

Preface

*The Lavalla Catholic College (**the College**) Pastoral Care Policy is firmly embedded in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. 'Pastoral Care' can be traced back to Jesus' giving of the New Commandment: 'Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another' (Jn 13:34). This challenge has been echoed by Pope Francis (2013), 'Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, and this can happen unexpectedly and in any place – on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey'.*

Introduction

Pastoral Care is foundational to Catholic faith and tradition. It assists in the cultivation of the spiritual, emotional, physical, academic and social development of young people as they grow to become learners for life in a changing world. Through enacting the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, pastoral care approaches may contribute to the development of a healthy and just society.

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019) refers to the responsibility of schools, with students, parents, carers, families and the community, to promote the development and wellbeing of young Australians. When grappling with school policy and governance, it is vitally important to maintain focus on the centrality of the young people in our schools: 'It is our moral obligation to give every child the very best education possible' (Tutu & Van Roekel, 2010).

Pastoral care includes the decisions, structures and practices established to challenge, nurture and support individuals whilst maintaining the dignity of each.

Pastoral Care is the responsibility and the right of all – students, parents, families and College employees.

Commitment to Child Safety

The College holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of Catholic education. This commitment is drawn from, and inherent to, the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

Purpose

This policy is to inform the College community of the principles and procedures in providing effective pastoral care.

This policy provides direction to the College in establishing and enacting pastoral care policies, procedures and guidelines.

Definitions

Pastoral Care: All measures taken to assist an individual or community to achieve their full potential. This includes enabling academic progression, promoting social-emotional outcomes, building resilience and building capacity for ethical decision making.

Academic Care: Building an environment that enhances learning by exploring the explicit link between positive student behaviour and improved student academic outcomes

Catholic Social Teaching: The permanent principles of the Church's social doctrine.

Partnership: Relationships characterised by:

- actively working together;
 - showing mutual respect and trust;
 - communicating with each other in clear and open ways;
 - respecting each others' insights, priorities, goals, ideas, differences and experiences;
 - valuing each others' knowledge and expertise, and bringing these together in complementary ways;
 - jointly agreeing on aims and outcomes and sharing responsibility for fulfilling tasks;
 - negotiating decisions and resolving disagreements and conflicts.
- (Davis & Day, 2010)

Principles

- Pastoral care is informed by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching:
 - The dignity of the human person;
 - The common good;
 - Subsidiarity;
 - Solidarity.
- The foundation of each relationship in the College community is pastoral care; 'Every contact is a pastoral care contact' (Cross, 2014). Pastoral care is for everyone and is everyone's responsibility.
- Pastoral care is enacted in school environments that are safe, supportive, inclusive and empowering.
- 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. Parents / guardians exercise their responsibility by providing positive support and collaborative engagement with the school in support of student and school community wellbeing.
- Purposeful training of staff is necessary for the wellbeing of all members of the College community.
- Enhanced student wellbeing and therefore effective pastoral care, contributes significantly to improved student learning outcomes.
- 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.
- 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 schools' own pastoral initiatives.

Procedures

The successful implementation of this policy will include:

- having appropriate structures to support wellbeing, including, but not limited to, Homeroom teachers, counsellors and designated staff in positions of leadership in this area.
- the College community working in partnership with its members and associates (agencies, services) to promote pastoral care for all;
- 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 College staff to understand all College policies and making clear connections between them and this Pastoral Care Policy;

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

The Principal will ensure:

- observance of all legislative requirements and engage as necessary with external agencies in relation to student wellbeing;
- engagement as required with school-based and/or external specialist advice about wellbeing-related matters to ensure the effective implementation of this policy;
- regular communication of this policy to staff and promote the importance of pastoral care for all;
- genuine partnership with parents, carers and families, Marist Schools Australia Ltd, DOSCEL, MACS, students, staff and the wider community to achieve the purposes of this policy;
- timely response to any breach of this policy in accordance with current guidelines and the law;
- critical incidents are managed in line with the College Critical Incident Response Procedures;
- participation in appropriate professional learning and training to support the care, safety and welfare of students;

College staff are expected to:

- create and maintain safe, positive and inclusive learning environments;
- model, support and promote socially responsible acceptable and responsible behaviour;
- work in partnership with parents, carers and families;
- participate in appropriate professional learning and training to support the care, safety and welfare of students;
- support College policies and school-based procedures.

Students are expected to:

- adhere to College policies, procedures and guidelines;
- co-operate with staff, parents, and carers;
- contribute positively to the development of safe and inclusive learning environments;
- appropriately report concerns about their own wellbeing and that of fellow students.

Parents, carers and families are expected to:

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

Expected Outcomes

- Students become successful lifelong learners, active, informed and hope-filled citizens contributing to a just society and the Church's mission.
- Students display knowledge and appreciation of self and others.
- College community members work respectfully and collaboratively.
- Student wellbeing and learning outcomes are strengthened.
- Pastoral care in the College is inclusive of all students and community members.

References

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