



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Introduction and Purpose

Pastoral Care is defined as the provision schools make to ensure the emotional, physical and spiritual welfare of students within their care. A successful pastoral policy means students feel safe, happy, involved and are performing to their full potential. At St Edward's the pastoral care is seen as a priority for all students in our care, so to help foster and promote a positive learning environment for all young men who attend the College.

St Edward's college follows the ethos of catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition. Under this philosophy the College adopts the following EREA principles in caring for students:

- The dignity of each person underpins any program designed to support the development of each student;
- Any wellbeing program will be well researched, educative, supportive and restorative in nature;
- Wellbeing practices will emphasise duty of care responsibilities for the common good and safety of all members of the school community;
- The use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment is *explicitly forbidden*;
- Students will have a voice when it comes to designing programs to support their wellbeing;
- Wellbeing programs will be inclusive and culturally sensitive;
- Parents and other family members are recognized as the primary caregivers of children;
- Natural justice (that being the rule against bias) and procedural fairness will underpin all procedures designed to support student wellbeing; and
- Appropriate resources are allocated to enable wellbeing programs to be implemented effectively.

Implementation

All members of the St Edward's community are called to exercise the principles of pastoral Care to each other. Students are known and treated as individuals and, via a dedicated Pastoral Leader for each grade, are assisted in their personal growth. St Edwards also manage a Home Room System where each Home Room leader is responsible for a range of students from Year 7 to Year 12. The integration of students across all years also introduces the concept and programs for peer support.

Within the classroom Teachers use their own systems of support and discipline within the classroom and schoolyard situations. Teachers may also make use of the College's standard procedures where situations may require further or broader attention.



St Edward's also uses "The Level System". The Level System applies to all students, acknowledges and rewards student's achievements in relation to behaviour, Service to the College and Academic Effort. The system is intended to create responsibility and positive behaviour amongst students in the College through encouragement, support and positive re-enforcement by all in the College community.

College Counsellors

The College Counsellors provide an opportunity for students or parents to discuss matters that are of concern to them. The aim of providing such a service comes through a wholistic and restorative approach. It supports the College Charter of education being a liberating force in raising awareness of self and others in the world.

While all members of staff exercise Pastoral Care, the College Counsellors offer professional, specific and direct help that is beyond the training of staff members. Alongside the Charter, the College Counsellors also adhere to their professional registration bodies, those being the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and Australian Psychological Society (APS). These guidelines also include their code of conduct; which includes providing a confidential process that supports students and their families in times of need both internally and externally.

In accordance to the 'Paramountcy Principle' the College Counsellors adhere to the child's best interest and welfare at all times. This plays an important role when guided by 'The Care of Children Act', which allows a judge to take all things into consideration when making orders around care and protection of children if the situation leads to such circumstances. All records of sessions are held within an encrypted electronic format that is only accessible to the counsellors or by courts if subpoenaed to court.

As outline by Section 7 of The Child Guardian Act 2019 (NSW), counsellors may speak to students on an informed consent basis and, if deemed appropriate and satisfactory under NSW Child Safeguarding legislation and guidelines, without the consent of a Parent or Guardian.

Currently St Edward's College has two full time Counsellors. In order to maintain a wholistic approach, they sometimes work in conjunction with external agencies and stakeholders that can complete the basis of the counselling process.

The College Counsellors are located in the Pastoral Care area. Students and families always have access to counselling during school terms. Out of school terms, counsellors are accessible and utilised when requested by the School Principal.

The content of this policy is to be used in conjunction with the College Pastoral Procedure document which outlines details of the College programs and approach to its care program. This document is available upon request from St Edward's.

Responsible Officers

The College Principal, Mr. Mark Bonnici is responsible for the implementation of this Pastoral Policy. The current Child Safety officers are –



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Related Information: The Child Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)

NSW Child Safeguarding outlines - 2019

The Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition

EREA Code of Conduct EREA Child Safe Standards

EREA Child Protection Policy EREA

CompliSpace Child Protection programs

NSW School Registration requirements

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