

Holy Family Catholic Primary School Lindfield



Pastoral Care Policy

Rationale:

I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.

(John 10:10)

Pastoral Care is central to the ethos and identity of a Catholic school. It is based on a deep respect for the dignity and uniqueness of the individual person as we are all made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). The Catholic school by providing a strong sense of wellbeing, belonging and security, that affirms students in their dignity and worth, assists students to achieve their full potential as a human person, physically, socially, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.
(Guidelines for Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools 2003, CEC, p6)

Pastoral Care at Holy Family is based upon shared Catholic values through which families and teachers work together to provide a positive supportive environment characterized by trust, cooperation and respect. We acknowledge the right for all Holy Family community members to feel safe.

Catholic Context

Pastoral Care at Holy Family is based on the Catholic worldview and the Christian values as expressed in the following statements.

Pastoral care.....

...has as its focus the life of Jesus Christ.

I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.

(John 10:10)

The Catholic worldview perceives Jesus as God's Son, who saved us through his life, death and resurrection, and through whom we enter into the life of God.

Pastoral Care in the Church and hence in a Catholic school draws its expression and strength from the life of Jesus Christ. In Jesus we see God's paramount expression of love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In Jesus we experience God as a caring shepherd who is faithful to the flock, who knows them intimately, who frees and saves.

Jesus demonstrates by his own life what we have been created to be — fully human, fully alive and able to participate in the life and love of God. It is this vision of human life which the Catholic school communities of the Diocese of Broken Bay seek to embrace and emulate in their approaches to pastoral care.

... is concerned with the dignity and integral growth of the person.

God created humankind in God's image

(Genesis 1:27)

The Catholic worldview perceives each human being as a unique person created in the image of God, having an inalienable dignity that is always to be respected.

We are made in God's image and at the core of all the Church's pastoral action is a deep respect for the innate dignity and uniqueness of individual persons.

As an agent in the mission and ministry of the Church, the Catholic school aims to offer to all a vision and experience of learning that is an exercise of love (cf, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, n15). In a community

that provides a strong sense of wellbeing, belonging and security, students are given every opportunity to be affirmed in their dignity and worth, confirmed in their personhood, and assisted to grow to the fullness of their potential. Likewise, the dignity of parents and their noble place as prime educators of their children is respected and affirmed.

... is a responsibility entrusted to all members of the faith community.

All members may be concerned for one another. If one member suffers, all members suffer: if one member is honoured, all members share this joy. You then are the body of Christ.

(1 Corinthians 12:25-27)

The Catholic worldview perceives an imperative to proclaim to others the love we receive from Jesus, by loving them as Jesus loves us

In the Catholic school community responsibility is entrusted to all members — students, parents, staff, clergy, administrators — to contribute to one another's growth and journey towards wholeness.

It endeavours to provide to all the experience of high quality interpersonal relationships of care and support. Thus each member is both a provider and recipient of Pastoral Care.

... is a force for healing, reconciliation and liberation.

I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall be a true shepherd to them.

(Ezekiel 34:16)

The Catholic worldview perceives the action of the Spirit in the world, inviting and empowering all people to respond to the divine love.

The Scriptures present God's work of redemption fully realised in Jesus, and it is in and through Jesus that we learn to be a welcoming, forgiving and reconciling people.

A Catholic school community immersed in the Gospel of Jesus and filled with his Spirit is committed to the values of compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation. Pastoral Care supports and provides a context for the growth and expression of these values in all aspects of the school's life.

... is an expression of and commitment to justice.

He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, and set the downtrodden free.

(Luke 4: 18)

The Catholic worldview perceives an obligation to work to create social conditions in which the unique dignity of each person is respected and all human rights protected.

The pursuit of justice for individuals and communities has long being a core focus of the mission and ministry of the Church. Pastoral Care in our Catholic schools endeavours to uphold and sustain policies and practices that foster the values of mutual respect, responsibility and service within the community. A commitment to democratic processes, co-operation and concern for the common good are principles that students are progressively encouraged to emulate in their relationships with others.

