

# Leadership Standard

## Message from the Directors

The Living Learning Leading Framework gives us a foundation for understanding what we do in Catholic Education – who we are, what we value and how we partner with our families to ensure our students thrive. At the heart of our Framework is our commitment to our students and our understanding of all people – we see them as ‘thriving people, capable learners, leaders for the world God desires.’ The Living Learning Leading Framework underpins everything we do, ensuring our students develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to thrive in a rapidly changing and complex world.

During 2019 the Catholic Education Office worked to develop the Leadership Standard to support the Living Learning Leading Framework and underwent a robust consultation phase with stakeholders.

The Leadership Standard communicates clear expectations about the work, qualities and values of effective Catholic school leaders. The Standard has been written to be relevant to all principals irrespective of setting or length of service. It reflects contemporary leadership and the characteristics of high performing schools and recognises the critical role that school and system leaders play through:

- Leading Catholic identity
- Leading teaching and learning
- Developing self and others
- Leading improvement, innovation and change
- Leading the management of the school
- Engaging and working with the school community
- Leading for system excellence.

The Leadership Standard defines the benchmarks which are applicable to all South Australian Catholic schools against which actual performance can be measured and depicts the leadership requirements and professional practices that aspiring and current Catholic leaders should engage with to develop their own and others' capacity for leadership. It provides a common language set around contemporary leadership requirements and practices and is intended to guide formation and growth, support performance, appraisal and contract renewal processes, inform recruitment, selection and succession planning and set the direction of professional learning for leadership.

We are an educational sector that is committed to providing excellence for every child whose learning and education is entrusted to our care. Our learning experiences are grounded in Catholic values and beliefs. We want every student to experience success according to their unique characteristics and talent. The Standard is intended to challenge all leaders to reflect on what it means to be a Catholic school and system leader, assisting them in attending to their own school priorities as well as system priorities and goals.



