



CASA LORETO

Via Massaua 3, 000162 ROME, Italy

May, 2003



Dear Friends

I am very pleased to welcome these international guidelines, which are the fruit of the historic education meeting which took place in Kolkata (India), November 4-18, 2002. Though our schools and colleges worldwide may be known by different names for historical reasons - IBVM, Loreto or Loreto - there has always been a strong sense of belonging to one international family and of sharing a common identity through our founder Mary Ward. Currently we have almost 150 schools and colleges, with 70,000 students, 5,500 staff members and many hundreds of thousands of past pupils in Australia, Canada, England, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania and the United States.

In the context of globalisation our international network of schools and colleges has an important role to play in our work for personal and social transformation. These common international guidelines are a tangible sign of our worldwide network. As you work with them during the next few years, I am sure that these guidelines will raise a variety of challenges in each of your different contexts. I invite you to share the outcome of your deliberations with your colleagues worldwide, and I look forward to hearing how these guidelines have been implemented in each country.

Your work with young people is of vital importance for each individual student's well-being and for the families and societies that you influence as a result. I would like to thank each of you for your dedication in the service of young people. May you experience the rich sense of fulfilment that your involvement in this important work deserves.

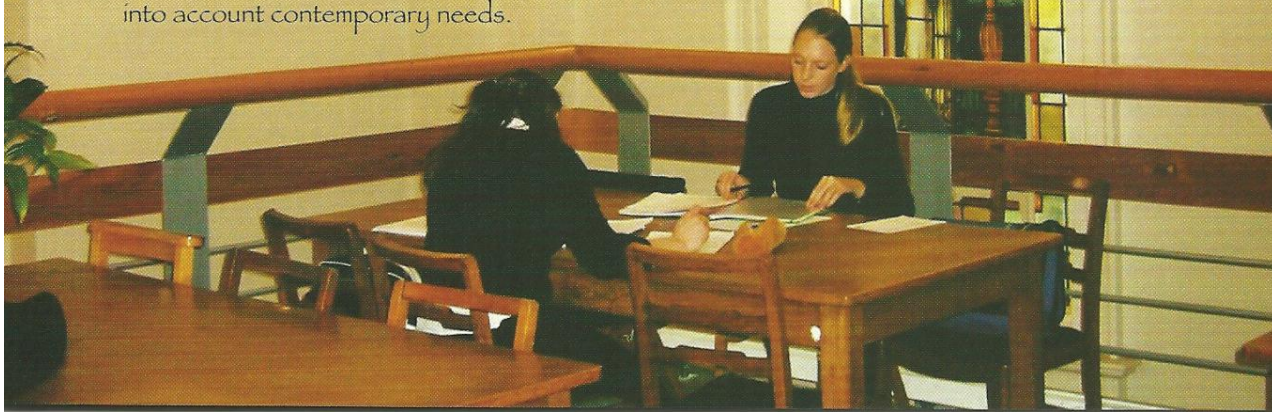
Mary Wright IBVM
(General Superior)

FOUNDATION

The person of Jesus Christ is at the heart of a Loreto/IBVM school/college and Gospel values permeate the entire school experience.

Mary Ward's core values - justice, freedom, sincerity, truth and joy - are the foundation of the spirituality of the school/college community. Discernment, involving reflection on experience leading to action, will inform and influence policies, structures, practices and pedagogy.

It is essential that those involved in Loreto/IBVM education have the wisdom and the courage to respond and adapt to continually changing circumstances. Therefore, ongoing discernment is required to ensure that systems and structures take into account contemporary needs.



THE PERSON OF THE STUDENT

'God's glory is shown in each person who is fully alive'

A Holistic and Person Centred Education

To enable the fullest possible personal growth, Loreto/IBVM education gives priority to the integration of the spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical and emotional development of the individual student. Relationships within Loreto/IBVM education are characterised by respect, justice, honesty, sincerity, courage and compassion.

Key Challenges

- *How are the above values reflected in school policies, practices, structures and curriculum delivery?*
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Faith Development

Liturgy, prayer, catechetics, retreats, reflection on experience and the recognition of God's presence in all things, strengthen one's relationship with Christ.

