



# Sydney Catholic Schools Excellence in Action

## A System Approach

*“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them”  
(Matthew 18:20)*

Inspired by Matthew 18:20, SCS Excellence in Action is committed to collaboration to ensure that every student, in every classroom and in every school across our system, has access to the best our system has to offer.

This approach seeks to enhance SCS systemness by establishing a shared language and practices across our schools, enhancing our capacity to collaborate, through the sharing of expertise and resources for the benefit of all our students. Our focus on student excellence is enabled by SCS’s recognition of the centrality of a supported and capable workforce.

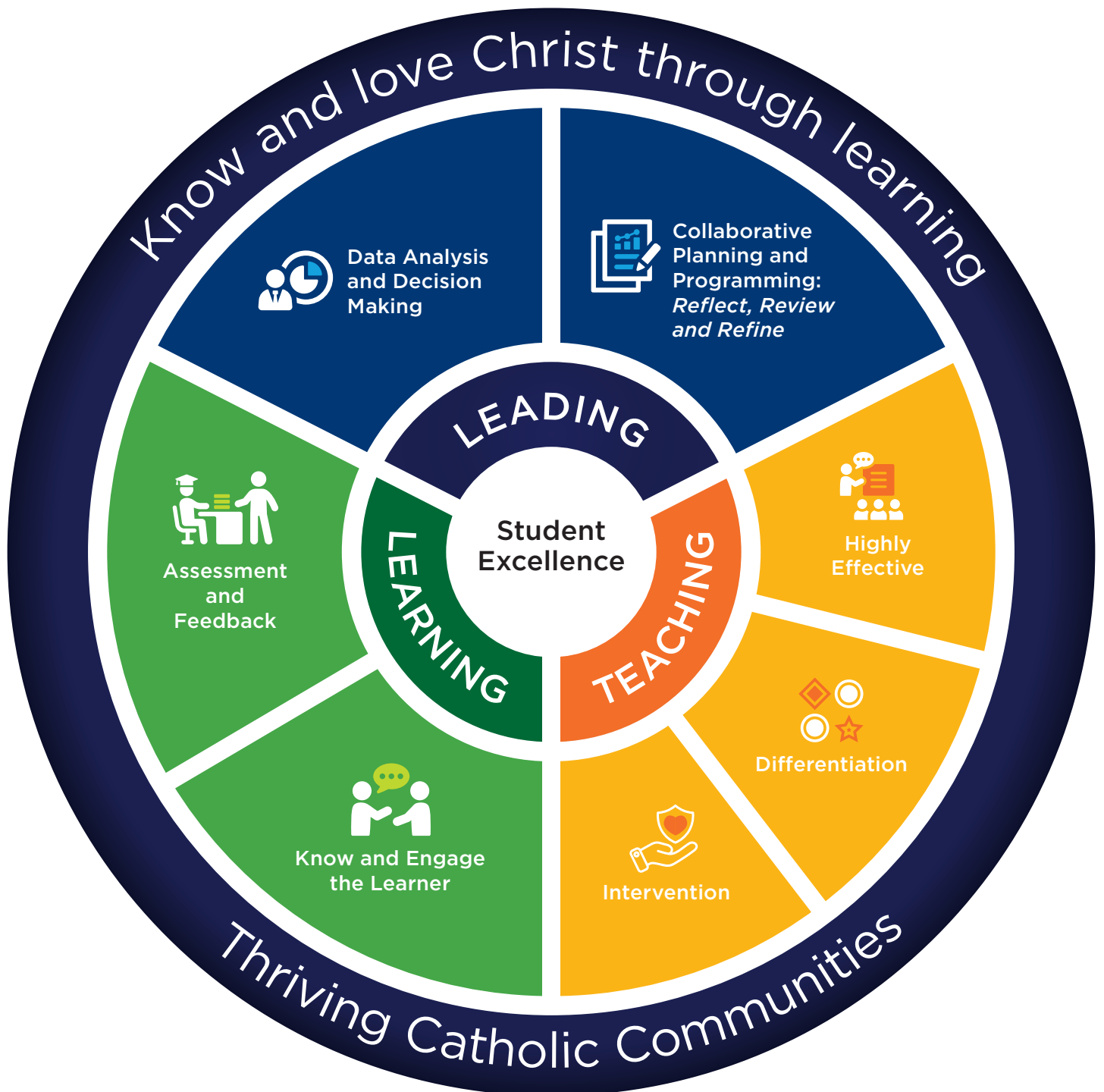
This shared commitment to high expectations for every student is supported by the implementation of and engagement with the evidence-based practices described in The SCS Excellence in Action Framework and through the implementation of evidence-based curriculum materials, professional learning and a shared approach to instructional coaching.

# Excellence in Action Framework

The Sydney Catholic Schools' Excellence in Action Framework supports our vision of developing “thriving Catholic communities through excellent teaching and learning” by ensuring a shared language and consistent practices. These form the foundation of leading, teaching, and learning in each of our schools.

Grounded in contemporary research, the framework provides “a coherent and cohesive learning system underpinned by shared, evidenced-based principles” (Masters, 2023) and aligns with the School Improvement Tool (ACER, 2023) and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (NESA, 2018). It complements established SCS frameworks for school improvement, student well-being, and inclusive practices for students with diverse learning needs.

The Framework reflects the relationships between Leading, Teaching and Learning, informed by Cognitive Load Theory, guiding teaching and learning design.



# Leading



## Data Analysis and Decision Making

Informs decision-making in schools by:

- identifying starting points
- monitoring improvement
- evaluating the effectiveness of instruction



## Collaborative Planning and Programming

Improves student learning outcomes by fostering:

- coherence and cohesion
- distributive leadership
- collective efficacy

# Teaching



## Highly Effective Teaching

The single biggest influence on student learning and engagement because it activates:

- evidence-based pedagogies
- deep domain-specific knowledge and understanding of curriculum requirements
- development of appropriate challenge and support in a safe learning environment



## Differentiation

Commits to learning that supports individual differences through the recognition of:

- individual learning needs
- learner diversity
- high challenge and high support



## Intervention

A collaborative approach to early and ongoing intervention is critical to ensure:

- explicit instruction and informed teaching matches students' diverse levels and needs
- adjustments to learning programs are informed by data to enable students to access learning on the same basis as their peers

# Learning



## Assessment and Feedback

Provides direct measures of student outcomes relative to performance standards, determining what students know, understand, and can do at a certain point in time, and is essential to:

- an ongoing dialogue between teachers and learners, centred on the questions of: Where am I going? How am I going? Where to next?
- the provision of effective and timely feedback with clearly defined objectives that are focused on student process and effort and encourages student self-regulation
- guiding students towards the next step and thereby building confidence so that further progress is possible



## Know and Engage the Learner

Occurs when students feel known, valued, and understood when:

- learning environments are safe and supportive and focus on positive relationships
- there are high expectations that are consistent across the school
- teaching strategies provide students with a sense of agency



## Implementation and Support

The SCS Excellence in Action Framework is an evidence-based expression of our shared language and practices, which form the foundation of leading, teaching, and learning in each of our schools. It articulates SCS commitment to high ambition, high expectations and high support, which will be enacted through clear expectations, professional learning and instructional coaching.



### Establish clear expectations of shared, evidence-based practice by providing:

- **Position Papers** that guide and provide classroom teachers with clear expectations of evidence-based practices, presented as practical descriptions and illustrations of observable practices in each stage and subject
- **Curriculum Material** that supports teachers by providing scopes, sequences, units of work, and resources developed by experts from across our system that are grounded in evidence-based best practices. As concrete representations of Excellence in Action, these materials will ensure each student has access to high-quality teaching and learning while supporting teachers in focusing on what matters most



### Support teachers and leaders through quality professional learning, including:

- System-led Staff Development Days
- Professional Learning to Support Curriculum Reform
- Professional Learning Communities and Secondary Network Meetings
- Online and On-Demand Modules
- School-based Professional Learning



### A system-wide approach to instructional coaching that ensures fidelity to our shared approach and precision of practice with:

- A shared Instructional Coaching Model
- Teaching and Learning Coach support for Senior and Middle Leaders

