity. We will develop our ability to differentiate, welcome and adapt to students and families with a diverse and complex set of cultural, social and linguistic attributes, giving in-depth consideration of the individual needs of our students, their abilities and challenges
- Improving access to education and opportunity for all members of our community through inclusive and culturally safe environments.

The key initiatives to deliver on this priority:

- Implementing pathways for students with disability to ensure every school is equipped to meet these students' needs.
- Reducing barriers to our schools for families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds through an enterprise enrolment strategy focussed on access and dignity.
- Implementing the Reconciliation Action Plan to build meaningful relationships, respect and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Improving the diversity of the workforce, through a Diversity and Inclusion strategy with a focus on increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, as well as women in leadership positions, and on enhancing the cultural competency of employees.
- Ensuring Brisbane Catholic Education is culturally safe and literate through our communication, leadership and actions.





Our enablers

Catholic social responsibility

Catholic social teachings guide our approach to Catholic social responsibility. We have an ongoing commitment to creating an organisation which is reflective and committed to our Catholic mission of service to others.

We will:

- Partner with organisations that do business responsibly.
- Exist more sustainably in harmony with God's creation, acknowledging the inseparable bond "between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace" (Pope Francis).
- Promote equity and justice, particularly for those who face social and economic barriers.
- Promote best practice organisational and resource management.

Knowledge and insights

Our aim is to optimise the way we generate, share and use knowledge to develop working insights into the needs of our communities and drive tailored and effective responses.

We will:

- Leverage system and experiential knowledge to drive decisions.
- Implement a HealthCheck process to support evidence-based strategic decision making at school and system level.
- Increase data literacy and capability, through building informal and formal 'learning communities' working together on common goals and recognising data as a key asset within the decision-making cycle.
- Establish key performance indicators to enable risk-responsiveness and early intervention.





Enablers

Sharing our story and partnerships

The authentic original stories of Brisbane Catholic Education knit together the achievements of our community of families, students and staff. It is through connection and mutually beneficial partnerships that we develop an inspiring, resilient, faith-filled and locally responsive Catholic education system.

We will:

- Establish partnerships with families to support the faith development, and improve the engagement, progress, achievement and wellbeing of students.
- Implement a system-wide Enrolment Strategy that builds understanding of the benefits of Catholic education and attract families.
- Improve our recruitment and enrolment process by considering the needs of families, adopting contemporary best practices, and maximising the opportunities of each school's facilities and expertise.
- Celebrate our success through stories of achievement, resilience and innovation.
- Advocate for better funding, resourcing and visibility.

Sustainable resourcing

Good governance and stewardship of our resources contributes to our overall performance, ensuring we manage our resources to establish a sustainable financial base and build agile, responsive and efficient operations.

We will:

- Centralise procurement and contracts management functions.
- Establish a new recurrent funding allocation model compliant with the *Australian Education Act 2013*.
- Implement a new performance framework to clarify accountabilities, and better manage risk and meet compliance obligations.
- Ensure the delivery of efficient and effective central services to support schools.
- Share accountability with schools and our key stakeholders.



Enablers

Integrated digital technology

We use digital technology to support transformative and future-focused practices, improve access to data and information, enable more efficient business activities, and deliver safe and secure environments for learning, collaboration and administration.

We will:

- Provide a robust technology platform which equitably connects offices and schools to a variety of learning, teaching, collaboration, analytics and administration tools.
- Provide integrated enterprise systems and safe and secure digital environments that:
 - inspire a love of learning and engage staff and students in deeper learning
 - enable users to develop new partnerships and opportunities within and beyond the classroom and offices
 - enable staff and student feedback that is progressive, evidence-based and maximises learning success and wellbeing
 - strengthen parent interaction, feedback and collaboration
 - improve productivity and minimise administration effort.
- Deliver technical solutions that support real time information and data gathering to accelerate continuous improvement and planning.
- Enhance the use of our available digital resources and leverage emerging technologies to support the changing needs and expectations of staff, students and parents.

Safeguarding

We place student safety at the core of how we plan, think and act, and aim to drive cultural and behavioural change to embed a student safe culture. Creating an environment that is safe for all students includes developing inclusive and welcoming environments, enabling students to participate in decisions that affect them, and ensuring our student protection systems are inclusive of governance, recruitment, training, policy, complaints management, and continuous improvement cycles.

We will:

- Implement a range of action plans across schools and our offices to ensure compliance with the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the 10 National Catholic Safeguarding Standards of:
 - Leadership, governance and culture
 - Children are informed and participate
 - Partnering with families and communities
 - Equity is promoted and diversity respected
 - Robust human resource management
 - Effective complaints management
 - Ongoing education and training
 - Safe physical and online environments
 - Continuous improvement
 - Policies and procedures support child safety.





The Spirit

Story behind the artwork

The painting shows Brisbane Catholic Education embracing Aboriginal Culture, to work as one in building a better future for all.

Crosses are most commonly made of wood, and in our Culture wood is a living being that has a spirit.

The four arms of the purple cross symbolize pathways coming together to meet at the centre.

The cross is covered by light purple triangular lines which for my Country represent calmness.

Surrounding the purple cross are gold and yellow ochre dots which show Aboriginal Culture and Catholic faith working together.

The white dots on the outside show the good Spirit looking after us.

Laying over the cross is a large circle representing the central Brisbane Catholic Education office, with pathways leading out to the Service Centres.

The red ochre is the land, this is the land where we live and where we work.

It is essential that we care for the land just as our ancestors have for tens of thousands of years.



Artist - Eric Ellis

*Since, then,
we have such a hope,
we act with great boldness.*

Corinthians 3:12

Share your thoughts...

www.bne.catholic.edu.au/futurelearningcommunities/

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More than
11,500
Staff

Supporting
144
Schools

Transforming
75,000
Students