Certificate in Catholic Early Childhood Education

Professional Development Programme

This programme recognizes the commitment and educational value of a professional development programme that:

- reflects the unique and special characteristics of Catholic early childhood environments
- provides opportunities to analyse aspects of Catholic early childhood environments and identify holistic understanding of the curriculum within authentic cultural perspectives
- incorporates a Māori world view throughout the programme
- develops opportunities for teachers and community to come together to share their knowledge, their faith and their understanding of the spiritual dimension of the curriculum and its application
- encourages teachers and whānau share their understanding of the spiritual development of young children and ways they can enhance it through the curriculum
- enhances teacher's understanding of their own spiritual life
- encourages participation by teachers, whānau and community

This qualification has been designed for people:
- involved in early childhood education in a Catholic service.
- in leadership or aspiring to leadership in a Catholic early childhood service.
- who would like to work towards gaining Certification from the National Centre for Religious Studies (NCRS)

What does it involve?
The professional development programme consists of modules of work that focus on topics which have been identified by teachers as being valuable for enquiry. Participants will address aspects of the Catholic faith appropriate to early childhood education. Enquiry is initiated through workshops which provide knowledge and resources from which participants can launch further learning and analysis of their own practice.

The workshops provide a focus for participants:

- to explore their personal beliefs and values held within their Catholic faith and culture.
- to identify ways in which these beliefs and values are integrated within professional practice
- to reflect on and evaluate professional practice within a Catholic environment

Workshops also begin evaluation processes which link to the Catholic Early Childhood Religious Education Curriculum Statement: the Principles and Strands, Christian attitudes, and the particular philosophy within the early childhood service.

Requirements

- 48 hours of guided study, which comprises attendance at all workshops

- a total of 32 non-contact hours for personal study and completion of assessment requirements.

Assessment

Assessment consists of:

- Attendance at focus workshops
- Completion of professional portfolios and reflective journals, including references to literature, the Catholic Curriculum Statement and practical application of learning
- Presentations
- Contribution of ideas to colleagues and whānau

A Centre professional portfolio is a compilation of work that identifies processes of learning. According to Jones and Shelton (2006) "portfolios are rich, contextual, highly personalized documentaries of one's learning journey. They contain purposefully organized documentation that clearly demonstrates specific knowledge, skills, dispositions and accomplishments achieved over time".

Documentation may include, but is not limited to:
narratives, observations, learning and teaching stories, audio-visual material, literature, children's work, anecdotes, meeting minutes and notes from workshops.

A personal reflective journal increases awareness of why we do what we do, with the aim of improving practice. Schon (1987) identifies two forms of reflection
- *Reflection-in-action - what we are thinking at the time of the event*
- *Reflection-on-action - our thoughts either before or after the event.*

The purpose of professional reflection is to strengthen practice, values, knowledge and relationships. It allows us to make connections between what we think and what we do. It provides a basis for decisions and change.

Presentations provide evidence of ways in which the learning processes have been agents of change within the centre and professional practice.

Completion of the programme requires that students undertake a commitment to apply the knowledge gained in each module to their practical experiences within an early childhood service and provide documentation of their learning as part of the assessment.

Contribution It is expected that on completion of each module, participants in the programme will share their learnings with colleagues and whānau within their centres, thus ensuring continued benefits for the centre.

2014 -2015 Modules for Certificate in Catholic Early Childhood Education:

EC101 Exploring our Catholic Character
This module will explore issues related to requirements within in the Policy for Catholic Early Childhood Centres, 2006 and prayer in Centres.

Date   February 22, 2014   Guest Speaker: Ann Kennedy

EC102   Exploring our Catholic Vision
This module will explore issues relating to the Catholic vision for early childhood education.

Date   May 17, 2014   Guest Speaker: Lyn Smith

EC103   Exploring our Catholic Community
This module explores ways to actively engage with the community.

Date   August 9, 2014   Guest Speaker: Sr Sian Owen

EC104   Exploring Spirituality
This module will explore spirituality and its implication for early childhood services.

Date   November 1, 2014   Guest Speaker: Sr Jill McLoughlin

EC105   Exploring Faith Formation
An exploration of faith formation in context of an early childhood service.

Date   March 7, 2015   Guest Speaker: Lyn Smith

EC106   Exploring Sacramentality
This module explores how to develop a sacramental awareness in the context of an early childhood service.

Date   June 20, 2015   Guest Speaker: Lyn Smith

EC107   Exploring Sacred Scripture
This module explores the meaning and relevance of the Liturgical Year.

Date   August 22, 2015   Guest Speaker: Von Cassidy

EC108   Exploring the Liturgical Year
This module explores ways to actively engage with Sacred Scripture

Date   November 7, 2015   Guest Speaker: Von Cassidy

Final Presentations and Celebration Lunch   Date: November 28, 2015