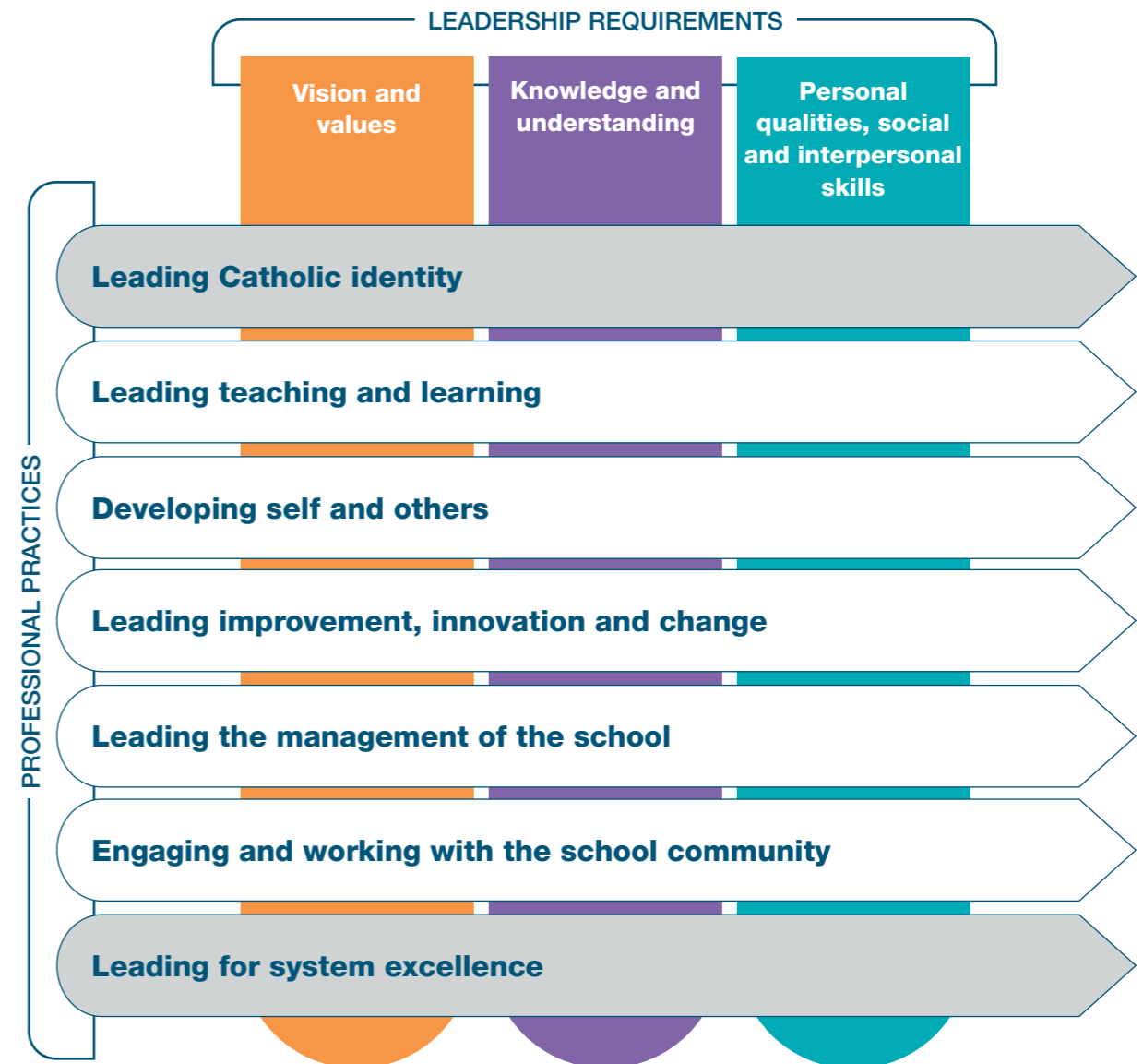
**Dr Neil McGoran**  
Director



**Nichii Mardon**  
Director

## Introduction to the Leadership Standard

The Leadership Standard provides a framework for what principals and those aspiring to the principalship should know, understand and do to succeed as a principal or school leader. It is intended to challenge all leaders to reflect on what it means to be a Catholic school leader, assisting them in attending to system priorities and goals. It provides a common language set around current leadership requirements and practices and is intended to guide the formation and growth of potential and current school leaders and support performance, appraisal and contract renewal processes.



The Leadership Standard is adapted from the AITSL Australian Professional Standard for Principals model. Each practice is fully interdependent, integrated and with no hierarchy implied. There are two new Professional Practices that have been added to the AITSL five. They are:

