



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Jesus, is seen God's image and likeness in its human expression, and that Jesus' values and teachings show all people 'the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:6).

RATIONALE

At Holy Family, we believe that Pastoral Care is integral to the daily life of the school and cannot be restricted to a particular program or curriculum. It fosters growth and embraces the total life of the school by building relationships through the cooperation of parents, families, Parish and the wider community. Pastoral Care is the responsibility and the right of all – students, parents, families and staff employed at Holy Family School. It includes the decisions, structures and practices taken to challenge, nurture and support individuals whilst maintaining the dignity of each one, honouring the richness of diversity as each person *'is created in the image and likeness of God'* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, para.1701).

In accordance with this belief, Holy Family School values love, respect, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, repentance, reconciliation and justice. Pastoral Care is foundational to our Catholic faith and tradition. It assists in the cultivation of the spiritual, personal, emotional, physical, academic, moral, social and aesthetic development of young people as they grow to become active and informed global citizens. Through enacting the principles of Catholic social teaching, students, staff and parents contribute to the development of a healthy and just society.

PRINCIPLES

Holy Family School promotes the following principles with regards to Pastoral Care:

- Each person is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), with the inherent dignity that this implies, and all are created as social beings, with the mutual rights, obligations and needs that this implies.
- Pastoral Care affirms and gives expression to the belief that 'the person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.'

- Pastoral Care is informed by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (refer to Appendix) and is enacted in school environments that are safe, supportive, inclusive and empowering.
- The foundation of each relationship in Catholic school communities is pastoral care; 'Every contact is a pastoral care contact' (Cross, 2014).
- In responding to pastoral issues and concerns, appropriate confidentiality must be maintained with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed either legally or pastorally.
- Schools exercise their pastoral responsibilities under the leadership of the Principal, ensuring that purposeful training of staff in pastoral care for all members of the school community.
- Effective pastoral care is therefore recognised as promoting the achievement of learning outcomes and thus contributing to a School Improvement Framework.
- Effective whole-of-school approaches to pastoral care require age-appropriate behavioural education and skilling of students, and pastorally driven management of student behaviour through processes focused on both individual and community wellbeing, and on ensuring a just and reasonable balance of individual and community rights, needs and responsibilities.
- Pastoral care requires that the integrity of the family unit is respected.
- Respectful and cooperative school-family relationships provide an effective channel of pastoral care for students. Schools and families share responsibility for developing and maintaining such relationships of trust, characterised by respect for the goodwill of the other and a willingness to engage collaboratively.
- Parents exercise their responsibility in pastoral care by providing positive support and collaborative engagement with the school in support of student and school community wellbeing.
- Effective school-community partnerships offer opportunities for networks of pastoral care for students. Appropriate local services and agencies may be identified, and links or partnerships developed, to support the needs of students and their families and to enhance the school's own pastoral initiatives.

PROCEDURES

The successful implementation of this policy will include:

- the school community working in partnership with its members and associates (agencies, services) to promote pastoral care for all within its cultural context
- regularly communicating this policy to staff and promoting the importance of pastoral care for all
- educating students and staff in Catholic social teaching, wellbeing and social justice
- educating school staff to understand all school policies (for example wellbeing, child protection, anti-bullying, communication, OH&S, learning and teaching) and making clear connections between them in relation to this policy

- supporting students and their families to access appropriate services
- maintaining appropriate confidentiality of information and providing it to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

School Leadership will:

- adopt and implement Diocesan policies, which include child protection, bullying, harassment, abuse and neglect as aligned with the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF)
- observe all legislative requirements and engage as necessary with external agencies in relation to student wellbeing
- implement a whole-school approach for student wellbeing in curriculum and in school procedures related to positive behaviour support and social-emotional learning
- engage as required internal and/or external specialist advice about wellbeing-related matters
- regularly communicate this policy to staff and promote the importance of pastoral care for all
- provide access to appropriate training for staff in areas of pastoral care
- work in partnership with parents, carers and families, the parish priest, CEM, students, staff and the wider community to achieve the purposes of this policy
- enable staff to have a working knowledge of government and system policies and procedures
- respond promptly to any breach of this policy in accordance with current guidelines and the law
- manage critical incidents, seeking and providing support where appropriate
- use positive relationship-based approaches in regard to student behaviour.

School staff will:

- create and maintain safe and positive learning environments
- model and promote socially responsible values and behaviour
- work in partnership with parents, carers and families
- explicitly teach and/or support socially acceptable and responsible behaviour
- participate in appropriate training in areas of Pastoral Care
- follow CEM and whole-school policies and procedures.

Students will:

- abide by school policies, procedures and guidelines
- work in partnership with parents, carers and families
- contribute positively to the development of safe and inclusive learning environments
- report concerns about their own wellbeing and that of fellow students.
- support CEM and school policies and procedures.

Parents, families and carers will:

- work in partnership with schools
- be aware of the significant influence they have on their children
- support CEM and school policies and procedures.

CONCLUSION:

It should be understood that Pastoral Care is part of and fundamental to every aspect of our school's life and activities. The essence of this Policy therefore is evident in all other Policy Statements developed and implemented at Holy Family School. This Policy is only complete when implemented in conjunction with all other policies in particular:

- Child Protection Legislation & Guidelines
- Behaviour Support Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Drug Education Policy
- Counselling and Psychological Intervention Policy
- OH&S Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Assessment & Reporting Policy