



St Clare's Catholic High School
Address: Davis St Taree, NSW
Phone: 6552 3300
Fax: 6552 3656
Email: admin@tareesc.catholic.edu.au

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Person(s) Responsible	Assistant Principal- Wellbeing/Pastoral Care Coordinators
Date written	2017
Review Date	2019
Date Last reviewed	February 2018
Associated School Documents	Student Management Procedures Student Award Procedures Anti-Bully Policy and Procedures Child Protection Policy and Procedures CLARE –Positive Education Framework

1. Preamble

Catholic schools have had a long history of exercising a role in the pastoral care of their students and it began with the work of the religious congregations. The very term 'pastoral care' traces its origins back to Jesus' description of himself as the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-21). This endeavour has been, and continues to be, an educational endeavour for the development of the 'whole person' and reflects '...the centrality of the human person in the educational project of the Catholic school' (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium no. 9). It is recognised, in this regard, that schools have a primary purpose in education, and that they need to be sensitive to the fact that there will be instances in which the appropriate course of action is to work in partnership with or refer to other agencies within the Church, or more widely. Parent support for, and involvement in, their children's education is a critical factor in student engagement, achievement and wellbeing.

"In a safe and supportive school, the risk from all types of harm is minimised, diversity is valued and all members of the school community feel respected and included and can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety or wellbeing." (National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF, p.2)

A whole school approach to creating safe and supportive learning and teaching communities acknowledges the strong interconnections between student safety, student wellbeing and learning. Harassment, aggression, violence and bullying are less likely to occur in a caring, respectful and supportive teaching and learning community. Student safety and wellbeing are enhanced when students feel connected to their school, have positive and respectful relationships with their peers and teachers, feel confident about their social and emotional skills and satisfied with their learning experiences at school. The wellbeing of all students is at the heart of Catholic Education enabling a learning environment, which provides for the spiritual, physical, emotional, cognitive and social growth of its students and staff.

2. Rationale

Pastoral Care at St Clare's is modelled on the person of Jesus Christ, who recognised the dignity and uniqueness of each person and who, in his humanity, called people to the fullness of life. We aspire to achieve this fullness of living for each community member through the many dimensions of Pastoral Care. These dimensions reflect the individual and communal nature of Pastoral Care, and acknowledge spirituality as the very essence of what Pastoral Care is all about.

2.1 Pastoral Care

- is embodied in our commitment to Justice and our preparedness to speak the truth
- is reflected in our willingness to be Loving, Forgiving and Reconciling
- is revealed in our desire to be of Service to one another
- is reflected in how each individual is enabled to find inner harmony and meaning in life.

Hence, Pastoral Care should be an expression of the reality of God's love in our school as revealed in our commitment to building and maintaining right relationships.

Right Relationships, are fundamental to effective learning and teaching and genuine Pastoral Care for all-members of the community; those, which reflect the Gospel values of Justice, Truth, Peace, Forgiveness, Love, Reconciliation and Service to one another; which honour and respect individual freedom, rights and responsibilities of all members of the community and are an expression of our Love of God in all creation.

2.2 Well Being

Student Wellbeing is a student's level of satisfaction about the quality of their life at school. Optimal (or desirable) wellbeing is characterised by positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships with other students and teachers, resilience, and satisfaction with self and learning experiences at school. (Noble, McGrath, Roffey and Rowling 2008).

In Catholic Schools, this definition is underpinned with the values and beliefs of Catholic Education. The wellbeing of all students is at the heart of Catholic Education enabling a learning environment, which provides for the spiritual, physical, emotional, cognitive and social wellbeing of its students and staff.

2.3 Positive Education

In Australia and globally there is growing interest in positive education. Much of this interest has stemmed from the work of Professor Martin Seligman from the University of Pennsylvania who developed a whole school positive education program for Geelong Grammar School in Victoria. Positive education has been defined as "education for both traditional skills and for happiness" (Seligman et al., 2009).

With the increasing statistics on psychological distress and mental illness in our children and adolescents, there is a realisation of the need to take a more proactive rather than reactive approach to mental health and student and staff development in a holistic manner. This has led to the development of the Positive Education Framework "CLARE," that is being implemented at St Clare's High School.

3. Aims

- 3.1 to honour each person as a manifestation of God's Love by affirming, protecting and promoting the dignity and worth of all community members.
- 3.2 to develop a school environment in which community members feel welcome, safe, secure, respected and happy
- 3.3 to promote the development of people as individuals and as individuals "in community" toward the holistic development of each individual in our community
- 3.4 to affirm and support community members in their humanness as they learn and grow towards accepting responsibility for their actions
- 3.5 to provide an environment that builds and nurtures quality relationships and is sensitive to personal and societal stresses
- 3.6 to provide opportunities for the healing and strengthening of fractured relationships, while acknowledging the inevitability of conflict in human relationships

4. Guiding Principals

This policy is designed to support the staff of St Clare's High School to make well-informed judgments that take account of the safety and wellbeing of all staff and students.