- Leading Catholic identity
- Leading for system excellence

# Leadership Standard

	Performance Standard	Developing	Meeting	Meeting	Excelling
Leading Catholic identity	Principals work collaboratively with the school community to establish, strengthen and actively promote Catholic identity as central to the Vision and Mission of the school. They create a positive culture to develop the personal, religious and faith formation of all staff and students. Principals ensure excellent religious education teaching and learning occurs in a faith-centred and inclusive school community. Principals ensure that all students and staff experience Catholic faith, liturgy, culture and traditions in meaningful and authentic ways.	Principals foster and promote Catholic faith, liturgy, culture and traditions in the religious life of the school. They are actively engaged and personally model these practices upholding a commitment to social justice and action in the school and wider community. They ensure that Catholic social teaching is part of the Vision and Mission of the school.	Principals demonstrate a commitment to an inclusive, respectful, compassionate, equitable school culture based on Gospel values. They demonstrate personal and professional integrity and a commitment to serving the needs of others. They build and sustain a Catholic professional learning community that encourages focused dialogue. They encourage and engage with staff, parents and the wider school community to know and understand how the Catholic identity of the school informs and is informed by the Vision and Mission of the school.	Principals actively and collaboratively promote, maintain and enhance processes for reflection, prayer and liturgical celebration and uphold a commitment to social justice and action within the school. They ensure opportunities for education in faith and faith formation and regularly call together staff, parents, students and the wider school community to know and understand the Mission of the Catholic faith. They assist parents in their role in developing the personal and religious identity of their children.	Principals consistently work with colleagues and the wider school community to promote, maintain and enhance the Catholic identity of the school. They articulate a clear Vision and Mission for the school that embodies its Catholic identity and promote, maintain and enhance processes for dialogue, reflection, prayer and liturgical celebration within an inclusive school community. They take responsibility for the development of the personal and religious identity of all students. They pursue social justice and action within the school, parish and wider community.
Leading teaching and learning	Principals create a positive culture of challenge and support, enabling effective teaching that promotes enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to lifelong learning. Principals have a key responsibility for developing a culture of effective teaching, for leading, designing and managing the quality of teaching and learning, and for students' achievement in all aspects of their development. They set high expectations for the whole school through careful collaborative planning, monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of learning. Principals set high standards of behaviour and attendance, encouraging active engagement and a strong student voice.	Principals ensure the school values underpin and support high-quality inclusive practices and set expectations that all activities are focused on improving student learning outcomes. They keep up to date with and share current developments in pedagogy and student engagement with all staff. They lead staff and students in identifying and planning high-quality teaching and learning.	Principals prioritise creating and sustaining a student-centred learning environment. They motivate staff to keep their teaching practice current through use of research and new technologies. They develop a robust approach to reviewing the curriculum and pedagogy to ensure a consistently high-quality environment for learning. They develop a coaching culture that encourages honest feedback to and from students and teachers based on evidence.	Principals lead a school-wide focus on individual student achievement, implementing strategies that secure educational provision for all. They ensure that reflective practices, structured feedback, peer review and use of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers lead to personal improvement of both students and staff. They systematically monitor and report on student progress and have interventions in place to reduce gaps in attainment. They communicate high aspirations and expectations for all, celebrate success and challenge under-performance.	Principals lead high aspirations in learning and inspire the same in students, staff and parents. They establish systematic methods for collecting and interpreting evidence to identify excellent teaching and learning and share successful strategies with the school community. They encourage staff to contribute to education networks, supporting the learning of others and development of pedagogy. They model collaborative leadership and engage with other schools and organisations to share and improve practice and encourage innovation in the education system.
Developing self and others	Principals work with and through others to build a professional learning community that is focused on continuous improvement of teaching and learning. Through managing performance, effective continuing professional learning and feedback, they support all staff to achieve high standards and develop their leadership capacity. Principals support others to build capacity and treat people fairly and with respect. They model effective leadership and are committed to their own ongoing professional development and personal health and wellbeing in order to manage the complexity of the role and the range of learning capabilities and actions required of the role.	