Student Pastoral Care

Definition

Pastoral Care permeates the total climate of relationships within the community of the Catholic school. Is has the individual as its focus, and reflects the support, the encouragement, the tender care shown and experienced in the ethos of Gospel based communities. With its life-giving focus, it should enable all to grow, to be affirmed in their dignity and worth as persons, to appreciate themselves and to develop skill in building personal relationships. It is a liberating experience, and an environment should be created which facilitates the development and experience of responsible self-discipline.

Pastoral Care is based on the:

- Loving concern God has always shown for his people throughout the history of salvation.

- Value and uniqueness of the individual person created in the image of God.

- Fact that “the Catholic School is committed to the development of the whole person, since in Christ, the Perfect Man, all human values find their fulfilment and unity” The Catholic School.

- Recognition that the ministry of each member of the College community contributes to the development of the climate in the College.

- Understanding that “the entire effort of the Catholic teacher is oriented towards an integral formation of each student”. Lay Catholics Schools: Witnesses to Faith, 1982, n. 28.

Pastoral Care is reflected in:

- Quality of relationships in the total College community.

- The commitment the teacher has to the individual student.

- All the policies, procedures and practices of the College.

- The fostering of self-discipline, initiative, creativity, and responsible leadership in staff and students.
Student Pastoral Care Policy

- Relevant and appropriate curricula.
- The establishing of an effective care network.

St Charbel’s College seeks to encourage and develop commitment to the Christian ideal of Gospel values. In particular, this includes just, caring and forgiving relationships.

In our overall educational endeavour, we stress the development of the individual within the life of the community, with particular emphasis on:

- Moral autonomy and self discipline.
- Shared participation for the welfare of the community.
- Acceptance of the need for legitimate identity.

In our community at St Charbel’s, we acknowledge and value multicultural richness in the context of a national identity.

In the day-to-day teacher/pupil interaction, we acknowledge and applaud a natural respect, friendliness, openness and directness, while stressing the necessity for guidance and correction. Appropriate consequences are applied when behaviour is unacceptable. In accordance with the principles of Restorative Justice an opportunity to restore the relationship will also be given.

Opportunities should be found at subject, class and school level to commend, award and give encouragement for good conduct and achievement.

**Some Principles of Pastoral Care**

- The College community is called to be part of the pastoral ministry of the Church.
- There is a pastoral dimension to the role of every staff member.
- The spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical development of each person in the College is integrated.
- Every member of the College community experiences a sense of belonging to a caring Christian community.
- The roles of parents, priests, teachers and students are complementary in liberating one another towards positive growth.
- Cultural differences are acknowledged, respected and welcomed.
- Problem-solving and discipline practices are based on reconciliation, not physical or psychological violence.
Student Pastoral Care Policy

- Pastoral care is not confined to a lesson period.

**Principles Underlying Effective Pastoral Care**

- Pastoral care is concerned with the needs of the individual child, and programs should be designed to ensure that every child has access to a member of staff who will respond in a positive way.

- Each child should be a member of a small group which has a close personal relationship with a particular teacher, and which shares the responsibility for the personal welfare of each group member.

- The teacher, as an individual, has a very important role to play in the social and emotional, as well as the academic development of the child.

- The Pastoral Care program is the responsibility of the entire College, but it is the Principal's responsibility to establish and lead the program, and to ensure that the methods of operation are known, and are fair and consistent.

- Year Coordinators underpin and direct the day to day processes to support Student Pastoral Care.

- Pastoral Care programs should spread through the school day. Pastoral Care should not be confined to a particular time or lesson.

- All sections of the College community have active parts to play in the planning and implementation of the Pastoral Care program. The involvement of parents is a means of confirming that, while parents and the school share responsibility for the child’s development and welfare, the prime responsibility rests with the parents.

**Comprehensive and inclusive approaches to teaching and learning**

The provision of a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum is inextricably linked to the highest ideals of pastoral care. In the light of changing educational priorities, economic uncertainties and limited employment prospects for many of the nation's young people, each school's curriculum provision needs to be comprehensive and of the highest quality so that students gain the competence, confidence and right to participate in the cultural and productive life of society.

Such curriculum provision is essentially concerned with deeper understandings of:

- How individual students learn.

- Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

- Fair and just assessment procedures.
Student Pastoral Care Policy

It needs to be responsive to students with special needs, and should endeavour to redress educational disadvantage brought about by such factors as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin and race.

Supportive school-family relationships

For the majority of students, the family unit and the school are among the most formative influences in their lives. It is therefore essential that relationships of trust, cooperation and partnership be developed between the school and family members, and that school personnel always respect and are sensitive to, diverse cultural values and family structures.

While pastoral care initiatives must respect the privacy of students' lives, many students and their families actively seek the school's support in times of crisis and instability. Within the limits of its resources and expertise, a school committed to the total well-being of its students endeavour to provide this intensified support.

Effective networks of care

Pastoral care involves every member of the school community. A commitment to partnership and shared responsibility among staff, students, parents and other family members is an integral feature of pastoral care.

There are many resources within the wider community which support pastoral care in schools, including church groups, family welfare services, respite care and health services. It is important that schools ensure that all support services are identified, and that strong links are established with all the agencies that may be able to support students in need.

Student Induction (refer to College Enrolment Policy)

After a student has been enrolled at the College, the respective Coordinator will carefully monitor the progress of the student, reporting regularly to the Assistant Principal and the College Principal.

The induction procedure comprises the following:

- Homeroom teachers should meet with the student for an interview, and review the student’s file to gain background knowledge.

- The student should be partnered with another student in the same home class.

- The student should be introduced to the members of the SRC from the particular year group, so that they are familiar with whom they should express problems or concerns.

- The new student will be encouraged to participate in other activities, eg sport, choir, debating, public speaking, community service.
Student Pastoral Care Policy

- Within the first fortnight, the coordinator should make contact with the parents to assess whether the child is having any difficulties in the transition process.

- The coordinator will report back to the assistant principal after the first fortnight, so that he is aware of the new student’s progress in the transition process.