- 4.1 The quality of the relationships among all those in the Catholic education community is particularly important.
- 4.2 The processes of suspension, transfer and exclusion are regarded as serious sanctions that can be applied by the Principal or their delegate to support the safety and good order of the school community for which they are responsible.
- 4.3 Every sanction applied under this policy requires an appropriate level of discernment and reflection, with careful consideration of the facts and circumstances of the situation.
- 4.4 Decisions regarding suspension, transfer and exclusion require the acknowledgement and consideration of the health and safety of all members of the school community, as well as their educational, physical and emotional needs.
- 4.5 This policy applies equally to all students, including those of post-compulsory age.
- 4.6 Collaboration and open dialogue between parents/caregivers, staff and students are essential in the development of effective student management processes.
- 4.7 Students, staff, parents/caregivers are to be included in the processes leading to suspension, transfer or exclusion, wherever this is appropriate and possible.
- 4.8 Students and parents/caregivers have an entitlement to be heard and are entitled to a reasonable decision, having regard to the facts and circumstances.
- 4.9 St Clare's will ensure that all legal requirements are met and that mandated notifications are made. All disciplinary matters and investigations will be thoroughly documented according to the relevant prescribed process.
- 4.10 Staff follow Restorative Action procedures that respond to student behaviours that cause a fracture in the relationship between the student and the teacher. The underlying belief is that all learning is based upon relationship and that effective learning can only take place when right relationship exists. This will require both parties to reflect upon the events and at the appropriate time discuss these in a conference setting, with a view to reconciliation. Restorative justice is about growth for the individuals involved and this can only happen if human dignity is respected.

- 4.11 Staff use the CLARE Positive Education Framework to enhance their well-being through the development of a positive attitude, positive emotions, positive relationships and a sense of purpose about self, school and life. To effect change and impact on the individual, the Clare framework will become embedded into all aspects of school life: spiritual life, academic life, pastoral life and the co-curriculum life of the school.
- 4.12 Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All communities have a legitimate expectation that all school and system personnel will follow these principles in all circumstances. Procedural Fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements: The right to be heard and The right of a person to an impartial decision.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 *The Principal will*

- Implement a whole school approach for Pastoral Care and student wellbeing in all school procedures
- Adopt and implement Diocesan policies that are aligned with the ST Clare's Pastoral Care Policy
- Observe all legislative requirements and engage as necessary with external agencies in relation to student wellbeing
- Engage internal and/or external specialist advice about wellbeing related matters as required
- Work in partnership with CSO, parents and the school and broader Church community to achieve the purposes of this policy
- Ensure that staff have a working knowledge of government and system policies and procedures
- Respond promptly and appropriately to any breach of this policy

5.2 *The School staff will:*

- Create and maintain safe and positive learning environments.
- Model and promote socially responsible values and behaviour.
- Work in partnership with the School Executive, Teachers, parents and broader Church community to achieve the purposes of this policy
- Demonstrate and reinforce through their teaching socially acceptable and responsible behaviour.
- Follow CSO and whole school policies and procedures to promote Student and Staff wellbeing.
- Report any concerns about a student's wellbeing to a Pastoral or Studies coordinator.

5.3 *The Students will:*

- Follow school policies, procedures and guidelines in relation to Pastoral care and Wellbeing
- Contribute positively to the development of safe and inclusive learning environments
- Report all concerns about their own wellbeing and that of fellow students to a teacher.
- Report all concerns regarding bullying issues to a teacher.

5.4 The Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure children are aware of and understand the requirements of policies and procedures relating to Pastoral Care at St Clare's
- Work in partnership with St Clare's to promote wellbeing in their children
- Be aware of the significant influence they have on their children's wellbeing
- Support CSO and school policies and procedures with respect to Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

6. Budget

The Annual School Budget will contain an allocation of funds for the purpose of:

- Staff Professional Development in areas of Restorative Justice, Restorative Practices and Class Room Management Strategies; Mentoring; Supporting Students with Special Needs etc.
- Supporting community members in need
- Conducting retreat and Pastoral Care/Reflection Days
- Purchasing necessary resources
- Conducting special programs for students and parents (e.g.) Seasons for Growth; Bullying Workshops, Drug & Alcohol Workshops, Mind Matters, and Cyber Safety Workshops etc.
- Providing outreach support to families in need, especially those in crises.

7. Evaluation

- WHEN - St Clare's Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy and its elements shall be clearly documented and reviewed annually.
- BY WHOM - Community member, including Staff, Parents and Students Body, will be consulted in assessing the effectiveness of the policy, and in making amendments to it.
- HOW- The policy shall be assessed in the light of its effectiveness in promoting and achieving the school's vision, the provisions of the Diocesan Policy Statement: Pastoral Care (November 2002) and for consistency with the Principles of Restorative Justice and Procedural Fairness.