Principals promote the benefits of professional learning to all staff and ensure that their willingness and efforts to learn and improve are recognised. They develop and implement a personal and organisational vision that links all learning and development activities to better outcomes for students. They work with staff to identify and prioritise their professional learning needs based on any gaps between the requirements of their roles and their current knowledge, understanding and skills. They model personal and professional learning that is clearly linked to school goals and seek support from others as appropriate.	Principals seek leadership potential in others and provide opportunities for their development. They identify and implement professional learning opportunities with staff that are aligned with staff learning plans and school priorities. They consistently apply effective performance and development processes so that success is celebrated, underperformance addressed, and complacency challenged. They provide staff with regular and effective feedback on their performance, determining together how they can improve and remove any obstacles to learning.	Principals build capacity by creating a culture of empowerment, responsibility and self-directed research that leads to the development of a professional learning community. They model the importance of health and wellbeing, watch for signs of stress in self and others and take action to address it. They modify their leadership behaviour based on learning from experience and feedback from colleagues. They evaluate whether professional learning undertaken by self and staff has had the desired impact on students and has been shared with others.	Principals create challenging roles, responsibilities and opportunities for senior leaders that leverage and grow their talents. They build and sustain a coaching and mentoring culture at all levels in the school and have a system of peer review and feedback in place. They mentor other principals to support their growth and development and help them to address issues. They seek opportunities for professional growth through engaging in state, national and global educational developments.
Leading improvement, innovation and change	Principals work with others to produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies for the development of the school and its facilities. They recognise that a crucial part of the role is to lead and manage innovation and change to ensure the vision and strategic plan is put into action across the school and that its goals and intentions are realised.	Principals identify the need for innovation and improvement that is consistent with the school's vision and values and is informed by student learning outcomes. They communicate the need for change to the whole-school community in an inspirational and logical way. They deepen their own knowledge and understanding of improvement strategies, leading change and innovation at a whole-school level. They engage and inspire staff to commit to evidence-based improvement, change and innovation that has a positive impact on student learning.	Principals develop a process and common language for change, which supports the implementation of the vision and strategic plan. They evaluate outcomes and refine actions as change is implemented, paying attention to social, political and local circumstances. They take account of the impact of change on others, providing opportunities for regular feedback so that change is owned by the school community. They distribute leadership and encourage staff to build consensus across the school community and to take individual responsibility for implementing change.	Principals maintain their values whilst adapting flexibly and strategically to changes in the environment, in order to secure the ongoing improvement of the school. They lead and implement the appropriate use of new technologies in all aspects of the school's development. They build a culture of trust and collaboration where change and innovation based on research and evidence can flourish. They embed collaborative and creative practices in the school, allowing everyone to contribute to improvement and innovation.	Principals embed a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring research, innovation and creativity are core characteristics of the school. They lead educational networks by trialling and exploring new ideas for the system, acting as a guide, coach and mentor to staff and colleagues. They evaluate the personal and organisational effects of change through regular feedback from stakeholders and evidence of impact on student outcomes. They develop an innovative and outward-focused role as a leader influencing school excellence across the system.
Leading the management of the school	Principals use a range of data management methods and technologies to ensure that the school's resources and staff are efficiently organised and managed to provide an effective and safe learning environment as well as value for money. This includes appropriate delegation of tasks to members of the staff and the monitoring of accountabilities. Principals ensure these accountabilities are met. They seek to build a successful school through effective collaboration with school boards, governing bodies, parents and others. They use a range of technologies effectively and efficiently to manage the school.	Principals align management procedures and processes to the educational goals and the vision and values of the school. They ensure employment practices and decisions are consistent with legislative requirements. They allocate resources effectively to maintain the day-to-day operations of the school and evaluate impact on student outcomes and value for money. They clarify for staff the relationship between the school's vision and values and the operational tasks that support them.	Principals embed effective decision-making processes and build a cohesive leadership team. They analyse what data is important and plan how it should be used in the support of student learning outcomes. They make best use of technology to record, analyse and share information, to monitor progress against goals, and support new ways of working. They model exemplary professional behaviour and promote ethical standards throughout the school community.	Principals ensure management procedures are fully understood by staff who take collective responsibility for the smooth and efficient running of the school. They introduce best practice in human resource management to ensure the school can attract, retain and motivate all staff. They review and improve plans regularly with the school's governing body so that the school's vision can be realised. They use a consultative approach with students, staff and the wider school community to develop formal strategic plans.	Principals identify trends and influences that will have an impact upon the management of the school and plan for them. They review the effectiveness of processes and use of data to improve school performance. They share best management practice and use of resources with other schools and education networks. They embed a culture of review, responsibility and shared accountability to achieve high standards for all.
