



# SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL PASTORAL CARE POLICY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

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## RATIONALE

Pastoral Care is the network of care, which exists in a school. Students, staff, parents, the parish, parish priest and wider community all contribute to this care.

The school's Christian ethos is reflected in individuals caring for, and respecting one another, in a supportive and encouraging way, just as Jesus challenges us to take that extra step.

Staff at Sacred Heart Catholic School have a holistic approach to education, and seek to develop the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social aspects of the child in the service of others.

All school curricula, policies and practices are designed to enhance the dignity and worth of the human person. All school members have the right to feel safe and have their concerns addressed in an appropriate and unbiased manner.

## DEFINITION

**"Pastoral Care** may be defined as the expressions of care in the school community which bring together the diverse aspects of school life, academic, social, physical and religious. **Pastoral Care** is love in action. It invites students, staff and parents to make choices about life which fulfil their destiny as sons and daughters of God, created in God's likeness. **Pastoral Care** embraces the whole gamut of the curriculum and grounds the school's mission statement in the quality of daily relationships." (Treston, 1992 p.27, 28)

Sacred Heart Catholic School aims to foster the total development of each child within a caring community that is totally committed to supporting and living the Catholic principles and ideals. Our Pastoral Care Policy is intricately linked to our school goals.

At Sacred Heart Catholic School we strive:

- To foster children's faith in Christ so that they are able to become more like God.
- To provide a total caring environment in which each child's dignity as God's creation is respected and developed.
- To affirm, respect and develop the individuality and God-given gifts of each child, staff member and school community member.
- To respect and develop in each person the God-given gift of free will.
- To provide opportunities for all children to develop culturally within their own environment and to understand, respect and embrace the cultures of others in our multicultural school.
- To develop the parents' role in their child's education.
- To develop a staff community in which each person is encouraged to grow and develop in faith for the benefit of themselves, the staff, the children and the wider school community.
- To endeavour to work as a total school community in meeting the needs of each member.

## **AIMS**

### ***That Students, Staff And Parents:***

- Feel secure and comfortable within the school
- Are encouraged to participate in the life of the school
- Feel they are trusted and valued members of the community
- Treat each other's ideas with respect
- Are encouraged to develop within themselves confidence in their own abilities
- Accept and enjoy the diversity of cultures within our school and community
- Share in and enjoy the richness of our heritage.

## **SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS, STAFF, STUDENTS, PARENTS, WIDER COMMUNITY**

### **STAFF**

At Sacred Heart Catholic School our staff endeavours to provide a model of Christian goodwill and co-operation.

#### ***Strategies***

- Respect, accept and support each other as professional people with specific individual talents.
- Demonstrate commitment to students.
- Share problems and assist when difficulties arise.
- Welcome and include new members
- Provide a network for constructive advice and communication.
- Provide opportunities for shared prayer.
- Encourage occasions for staff celebrations.

### **STUDENTS**

Sacred Heart Catholic School encourages students to develop as confident Christians, secure in their strengths, aware of their needs, and able to work academically to the best of their ability.

#### ***Strategies***

- Provide situations which encourage children to recognise and believe in themselves and celebrate life with one another.
- Provide personal development and self-esteem programmes for children.
- Plan programmes which develop interpersonal relationship skills.
- Implement the full curriculum based on Catholic Education Office and Ministry of Education requirements and modify these to suite the children.
- Encourage the individuality of children by extending to them the courtesies expected in a caring society –
  - Addressing them by name
  - Taking time to listen to them
  - Making realistic demands which recognise a variety of abilities and qualities.
- Provide for children with specific needs, giving recognition and help where appropriate.
- Cater for individual differences in students' abilities.

## **PARENTS**

The staff respects the role of parents as prime educators of their children. As both parents and teachers are committed to the education of children, courtesy, honest communication and co-operation enhances the prospects of a successful educational partnership.

Multicultural issues, socio-economic pressures, single parent families, language differences and religious situations require understanding and mutual respect.

### ***Avenues of Co-Operation and Communication***

- Regular consultation and reporting with parents on the individual development of students.
- Parent orientation meeting early in Term 1 to explain class systems of discipline, homework etc.
- Education meetings e.g. Sacramental Programme, Literacy, Numeracy and Reading Recovery Parent nights.
- Parent/teacher availability for discussion outside school times.
- Utilising parents' resources and welcoming and encouraging their participation in the school.
- Weekly newsletter.
- Use the P. & F. as a forum for consulting with the parent body on issues related to the management of the school and the teaching/learning program provided.
- Special Community Meetings.
- School activities e.g. camps, incursions and excursions.
- Social and fund-raising occasions.
- Special Occasions e.g. Mother's Day, Father's Day, School Sports Carnivals.

## **PARISH**

The Parish has a supportive role to play in the pastoral care programme of the school.

### ***Strategies***

- Be supported by staff and parents in the school's liturgical events.
- Be supported by staff and parents in the preparation of the Sacraments.
- Principal as member of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church Parish Council. Through the parish council the school/parish relationship is further developed and opportunities where parish can support school and school support parish are adopted and acted upon.
- Social and fund-raising events.

## **WIDER COMMUNITY**

The school sees the community as a vital and integral part of each child's education and so should be seen to be actively involved in community events.

### ***Strategies***

- Develop community pride through participation in various projects and events e.g. Life Link Day, Asthma Awareness, Anzac Day, St Vincent de Paul and Christmas hampers.
- Encourage the children to take part in the community's educational programmes including bike education and Youth Group.
- Invite members of the community to enrich curriculum experiences e.g. NAIDOC Week presenters and encouraging parents into help with the garden, reading groups and canteen and involvement of CWA and visits to Aged Care. etc.
- Utilise community services such as referral agencies, dental clinic, libraries.
- Resources available both in the school and in the community should be reciprocally used whenever possible.
- Share resources and ideas with other schools.
- Encourage multiculturalism through attitudes and involvement e.g. learning languages, customs and cultures.
- Participate in sporting, cultural and interest activities with other schools.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

### **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT – *Improve student learning and enhance teacher instruction.***

A friendly, supportive and co-operative atmosphere amongst members of staff is essential to the whole school's well-being. Parallel in importance is the maintenance, development and application of teaching skills which include not only the ability of class teachers to teach a comprehensive range of subjects in an interesting way but also, being able to nurture and develop the talents of all children.

#### ***Strategies***

- Providing opportunities through staff prayer and in-services for ongoing faith development of staff members.
- Regular in-service to develop teaching skills, techniques and update knowledge.
- Sharing knowledge gained at such in-service e.g. by reporting to staff.
- Accepting responsibility for organising and development some area of the curriculum.
- Organising celebrations and programmes within the school for annual events such as *Book Week, Multicultural Week, Mission Week and NAIDOC Week.*
- Implement effective programming which reflects the spirit of the school policy, significant church and educational statements and the professional image of the informed and caring teacher.
- Support in developing classroom management skills will be given to teachers commencing their professional career.
- Further Professional Development of individual staff members.
- Upgrading of religious knowledge to ensure the children are nurtured into the modern church.
- Staff new to Sacred Heart Catholic School need to be introduced to the procedures of the school directly by the Principal and indirectly by all staff members.
- Kagan strategies were introduced into the school in 2013. New staff need to be up skilled on applying these strategies to their classroom practice.