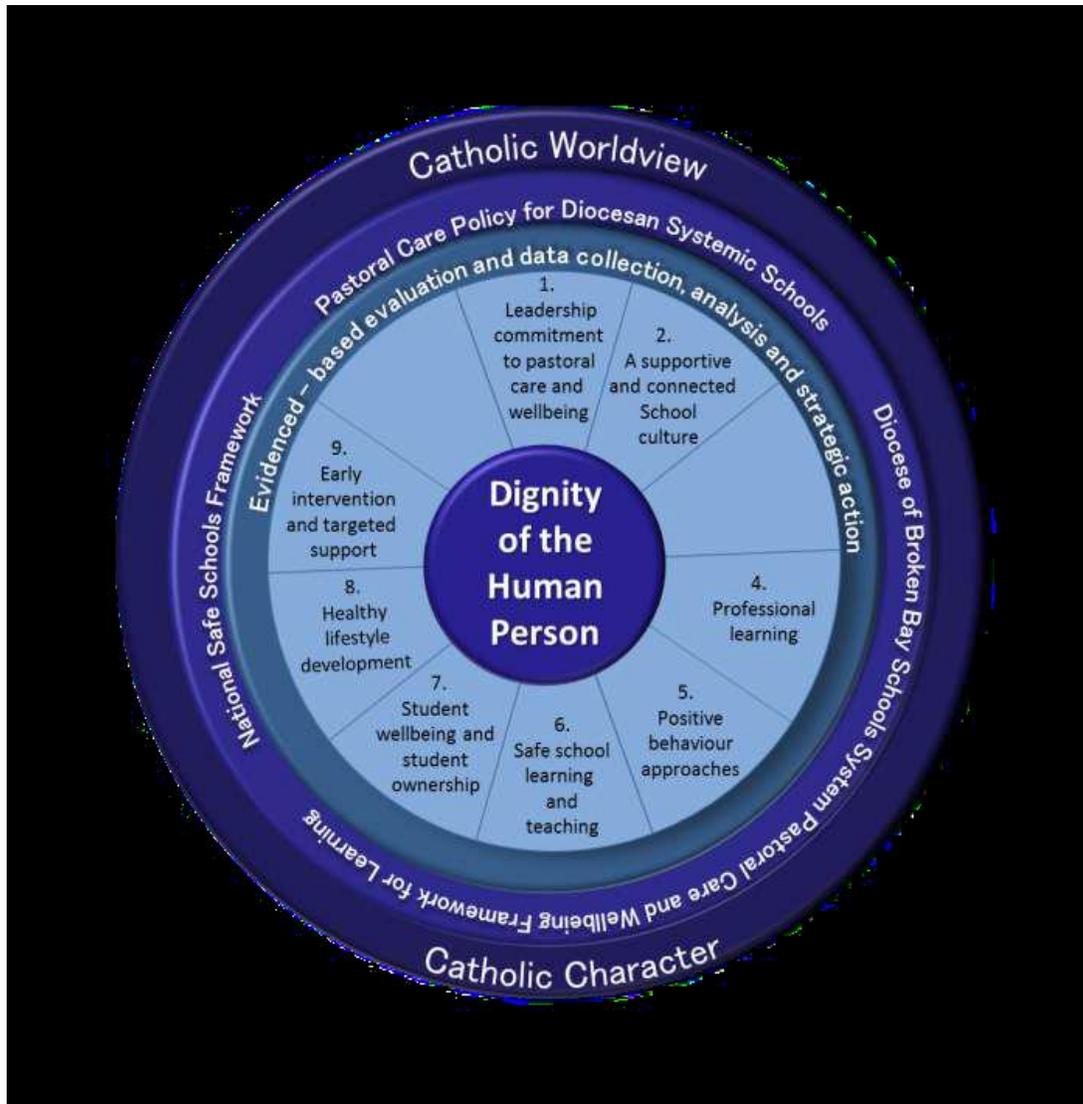
A school community needs to respond with increasing sensitivity to the social and cultural diversity of its members. It is in and through Pastoral Care than much can be done to promote respect and to support such things as diverse family structures, different ways of giving expression to Christian faith, and awareness of cross-cultural issues. School policies and practices must be respectful of the dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms of individual students and must provide learning opportunities for individual students which are responsive to their unique needs for growth and fulfillment.