Engaging and working with the community	Principals embrace inclusion and help build a culture of high expectations that takes account of the richness and diversity of the wider school community and the education systems and sectors. They develop and maintain positive partnerships with students, families and carers and all those associated with the wider school community. They create an ethos of respect taking account of the spiritual, moral, social and physical health and wellbeing of students. They promote sound lifelong learning from preschool through to adult life. They recognise the multicultural nature of Australia's people. They foster understanding and reconciliation with Indigenous cultures. They recognise and use the rich and diverse linguistic and cultural resources in the school community. They recognise and support the needs of students, families and carers from communities facing complex challenges.	Principals promote parental and carer engagement as a key aspect of raising the achievement of all students. They support the development of a strong school governing body that is truly representative of the community. They lead an inclusive curriculum and school culture that promotes understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages and other culturally and linguistically diverse communities. They build partnerships with the local community and external stakeholders so they are aware of the vision and values of the school and can contribute to its success.	Principals draw on expertise from other organisations to enhance and enrich the learning experience for students and their families. They encourage the community to use school facilities in order to strengthen community engagement with the school. They identify and implement strategies to meet the diverse needs of students and their families, challenge low expectations and close gaps in achievement for specific groups. They understand the strengths and needs of their communities, promoting high expectations and achievement for all.	Principals work with other agencies to support the health, wellbeing and safety of students and their families. They create specific strategies for hard-to-reach parents and carers and explore the use of technology to deepen the engagement of parents and carers in student learning. They establish innovative processes to gather regular feedback from families and the local community that is systematically used to review school practices and inform decision-making.	Principals lead the school as an inclusive outward-facing organisation. They link with and provide support to other schools in effective community and family engagement. They draw on best practice nationally and internationally to embed a culture of inclusion and high expectations for all and take steps to tackle the effects of disadvantage on learning. They develop a mutually supportive, collaborative and trusting relationship with the community to ensure engagement in the life of the school. They collaborate effectively with other schools and agencies to promote an excellent education system in which all young people can thrive.
Leading for system excellence	Principals realise in a deep way that the classroom, school and system all impact on each other and understand that in order to improve the system they must engage with it in a meaningful way. They seek and fulfil roles as system leaders, fundamentally committed to improving student learning and increasing achievement both within their school and across the system. They engage deeply with the design and organisation of teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment in and beyond their schools and build a culture of collaboration across schools to achieve system priorities, expecting and facilitating staff to contribute and lead in collaborative initiatives in and beyond the school.	Principals understand and can articulate system mission, vision and goals. They encourage staff to contribute to education networks. They openly and effectively communicate with other schools and members of the system administration. They are able to advocate for the school with the system, and with the parent and wider school community.	Principals implement system initiatives and collaborate with Catholic Education Office colleagues to share their school's practice related to system goals and initiatives. They seek internal and external opportunities to secure resources and support for the school. They work collaboratively with principals and leaders across the system.	Principals share their expertise and work jointly with principals and leaders from other areas of the system in order to drive improvement and success. They analyse a range of school data in order to actively collaborate with school leadership teams across clusters, districts and the Diocese to plan and execute strategies that are aligned with system initiatives. They play an active role in the development of system goals and initiatives and work with system leaders to examine the impact of their practice, and their collective practice, on student achievement.	Principals operate as system leaders and work closely with the Director(s) to set the conditions to enable reform and improvement. They establish and foster a culture of awareness and commitment to achieving system goals within their school community. They demonstrate care for, and work for the success of, other schools as well as their own. They work with principals and other senior colleagues, complementing their leadership. They draw on a range of local, national and international research and advice to inform and enhance their practice as system leaders.



