

PORT MACQUARIE STEINER SCHOOL

2.3 STUDENT WELLBEING AND PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Drafted date: 4 th March 2018	By: M Ayriss	Approved by Faculty date: 17 th March 2021
Reviewed date: 17 th March 2021	By: S McDowell	Next review due date: March 2022
Associated policies:	9.5 Staff Code of Conduct 2.2 Student Code of Conduct 6.1 Parent, Guardian and School Community Code of Conduct 2.5 Student Welfare and Security Policy	
Associated Laws:	<i>Education Act 1990</i> <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> <i>Crimes Act 1900</i> <i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i> <i>Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002</i> <i>Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998</i> <i>Children's Guardian Act 2019</i>	

INTENTION

To clearly outline our commitment to care for the academic, emotional, social and physical wellbeing of students through the provision of pastoral care.

INTRODUCTION

Pastoral care is based on the philosophy and core values underpinning Steiner education and the school. It is holistic in nature, recognising that the social and emotional aspects of young people need to be nurtured along with the intellectual and physical aspects. The promotion of wellbeing is integral to the schooling outcome of students along with their social development and capacity to contribute to their families, the community and later on, the workforce.

The creative, artistic and imaginative aspects of Steiner education provide opportunities for participation, communication, engagement and expression that can increase the self-esteem of students and build a protective connectedness to the school community. A school climate which is based upon quality relationships and which supports the growth of the individual within a community is fundamental to effective learning and genuine pastoral care.

POLICY

The educational philosophy of the school lends itself to pastoral care being the responsibility of primarily the teachers in their day to day interactions with the students. The teachers provide a safe environment and contribute to the healthy development of harmonious social relationships between students, teachers and parents.

1. Student Welfare

Student welfare encompasses the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of the student. Student welfare policies and programs are essential for developing a sense of self-worth and fostering personal development. This:

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- encompasses everything the school community does to meet the personal, social and learning needs of students;
- creates a safe, caring school environment in which students are nurtured as they learn;
- is achieved through the curriculum and the way it is delivered;
- incorporates effective discipline;
- recognises the value of early intervention when problems are identified;
- recognises diversity within the school community and provides support to acknowledge difference and promote harmony; and
- provides students with opportunities to enjoy success and recognition, make useful contributions to the life of the School and derive enjoyment from their learning.

The contact information for support services available to the school community are as follows:

Police Liaison Officer: Steve Cherry Phone (02) 6583 0199

Youth Liaison Officer: Wendy Hudson Phone (02) 6583 0199

Family Counselling Services: Interrelate Phone: (02) 5525 3200

2. Effective Learning and Teaching

The school is committed to providing an effective learning and teaching environment in which students can flourish. Learning and teaching are enhanced by:

- understanding the developmental process of human consciousness and supporting the intellectual, emotional, social and physical development and needs of each student;
- encouraging and guiding students to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour;
- identifying and catering for the individual learning needs of students;
- establishing a well-managed teaching and learning environment;
- ensuring that learning activities build on prior knowledge and experiences and are age-appropriate, socially, developmentally and culturally relevant;
- providing frequent opportunities for students and their parents to discuss learning programs and student behaviour and progress through ongoing parent, teacher communication;
- identifying key social skills and developing plans for all students to acquire them, or make progress towards them over time;
- ensuring that gender and equity issues are recognised and addressed across the curriculum and within the attitudes of the students; and
- identifying student needs and adjustments.

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3. School Environment

Pastoral care enhances the school environment and student engagement by:

- ensuring the principles of equality and fairness are reflected in school practice;
- providing opportunities for students to demonstrate and enjoy success in a wide range of activities;
- developing and implementing policies to protect the rights, safety and health of all school community members;
- establishing clear school rules which are known, understood and respected by all school community members;
- monitoring attendance and implement early intervention to improve student attendance;
- valuing and providing opportunities for all students to develop the skills involved in positive relationships, social responsibility, problem solving and dispute resolution;
- valuing difference and discouraging narrow and limiting gender stereotypes;
- incorporating students' views, where appropriate into planning related to school climate and organisation;
- establishing networks to support students and making sure that students and parents know about, and have ready access to this support;
- recognising the relationship between student and staff welfare and ensuring that staff welfare is also a priority; and
- providing resources and opportunities for students to gain leadership experience using a range of age appropriate methods.