Key Challenges

- *What needs to be done to introduce students to the practice of a reflective way of living?*
-

Educating for Wisdom

To enable the student to search for the wisdom that lies within, pedagogy and practice based on reflection and action help the student to experience a reflective way of thinking and living.

Key Challenges

- *How to create time and space for prayer and reflection?*
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Striving for Personal Excellence

Students are encouraged to strive for excellence at the level of each one's potential in all areas of life and work. This striving for excellence has implications for the structures, policies and practices of the school/college*.

Key Challenges

- *To articulate a common understanding, within the school/college* community, of the meaning of excellence in the light of Gospel values.*
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Commitment to being an Agent of Social Change

The promotion of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is a Gospel imperative and a priority within Loreto/IBVM education. Loreto/IBVM educators recognise their responsibility to develop agents of social change who will commit themselves to building a better world. This is not an option but an integral part of the educational process. In educating for responsible global citizenship, God's Kingdom is made more visible.

Key Challenges

- *What educational processes enable the development of agents of social change?*
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* School includes colleges throughout

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Discernment

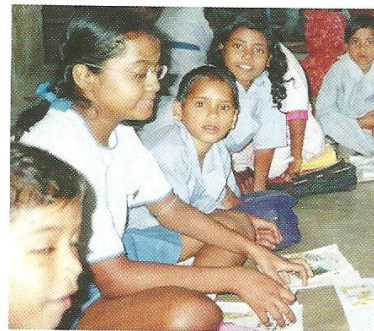
Discernment and reflection on experience characterise the Loreto/IBVM educational experience. Students need to be taught the practice and discipline of discernment and given opportunities to apply their learning in situations which require critical reflection and decision making.

Key Challenges

- *How does the practice and discipline of discernment become part of the educational experience?*
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Participation and Celebration

A Loreto/IBVM school prays, celebrates, participates in sacramental life and ministry and honours Mary the Mother of God. Loreto/IBVM educators recognise the significant influence that Mary Ward's vision has for the universal church and acknowledge her loyalty to the church in times of misunderstanding. As part of the people of God, a Loreto/IBVM school community aims to become a dynamic presence in the local and universal church. In a multi-faith school community religious celebrations and experiences nourish and deepen the spirituality of each person and emphasise the universal values shared by different faith traditions.



Key Challenges

- *How to nurture students, especially women, to be prepared to take leadership roles within the Church?*
- *How to involve the school community actively in the local church?*
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Quality of Relationships

Loreto/IBVM education emphasises the importance of the quality of relationships within and beyond the school and other education centres. We seek to develop right relationships as the foundation of our educational endeavours. These relationships should be responsible, affirming, open, transparent, compassionate, trusting, and able to accept and offer challenge.

Involvement of Staff, Students, Families, Parents / Guardians etc.

Members of staff play a significant role in developing the vision for a Loreto/IBVM school and in making that vision a reality. The development and realisation of this vision is also made possible by a consultative and supportive management team and the active involvement of students, parents and others. Transparency and collaboration build mutual trust and accountability in all such relationships.

Key Challenges

- *What needs to be done to enable parents/guardians to be appropriately involved in school life?*
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Nurturing the Person of the Educator

A student-centred education in the Mary Ward tradition recognises the importance of the person of the educator. When an educator loves students and is committed to them, she/he finds meaning and motivation as a teacher or other staff member. An educator who is enthusiastic, caring and encouraging, acts as a role model for students and ultimately affects the happiness of each student.

Key Challenges

- *What opportunities need to be provided for the spiritual growth and both the personal and professional development of teachers and other staff members?*
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Leadership Development and Formation

Loreto/IBVM education is concerned with leadership development and formation for all: trustees, management, school staff, parents and students. This development is perceived to be an integral part of an educational experience which seeks to foster personal growth and bring about social transformation. Loreto/IBVM education seeks to develop dynamic leaders, with 'heart', wisdom, vision and the will to influence and bring about change in society. To develop the particular leadership potential of each person, appropriate skills training, permeated by Mary Ward values, is seen to be essential.

Key Challenges

- *How is the school developing leadership potential?*
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Inclusivity - Embracing All

Loreto/IBVM education values and respects each student. It seeks to educate all - irrespective of ability, creed, or ethnic, social and economic backgrounds - in an open learning environment.

Economic and Social Exclusion

Informed by the Loreto/IBVM priority 'to stand with those on the margins of society'¹ a Loreto /IBVM school must actively respond to the needs of those excluded from full participation in society on the basis of economic and/or social deprivation. When such a response, based on Gospel values, is integral to the school experience it is prophetic and makes our message credible in society.

Key Challenges

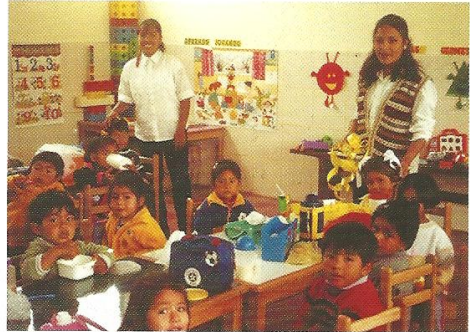
- *What steps does the school need to take now to make this a reality?*
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Multi-Cultural and Multi-Faith

Loreto/IBVM education, while maintaining a Catholic ethos, fosters multi-cultural and multi-faith dialogue. Diversity is celebrated. Sincere, honest and respectful dialogue among those of different cultures and faiths leads to greater understanding and tolerance, which in turn help to promote world peace.

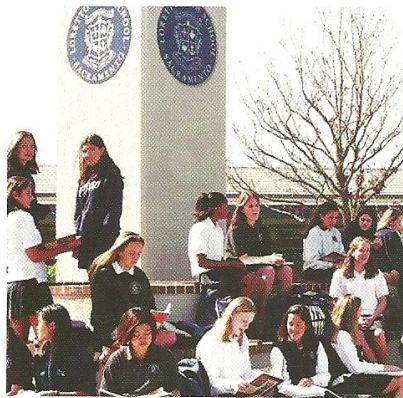
Key Challenges

- *How to engage the school in a multi-faith and multi-cultural dialogue appropriate to the local situation?*
- *How to engage a multi-cultural and/or multi-faith school community with the Mary Ward vision?*
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Critical Awareness of Today's Reality

In the search for truth, Loreto/IBVM education has a realistic and critical knowledge of today's reality through:



- awareness of the culture in which our students live
- provision of a relevant curriculum
- keeping up to date with developing practices and methods
- encouragement of critical reflection on contemporary social reality.

Key Challenges

- *How to keep abreast of the constantly changing culture of the world of the student?*
- *How do Loreto/IBVM educators critique today's social, political, economic and cultural reality?*
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ENABLING STRUCTURES, SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Participative Management Structures

In working as a team where there is shared responsibility exercised in a spirit of trust, collaboration and transparency, Loreto/IBVM school management acts for the good of the whole school community.

Key Challenges

- *What effective communication systems and participative processes are needed to ensure active involvement at all levels of the school?*
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Networking

Loreto schools constitute a multi-cultural and diverse family of schools found on every continent. Through the creation of an international network, Loreto/IBVM schools communicate and co-operate with each other, through such initiatives as

- internet technology
- personal contact
- exchange and educational visits

in order to help to build a better world.



Key Challenges

- *How to make global networking a reality?*
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Collaboration With Other Agencies

Loreto/IBVM educators show a willingness to share and learn from the wisdom, experience and expertise of other agencies with a view to maximising effectiveness.

Key Challenges

- *How do we interact with those agencies who differ from us in their value system?*
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ONGOING VISIONING FOR THE FUTURE

These guidelines provide a dynamic basis for Loreto/IBVM schools to engage in ongoing visioning for the future in the context of the local reality. Such a process will help revise and modify these guidelines, thus sustaining and developing the Loreto/IBVM vision worldwide.

Key Challenges

- *What processes and strategies will facilitate relevant engagement with these guidelines?*
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PARTICIPANTS AT THE KOLKATA MEETING

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