## Structure of the Leadership Standard



## Living Learning Leading Framework and the Standards

The Living Learning Leading Standard and the Leadership Standard have been designed to raise aspirations for excellent schools within a continuously improving system, raise student voice and achievement, ensure high quality teaching and learning, and support communication with the wider school community and other stakeholders to foster increased confidence in, and accountability for, each school's effectiveness and outcomes.



Mutual accountability

Mutual accountability

## Living Learning Leading Framework and the Standards

The Living Learning Leading Framework is underlined by a commitment from Catholic Education South Australia to encourage its young people to become "thriving people, capable learners and leaders for the world God desires".

Seven key capabilities lie within this framework, helping students to become:

- Literate, numerate and effective communicators
- Spiritually aware and inspired by faith
- Self-aware, collaborative and socially adept
- Intercultural and globally minded
- Knowledgeable, inquisitive and innovative
- Confident and careful creators and users of ICTs
- Moral, compassionate and ecologically aware

The CESA Living Learning Leading Standard and the Leadership Standard define the high standards applicable to all principals and school leaders across all Catholic schools. They are underpinned by the principle of 'mutual accountability' which can be defined as:

*Mutual accountability is a process by which two (or multiple) partners agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other. It relies on trust and partnership around shared agendas, rather than on 'hard' sanctions for non-compliance, to encourage the behaviour change needed to meet commitments. It is supported by evidence that is collected and shared among all partners.*

OECD, 2008, Mutual Accountability: Emerging Good Practice

### **Acknowledgements**

The Leadership Standard (Version 2, published 2020) has been informed by the valuable contribution and advice of the Principals of Catholic Schools and Catholic Education Office staff in South Australia.

This project is funded by the Australian Government through the Non-government Reform Support Fund.