As the Lighthouse sheds light on the darkened ocean, so does the light of Christ shed light on the heart and minds of people. From the witness of Catholic educators emanates the light of the gospel message, faith, community and Christian service.

Statement of Interpretation of the Broken Bay Educational Ministry Pin

Dimensions of Pastoral Care

The following diagram provides an overview of the dimensions of pastoral care in Holy Family and the various contexts in which they are situated, as guided by the Broken Bay Diocese pastoral care policy.



Human Person

Pastoral care is based on respect and dignity of the human person. Pastoral care grounds the school's Mission Statement in the quality of daily relationships. The ways in which people interact with each other in the daily life of the school significantly affects each person's sense of well-being, identity and self-worth.

Everyone in the school community has a responsibility to foster quality interpersonal relationships amongst teachers, students, parents, support staff, priests and parish communities.

All members of staff have a significant role to play in modelling the importance of building and maintaining relationships grounded in mutual respect, dignity, fairness, reconciliation, restoration, compassion and justice.

They have a responsibility to ensure that their response to gender, cultural background and family circumstances supports student learning outcomes. All staff need to be known as caring, compassionate adults who take a genuine interest in the lives of their students and who set appropriate boundaries within those teacher-student relationships.

For these reasons student-teacher interviews, parent-teacher interviews and school counsellor services provide opportunities to nurture individual growth.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The primary expression of pastoral care in a school is through the dynamics of teaching/ learning and in the congruence between the statement of purpose and values of the school and the total curriculum. The school curriculum, therefore, shall be comprehensive and inclusive based on the principles of quality learning for all characterised by the use of quality teaching strategies and responsive to the individual learning needs of students. It needs to be responsive to students with special needs and should aim to redress educational disadvantage brought about by such factors as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin and race.

Students are to be given opportunities to become reflective, self-directed learners capable of negotiating the curriculum around meaningful, relevant tasks. Fair and just assessment procedures will be utilised.

Pastoral care programs grounded in the Catholic worldview address the developmental needs of students such as:

- relationships
- drug education
- child protection
- peer support
- grief and loss
- sexuality
- self esteem
- values education

Such programs are intended to help students to value themselves and experience their own well-being whilst enabling them to contribute to building the school community. All dimensions of teaching and learning shall promote students' ongoing formation in self discipline and personal responsibility with schools establishing, developing and managing environments in which students learn to respect rights and fulfill responsibilities. The rights of teachers to teach and students to learn in a safe and supportive school environment are valued and protected.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND CULTURE

Pastoral care in practice takes place every day. A human person centred approach focuses the school towards the realisation of the potential of each person and at the same time nurtures the experience of belonging to the school community. School structures, therefore, ensure that each student has access to a smaller group where the student is known personally.

Furthermore, structures and administrative practices are intended to promote the positive interaction between staff and students.

The climate and experience of pastoral care can be significantly enhanced through various dimensions of school organisation such as: support for students in transition, leadership and peer support programs, effective responses to critical incidents and the development of aesthetically pleasing school environments.

COMMUNITY

The school community values hospitality, inclusion and empathy. A vital sense of community in the school offers a safe and supportive environment in which learning can occur and in which staff feel valued, empowered and affirmed. The school community particularly supports students at risk.

The community dimension of pastoral care supports the development of parent, parish and diocesan partnerships. Based on relationships of trust and cooperation, schools will have an orientation that empowers families, strengthens relationships between home, school and parish. Schools need to be respectful of diverse cultural and family structures, and supportive of families in crisis.

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A commitment to establishing effective networks of care is an integral feature of pastoral care. It is important that schools ensure that all support services within and beyond the school community are identified and that strong links are established with all the agencies and groups with related or complementary functions.

Principles that guide this policy:

These principles guide the way we work for the wellbeing of our community. They enable us to work flexibly with each other to develop and enhance positive relationships.

1. Pastoral care is a responsibility shared by all members of the Holy Family community.

Effective education of children is a partnership between school staff and parents. Positive interactions and relationships between parents, community members, staff and students are important to the well-being of all. At HOLY FAMILY we acknowledge that our parents are the first and most important educators of their children. Together we nurture Catholic values and social responsibility.

