



Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy

Reviewed: November 2020

Ratified: January 2021

Next Review: 2024

Rationale

Pastoral care is based on respect for the dignity and uniqueness of the individual person who is made in the image of God. It is an individual and community response to Jesus' call to: *love one another as I have loved you* (John 13.34). When Catholic Education is faithful to the call of the Gospel, compassion, justice and reconciliation are evident throughout the life of the education community.

Background

The Pastoral Care Policy respects the God given dignity of each person and focuses on the development of a community that is safe, supportive and inclusive of all.

The pastoral care and wellbeing of all is at the heart of Catholic Education enabling a learning environment which provides for the spiritual, physical, emotional, cognitive and social wellbeing of its participants.

Definitions

Pastoral Care is defined as the action taken within the educational community by its leaders and community members to promote and enhance the wellbeing of the individual of a personal, social, physical, emotional, mental or spiritual nature. Key elements of wellbeing are positive self-regard, respect for others, positive relationships, responsible behaviours and personal resilience.

Wellbeing is defined as a state in which every person realises their own potential, can manage the normal stresses of life and work productively to make a contribution to their community.

Policy Statement

1. Foundational to the nature of pastoral care in DOBCEL Schools is the belief that each person is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), with the inherent dignity that this implies. Each is created as a social being, with the mutual rights, obligations and needs that this implies.
2. Pastoral care in Catholic Education 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.'
3. DOBCEL Schools exercise their pastoral responsibilities under the leadership of the Principal. Parents exercise their responsibility by providing positive support and collaborative engagement with the school in support of student and school community wellbeing

4. 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
5. Student and Staff wellbeing is best achieved within a school environment that is safe, supportive, inclusive and empowering, where diversity is respected and valued, where human rights and the common good are honoured, where inter-relationships are positive, where students experience connectedness and engagement, and where those experiencing difficulty or special need receive particular care and support
6. Enhanced student wellbeing contributes significantly to improved student learning outcomes. Effective pastoral care is therefore recognised as promoting the achievement of learning outcomes and thus contributing to School Improvement.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Awareness about the issues that impact on physical and psychological health and wellbeing need to be raised.
10. An environment that promotes health and wellbeing needs to be promoted.
11. Participation in health and wellbeing initiatives within and outside the community needs to be promoted and encouraged.
12. All should be made aware of issues relating to health and wellbeing.

The DOBCEL Wellbeing Framework is the foundational document that provides schools with a set of guiding principles to support school communities to build positive learning environments, and to consider reviewing their current safety and wellbeing policies and support requirements.

The Wellbeing Framework provides school communities with best-practice advice on developing and implementing policies and support mechanisms to help all students from the first year of school to year 12.

All DOBCEL Schools are to implement Wellbeing practices as outlined in the Framework as a key resource in developing and promoting positive and practical pastoral care and wellbeing processes.

All DOBCEL Schools have the opportunity to participate in the ReLATE (Reframing the Learning and Teaching environments) as developed by MacKillop Family Services as a model that supports a school to create the preconditions for improved teaching, learning and wellbeing.

A suite of excellent support materials is included on the HIVE website and other resources for students and parents can be found at the Safe Schools Hub.

References

Pastoral Care Policy CECV (2008)

Working with Children Act 2006

The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (2018)

CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety 2016

HIVE – CEB Website

Resource: [Safe Schools Hub](#).

Mackillop Family Services: [ReLATE Program](#)