

ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

PASTORAL CARE POLICY



APPLICABLE TO	Staff, students and parents
DOCUMENT OWNER	Principal
APPROVAL DATE	19 October 2018
APPROVED BY	Principal
SCHOOL ACTIONS	School Policy – Staff and parents are to ensure practices are consistent with this policy.
LAST REVIEW DATE/S	Not Applicable
NEXT REVIEW DATE	19 October 2019
RELATED DOCUMENTS	MN CSO Code of Conduct 2018 St Bede's Anti-Bullying Policy 2018 CSO Pastoral Care Policy 2003 St Bede's Serious Incident Management Policy 2018 CSO Serious Incident Management Policy 2015 CSO Child Prot St Bede's Student Behaviour Management Procedures St Bede's Attendance Guidelines 2018 St Bede's Mobile Device Policy 2018 St Bede's Corporal Punishment Policy 2018 CSO Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2017 CSO Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Procedures 2017 St Bede's Sun Protection Policy 2018 St Bede's Grievances and Complaints Policy 2017 St Bede's Parent and Student Handbook 2018 St Bede's Staff Handbook 2018 St Bede's Sport Concussion policy 2018 CSO Risk Management Policy 2017 CSO Risk Management Procedure 2017 CSO Reporting Children of Concern Policy 2015

1. Preamble

St Bede's Catholic College, Chisholm, established in 2018, is a Catholic Co-educational, Year 7- 12 Systemic school in the Diocese of Maitland Newcastle. The College operates out of an evolving and dynamic culture of truth, love, compassion and justice. Respect for the human person in students, parents, clergy, staff and others in the wider community; respect for creation and the environment locally, nationally and globally and respect for the Church and the Gospel Values to which we aspire.

2. Rationale

St Bede's endeavours to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for all members of the community and it has, as its foundation, a profound respect for the dignity and uniqueness of the individual. The School endeavours to provide a strong sense of wellbeing, belonging and security for all individuals.

The School's motto is 'Shine with Christ's Glory', it recognises the life of Jesus Christ as the 'focus, source of strength and inspiration' and example for all we do. It nurtures the whole person towards achieving full potential – physically, socially, emotionally, academically and spiritually.

Research indicates that there are strong links between pastoral care and academic outcomes. The philosophy that underpins the curriculum at St Bede's is guided by the personal attributes and academic rigour of St Bede himself.

The School's policy reflects the Diocesan Vision Statement for Catholic schools, especially the following:

- Be an integral part of the evangelising mission of the Church, and reflect Gospel values of justice, truth, peace, forgiveness, love, reconciliation and service of one another.
- Be centred on the person of Jesus and grounded in the Scriptures, in the teachings, traditions of faith and prayer in the Catholic Church and the witness of its past and present saints and scholars.
- Recognise the individuality of each young person and foster the development of each one's unique potential and spirituality.

3. Aims

St Bede's Pastoral Care Policy aims to:

- Ensure that Pastoral care is integral to and permeates the total environment and culture of the school.

- Create within the school community an affirming climate that gives value to the Gospel teachings of love, compassion, tolerance, acceptance, forgiveness, reconciliation and justice.
- Give expression to the relationships of faith, care and support which characterise the school's vision, ethos and practice.
- Be aware of the personal and societal stresses affecting students, teachers, and families in the exercising of pastoral care.
- Develop structures, policies and practices which support the individual student and all members of the school community.
- Acknowledge the increasing prevalence of mental health issues in contemporary society and provide a high level of support for those in need within the School community through relevant pastoral care structures.
- Ensure all staff members at St Bede's are clearly aware of the procedures to follow if a student is identified as being at risk of harm. (Refer to St Bede's Management of Students at Risk Policy 2018).

4. Implementation

The Pastoral Care practices at St Bede's are based on the application of Restorative Justice principles and the principles of Procedural Fairness as set out in the Diocesan Statement: Pastoral Care (November 2002).

Consistent with the requirements of the Education Reform (School Discipline) Act 1995, this policy declares that corporal punishment is inappropriate and totally banned within the school. Therefore also this policy does not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce school discipline (Refer to St Bede's Corporal Punishment Policy 2017).

For the College procedures for managing serious offences refer to the St Bede's Student Management Procedures 2018. These procedures are in line with Maitland Newcastle CSO guidelines.

5. Procedural Fairness

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all individuals dealing with authorities. All communities have a legitimate expectation that all school and system personnel will follow these principles in all circumstances, especially when dealing with suspensions and expulsions.

Procedural Fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements:

1. The right to be heard which includes:

- The right to know why the action is happening.

- The right to know the way in which the issues will be determined.
- The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information that will be considered.
- The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations.
- The right to an appeal.

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision that includes:

- The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision-making phases.
- The right to an absence of bias in the decision maker.

As part of ensuring the right to be heard, the Principals should establish if parents/caregivers require an interpreter and if so, plan for one to be available.

Principals should also ensure that students and parents/caregivers have access to policies and procedures under which action is being taken.

While it is generally preferable for the functions of investigating and decision-making be carried out by different people, in the school setting this may not always be possible.

If the Principal is conducting both the investigative and decision-making stages, he or she must be reasonable and objective. Ultimately, the Principal must act justly and be seen to act justly. While it is difficult to combine the roles of investigator and adjudicator, it is acceptable to do so given the nature of the Principal's responsibilities. Nevertheless, it is always preferable to have another appropriate person, such as the Assistant Principal, carry out the investigation, if possible.

Note: Students must never be interviewed/questioned alone.

The availability of a line of appeal adds to the fairness of the process and offers a check in case there is a perception of a conflict of interest.

6. Budget

The Annual School Budget will contain an allocation of funds for:

- Staff Professional Development in areas with a focus on Pastoral Care best practice. Emphasis will be on Restorative Justice, Restorative Practices and Class Room Management Strategies; Mentoring; Supporting students with Mental Health issues and Supporting Students with Special Needs etc.
- Conducting Retreat and Pastoral Care/Reflection/Community Days

- Purchasing necessary resources
- Conducting special programs and presentations for students and parents (e.g.) Seasons for Growth; Brainstorm Productions; Key Note Speakers, Drug & Alcohol Workshops, etc.
- Supporting community members in need
- Providing outreach support to families in need, especially those in crisis situations

7. Evaluation

St Bede's Pastoral Care Policy shall be clearly documented and reviewed biannually.

Relevant stakeholders of the School, including students, staff, parents and the community, will be consulted in assessing the effectiveness of the policy. Recommendations will be considered, and appropriate amendments made if required.

The policy shall be assessed in the light of its effectiveness in promoting and achieving the School's vision, the provisions of the Diocesan Policy Statement: Pastoral Care (November 2002) and for consistency with the Principles of Restorative Justice and Procedural Fairness.

The Policy will be evaluated by community stakeholders:

- at staff and student committee meetings,
- at parent forums,
- through surveys,
- through informal discussion and general feedback,
- by other means deemed appropriate.