

# ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

## WOODBURN



## PASTORAL CARE COMMUNICATION POLICY

### **Philosophical Statement**

St Joseph's Primary School, comprising staff, parents, students, the parish and wider community acknowledges its responsibility within the teaching ministry of the Church. Pastoral Care and Religious Education are regarded, as being intrinsic to the quality of Catholic Education and the structures, policies, procedures and practices within the school should be in harmony with Gospel values.

St Joseph's Primary School Pastoral Care Policy aims to assist in the whole education of each member of the school community to develop as a well-integrated person with Jesus as model. Thus we will work towards:-

- \* developing quality relationships within the school community which support the growth of the individual.
- \* helping everyone realise that it is the responsibility of all members of the school community to collaborate in the provision of a caring environment within the school.
- \* providing engaging learning experiences.
- \* establishing effective care networks.
- \* developing self-discipline based on justice, self-esteem and reconciliation.

The intrinsic worth of each individual is acknowledged and any action, which lowers the dignity of the person, is deemed inappropriate.

## **PASTORAL CARE**

" The Lord has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this:  
to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our  
God."  
(Micah 6:8)

"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love". (John 15:19)

"In the same way as a shepherd takes care of his sheep that were scattered and are brought together again, I will bring them back from all the places where they were scattered on that dark, disastrous day". (Ezekiel 34:12)

### **Pastoral Care:**

- \* is inspired by the image of Jesus, a shepherd, continually caring for his sheep and always ready to go to the aid of any that might stray or be separated from the flock.
- \* is the means by which the "Spirit" of Pentecost touches the school community in response to the Gospel imperative "love one another as I have loved you". (John 15:12)
- \* is the very ethos of a Catholic School. It should be the distinctive feature that marks St Joseph's Primary School as different from any other education agency.
- \* has its roots in our salvation history.
- \* has the individual in focus: child, parent, staff, priest, visitor and is concerned for the whole social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual development of the person.
- \* should be seen in the school rituals e.g. administration, self discipline, welcoming, enrolment, curriculum policies etc.
- \* is the responsibility of all members of the school community.
- \* disregards colour, race, creed, ability.

## **FEATURES OF PASTORAL CARE**

### **School Climate**

School climate is an indefinable thing but it is the element within which Pastoral care happens. Positive school climate may be developed by:-

- \* explaining and giving meaning to the symbols of the school.
- \* appropriate welcoming and farewell procedures.
- \* recognising the right of others to develop fully as a person within acceptable boundaries.
- \* showing respect for ourselves and others, both in words and action.
- \* treating the property of others and the environment with respect.
- \* developing a sense of responsibility for our own values and actions.
- \* co-operating with and supporting people in authority.
- \* acting in a way which ensures the safety of the individual and others.

- \* dressing in a manner which reflects that we value ourselves and our school.
- \* respecting the individuals right to learn.
- \* creating a happy and supportive school environment.
- \* respecting the contribution every member of the community makes to the welfare of the school.
- \* affirmation.
- \* greeting each other.
- \* commendation of achievement/effort in all areas.
- \* display of work samples/achievements.
- \* recognising involvement in out of school activities.
- \* sharing talents and skills.
- \* encouraging each person to always give of their best.
- \* offering services.
- \* personal interest shown.
- \* PBS awards.
- \* celebrating the individual's milestones e.g, birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, baptism.
- \* taking time for each other.

## **Communication**

Basic communications used in a positive manner:-

- \* Newsletter
- \* School Assembly
- \* Staff meetings
- \* Parent meetings/ Parent Forum
- \* Parent/teacher nights
- \* Telephone
- \* Notes
- \* Student meetings/ SRC
- \* Staff whiteboard
- \* School reports
- \* Positive comments on work
- \* PBS Awards

## **Role Clarification**

It is important that every role within the school is explicit, communicated and evaluated.

Role clarification enables everyone to be clear as to how their role interacts with everyone else in the school.

## **School Environment**

An aesthetically pleasing environment helps to create a positive atmosphere in the school.

This can be ensured by:-

- \* Creating a welcoming feel to the administration and staff area.
- \* Caring for the school buildings.

- \* Arrangement of furniture.
- \* Classroom displays of student work.
- \* Maintaining gardens and grounds.

### **Student Participation**

By giving students responsibility a sense of ownership and self-worth are developed. At St Joseph's Primary School we try to promote this by encouraging students to:-

- \* welcome and thank visitors.
- \* take positions of responsibility in the school.
- \* be responsible for school procedures e.g flag raising.
- \* be concerned for the welfare of other students.
- \* be involved in wider community activities e.g Clean -up-Australia campaign, Anzac Day.
- \* take an active role in improving the school conditions e.g. keeping the playground free of litter
- \* adhere to school and general class rules.
- \* wear appropriate uniform in the correct manner.
- \* participate in fund raising events e.g. missions.

### **Parents/Guardians**

The place of the parent/guardian is vital in the success of the Pastoral Care Programme. It is essential that the programme is both understood and supported. The school needs to continually: -

- \* communicate with parents/guardians the meaning of pastoral care and the programme in the school.
- \* encourage parent participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the programme
- \* have resources available for parents to receive pastoral care
- \* encourage social gatherings
- \* invite parents to share in liturgy and prayer sessions of the school.
- \* encourage parental visits to the school
- \* schedule times for parent-teacher interviews
- \* regularly report to parents about the children's progress
- \* use phone calls or notes to give parents positive feedback
- \* conduct parent evenings to meet the needs of different issues

## **Staff**

It is pre-supposed that every staff member has a clear perception of the Gospel values that St Joseph's Primary School holds as being important. In order to promote these values staff are expected to:-

- \* be a model
- \* adhere to professional standards
- \* act consistently and justly
- \* to be aware of the individual child's needs and the appropriate resources available to meet those needs
- \* be loyal to the school and colleagues
- \* actively promote pastoral care amongst the school community
- \* be accepting of each person
- \* support those in places of responsibility
- \* affirm and challenge each other in a dignified manner
- \* use individual talents for the good of the school
- \* use opportunities to strengthen faith development e.g. staff prayer

## **Parish Priest**

The Parish Priest has a special role in the pastoral care programme by:

- \* presiding over religious services and gathering the community in celebrations of God's care.
- \* affirming the school communities quest for spirituality
- \* influencing others by an informal presence
- \* being available for those in need
- \* representing the Church's concern for her people

## **Local Community**

Interaction with the local community enhances the scope of pastoral care. This may be achieved by:-

- \* working with local community services for the welfare of the students
- \* Involvement in community celebrations
- \* support for community projects
- \* using community resource people in school/class activities
- \* keeping the community informed about some aspects of the school via the local newspaper/ facebook/social media/school website.
- \* referring parents to appropriate community services
- \* raising the students' awareness of the local area

## **Special Programmes**

Programmes have been introduced to respond to the particular needs of the students, these include:-

- \* Students with Additional Needs
- \* Integration of Children with Disabilities
- \* Life Education

## **Cultural activities, excursions, sport.**

These activities provide students with the opportunity to:-

- \* learn about teamwork
- \* develop new skills
- \* experience success and failure (How to be resilience in the face of failure)
- \* interact with students, teachers, parents and local community members on a different level

## **Relaxation**

The goal of relaxation is to develop inner directed people.

We can help to achieve this by:-

- \* creating a "quiet time" each day
- \* practising different types of prayer
- \* staff prayer
- \* providing times/days enabling staff, children time for themselves.
- \* ensuring the time-table is not overloaded
- \* creating an environment throughout the school that is restful

## **School Structures and Policy**

How the school functions can dictate the character of pastoral care. School structures and policies should reflect the values and vision of the school. Therefore it is crucial that the school continue to :-

- \* develop sound classroom management procedures
- \* motivate children in learning processes
- \* ensure integration of learning in the school curriculum
- \* develop meaningful assessment procedures
- \* adapt to changing educational demands and children's needs
- \* ensure all policies are imbued with the values and vision of the school

## **Student Absences**

When a student is absence for a period of 3 days or more and this absence has not been discussed with Principal or class teacher via verbal communication, letter or phone call, the Assistant Principal will make contact with the parent to ensure that everything is OK and if the school can assist in any way. For continued sustained absences the Principal will contact parents or guardians to ascertain the nature of the absence.

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