



February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

**'A Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition stands in solidarity with those who are powerless and marginalised'. (The Charter, Edmund Rice Education in Australia, 2004)**

The College is guided by four Touchstones which relate to all Edmund Rice schools across Australia:

- Justice and Solidarity
- Gospel Spirituality
- Inclusive Community
- Liberating Education

These themes inform and inspire by reminding our St Edward's College community of our purposes and priorities of Catholic education.

Justice, Peace and Advocacy are a central parts of school life at St Edward's College. As a Catholic school in the tradition of Edmund Rice and embodying the Catholic values, we seek to engage every student in programs of Awareness, Advocacy and Action which will become a life-long commitment to the values of service and outreach to the marginalised in our world.

### **Waterford – Service-Learning and Advocacy Project**

The vision of St Edward's College as a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition requires us to seek justice and compassion for others and give a voice to the voiceless. The Waterford Service-Learning Program is a vital part of this vision and permeates throughout the whole school curriculum.

The Waterford Service-Learning Program also provides opportunities for all secondary students to become involved in a wide range of volunteer activities, catering for different age groups. It allows them to experience the joy of giving and sharing with others and provides a unique learning experience that goes beyond the classroom and school environment, where students can reflect upon their own values and beliefs and develop their character through the act of service.

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*The College has been conducting this mandatory Social Justice program for over 20 years. Each student in Years 8-11 is required to complete at least 15 hours of service for others, by the end of Term 3.*

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Students in Year 7 are exempt from this, allowing them time to settle into College life, but they are welcome to participate if they choose. Similarly, Year 12 students are also exempt from Waterford to allow them to focus on study and other matters, however they are encouraged to continue the





Service Learning (and perhaps Edmund Rice Honours for completing over 100 hours) they engaged in Years 8 to 11.

Parent support, in terms of checking, reminding and encouraging your son(s) to complete Waterford has been a feature of this program since it began in 2000 and the College continues to seek your support.

The College is also conducting Founder's Day this year in Term 3, which is a day of fun and interactive activities to raise funds for the Edmund Rice ministries we support, including Kenya Christian Brothers Ministry for young people and families living in poverty.

The college asks for \$20 from each student to support day and is conducted bi annually.

The College is committed to Waterford because

- as Christians, we try to follow the teachings and values of Jesus and the founder of the Christian Brothers, Blessed Edmund Rice, of Waterford, Ireland.
- research and experience over many years shows that our young people should engage in actions of service for others, as part of a happy and fulfilled life. Many benefits for the boys flow from this in their lives.

For ideas on how to obtain Waterford Hours, please see the Justice, Peace, and Advocacy page on the College's website - [Justice, Peace and Advocacy - St Edward's College \(stedwards.nsw.edu.au\)](http://stedwards.nsw.edu.au/Justice,PeaceandAdvocacy)

Throughout the school year, if you have any questions about the Waterford Project, please do not hesitate to contact me on 4321 6416 or [arozario@stedwards.nsw.edu.au](mailto:arozario@stedwards.nsw.edu.au)

Regards

Alexander Rozario

Leader of Justice, Peace, and Advocacy