The Australian Professional Standard for Principals (The Standard) is a public statement which sets out what principals are expected to know, understand and do to achieve in their work. The CESA Leadership Standard is adapted from The Standard adding two new Professional Practices to the AITSL five.

### **Further information**

For further information please contact the People, Leadership and Culture section by email at [director@cesa.catholic.edu.au](mailto:director@cesa.catholic.edu.au) or on 08 8301 6600.

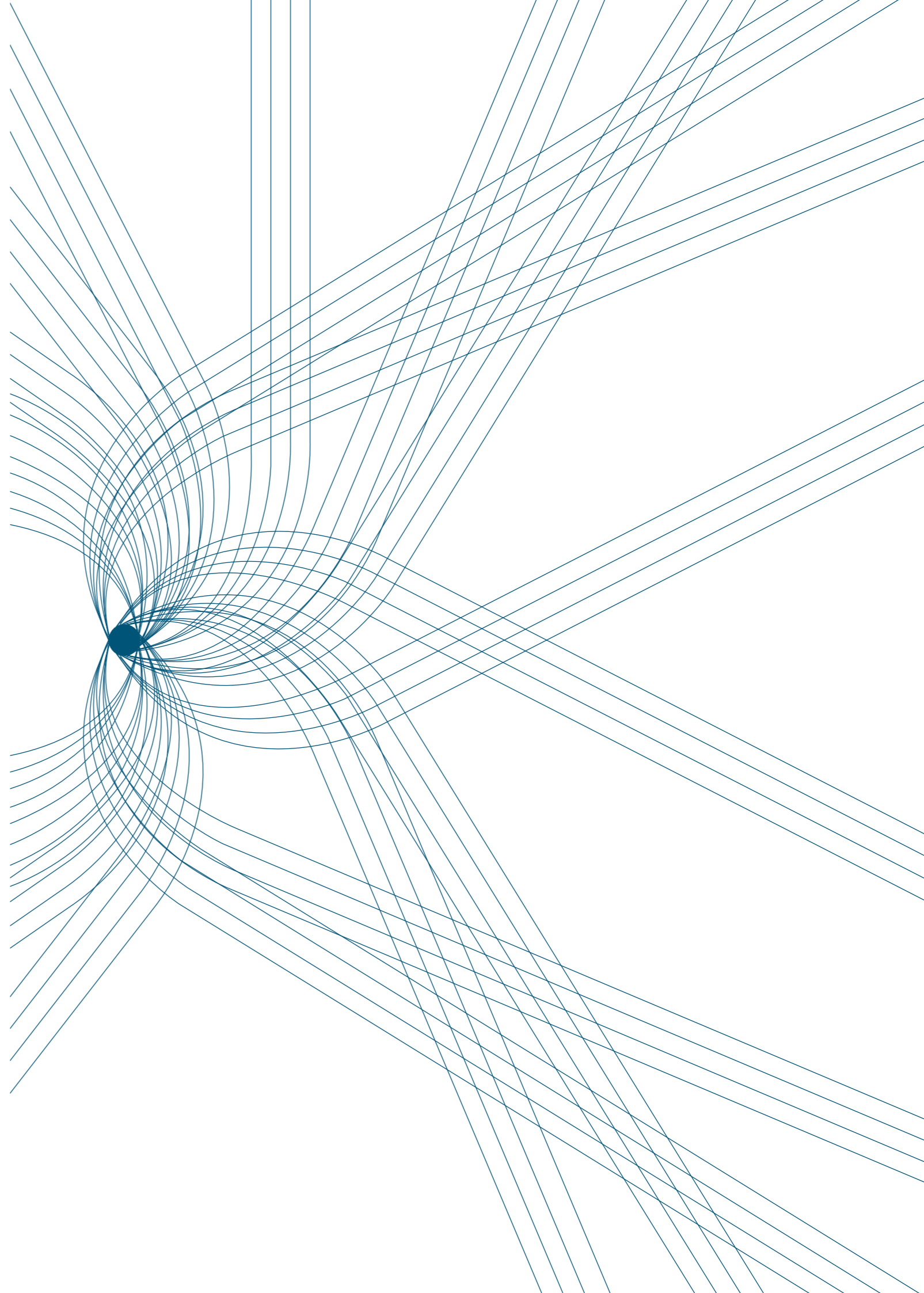


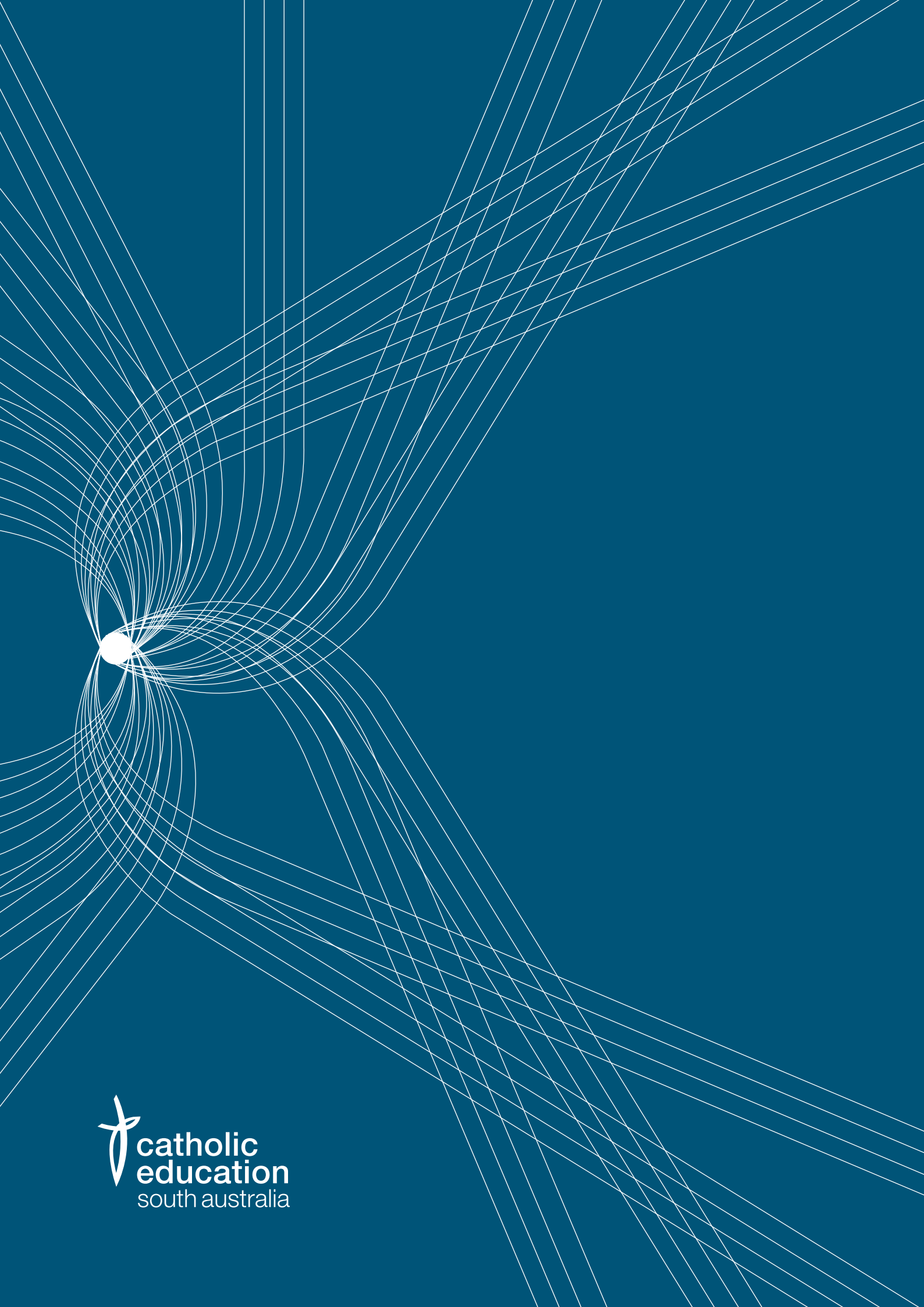
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