2. Positive caring relationships are developed through our three school rules of Respectful, Responsible, Learners, which are maintained by the supporting skills we teach.

3. Behaviour has a positive focus, describing what we want for our children- positive behaviour- and how we support its development.

Our Mission Statement says, '*the gift of God's love for us is central to our relationships,*' and positive behaviour is based on quality relationships. As we live out our mission to nurture our children into a community of disciples of Jesus, we are concerned with the dignity and integral growth of each child. As members of a hope filled community, we are here to help our children succeed. We have high expectations of every child and we believe that every child can succeed.

4. We teach for self-discipline and emotional and social development

We have a whole school approach to positive behaviours for learning (PBL). Our focus is on the development of social and emotional learning. At Holy Family, positive behaviour learning is the developmental path for acquiring skills and competencies. Learning positive social skills and competencies takes place within the broader context of collaborative learning across the curriculum.

5. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is about working together to accomplish shared goals. For cooperative learning to work well there need to be five key elements:

1. Positive interdependence
2. Face-to-face interaction
3. Individual accountability and personal responsibility to achieve the group's goals
4. Specific interpersonal and small-group skills (which are taught)

Strategies that promote the well-being of all at Holy Family:

Our Shared Values

From K-6, at HOLY FAMILY, we have shared values which provide teachers and children with the language to discuss behaviour in a consistent way.

- Respectful, Responsible Learners

Our commitment to these values therefore means that at Holy Family every child has the right to be safe and to feel safe: physically, psychologically and emotionally.

Developing Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Social literacy is highlighted within all areas of the curriculum. Care, respect, cooperation and diversity are promoted by pro-active strategies for emotional and social development. The strategies at Holy Family include:

- Cooperative Learning structures e.g. 'Think/Pair/Share'
- Student Representative Council (SRC) Yrs 2-6
- Class Meetings
- Model of Student Leadership including cross-age buddies

Promoting Staff Well-being

Well-being of all staff is an important component of Holy Family's Pastoral Care Policy. When the needs of staff are effectively met, the needs of students are met more effectively.

We have a commitment to promote an emotionally and physically safe environment. This supportive setting encourages staff well-being and resilience.

Supporting staff with specific students who are experiencing difficulties

As a staff we have shared responsibility to support one another and develop positive programs for managing children who are experiencing specific learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties/disorders.

The Learning Support teacher is integral to this support. Regular CASL meetings and Interagency meetings enable the school staff and parents to develop programs to support these children.

Professional Learning

The development of quality behaviour is a responsibility we all share. To support our whole school approach, we are committed to ongoing professional learning and staff training. All staff will have to opportunity to be inserviced in Positive Behaviour for Learning.

Celebrating Success

At HOLY FAMILY we celebrate success by showing true appreciation of the children's and staff members' achievements and endeavours. Celebrations happen in a variety of ways: individually, class and whole school. We express appreciation that is:

Timely
Relevant
Unconditional and
Enthusiastic.

As part of the Diocese of Broken Bay, Holy Family is bound by the guidelines for major disciplinary sanctions for the Diocese. A copy is available on request.

Related Policies

Commonwealth:

Commonwealth Safe Schools' Framework

Diocesan:

Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Student Discipline Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Anti-Bullying Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Anti-Harassment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Complaints Handling Policy & Procedures for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Drug Education & Management Policy for the Diocesan School System

Manual Handling & Lifting/Transferring of Students Policy in Diocesan Systemic Schools

First Aid Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Medication Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Occupational Health & Safety Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Creating Safe & Supportive School Environments -Child Protection Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Privacy Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools

Acceptable Use Policy for Internet/Intranet and Network Services in the Diocesan School System

Related HOLY FAMILY Policies and Statements

Occupational Health and Safety Policy for Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Medication Policy for Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Occupational Health and Safety Purchasing Policy for Holy Family Catholic Primary School

First Aid Policy for Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Staff Handbook

Parent Handbook

This policy complies with the National Safe Schools Framework Guiding Principles.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every three years.

EVALUATION

Policy date: April 2013
To be reviewed on: January 2016

Signed by Principal: 

Date: 30 /4/2013