4. Student Engagement

Student engagement refers to the extent to which students identify with and value schooling outcomes, and participate in academic and non-academic school activities. Its definition usually comprises of a psychological component pertaining to students' sense of belonging at school and acceptance of school values, and a behavioural component pertaining to participation in school activities.

The school is dedicated to creating a learning and teaching environment which promotes student engagement. In the early years of schooling, engaging students is geared towards creating a sense of belonging and encouraging participation at school. These two qualities are instilled in the daily school activities by the teachers and are supported by healthy student-teacher relationships and a fair and understanding behaviour management and discipline policy.

Teacher collaboration and mentoring can help to identify triggers for student disengagement and provide tools and approaches to improve student engagement.

5. Community Participation

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The school community and wider community can also benefit from pastoral care and is enhanced by it through:

- building learning communities in which staff, students and parents work together for planned results;
- encouraging parents and community members to be actively involved in the education of the students and in the life of the school;
- acknowledging parents as partners in school education and encouraging their participation in this;
- encouraging students to have a sense of belonging to the school community;
- assisting families to gain access to support services in the community;
- fostering close links with the wider community;
- encouraging links between parent and student representative groups;
- inviting parents to share their skills and experiences in the School community; and
- recognising students' families, cultures, languages and life experiences.

6. Expectations of Staff

- To foster and share in the responsibility for developing and maintaining quality interpersonal relationships with students, parents and other members of the school community;
- To provide opportunities for children to have their opinions and thoughts heard on matters affecting their classroom and school;
- To promote the classroom as an affirming place where good work and behaviour are required;
- To affirm the strengths in each child and encourage their efforts in all areas;
- To encourage all children in the classroom to be active participants rather than passive observers;
- To be supportive by using positive correction when disciplining children;
- To develop within the school an empowering atmosphere that facilitates the personal and professional growth of each fellow staff member;
- To communicate with parents in an open and honest manner; and
- To support families in need.

7. Expectations of Students

- To be active learners;
- To respect the rights of others;
- To share in the responsibility for forming and maintaining positive relationships; and
- To adhere to the school's Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy under the guidance of the teachers.

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8. Expectations of Parents

- To participate in the learning of their children and the life of the school and use opportunities to be actively involved in the school community;
- To support the development and educational formation of their children;
- To share responsibility for shaping their children's understanding of acceptable behaviour; and
- To inform the school of matters relevant to their children which may impact on their school life.

PROCEDURE(S)

When parents or guardians are seeking assistance in this area, the following procedure should be followed:

1. The child's teacher is the first point of contact for academic and day to day matters that occur at the School. A meeting can be scheduled to discuss these matters and a Teacher and Parent Meeting Record must be completed and managed by the teacher.
2. If there are more ongoing or major concerns, parents and guardians can approach their child's teacher who can then work in a team with learning support. This approach can be used for:
 - support with group conflict resolution;
 - children with ongoing social or emotional needs in consultation with the teacher; and
 - where assessment for counselling or referral may be required.
3. The Head of School is the final point of contact and can be involved in issues of major concern, such as bullying or discrimination.
4. The School does not employ a specialist counsellor. In relation to special needs students in particular, the School liaises with psychologists and other support professionals. This may be suggested by the teacher/s but is at the discretion of the parents or guardians of the child.

If the teacher identifies a need for additional support in a student, the teacher or Head of School notifies the parents or guardians for their input.

The contact information for counselling support services available to the School community is as follows:

Counselling Support

Interrelate Port Macquarie

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Phone: (02) 5525 3200

No referral is required to access services at Interrelate. This clinic also runs special programs for grieving children.

General and Family counselling

Margaret Biltris: 0438 618 393

David Allen: 0448 289 444

Restorative Communication, group facilitation post conflict or crisis

Pheobe Crane: 0400 776 776

Students requiring health and or medical services and support or medication are assisted to access these in an appropriate manner. Formal documentation is to be provided by parents or guardians on the Student Medical Form. The Head of School is to notify the Board of any resource implications.

RESOURCES

Teacher and Parent Meeting Record

Student Medical Form

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually.