Preface

Pastoral Care is the integration of the academic, social and religious dimensions of a school’s energy so that an atmosphere of care prevails within the school community. Pastoral Care is an expression of the philosophy and vision of the school. (Kevin Treston, Pastoral Care for Schools p5)

As a Catholic school operating within the Presentation charism, we see St Mary’s College providing a dynamic environment in which students are able to fulfil their spiritual, academic and personal potential.

At St Mary’s College Pastoral Care is not restricted to any particular program or curriculum, but involves all members of the school community. It is an expression of the mission and vision of the school.

Our Pastoral Care Guidelines reflect our acceptance of the Gospel values of love, justice, truth, hope, compassion, acceptance, faith, forgiveness, service, simplicity and integrity in the tradition of Nano Nagle. Our focus is on emotional support and spiritual care to all members of our school community. Using the School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework, we work together to promote Respect, Responsibility, Relationships and also Resilience.

Rationale

Pastoral Care is of prime importance at St Mary’s College as we continue to adapt to the changing role of schools and society. We aim to use a holistic approach towards education which includes a concern and compassion for fellow human beings.

There are five factors which have influenced current interest in Pastoral Care. (Kevin Treston, Pastoral Care for Schools p6)

1. There are disturbing symptoms of alienation and fragmentation in our society.
2. Society has increased expectations that the school will provide personal development and pastoral care.
3. Schools are generally more aware of the need for congruence between the ethos of the school as described in its mission statement and pastoral care policies and practices.
4. There are many resources within the wider community which are useful for pastoral care.
5. Many societies are in a state of rapid change.

Guidelines

St Mary’s College aims to create and maintain a supportive, nurturing and secure environment. Each member of the College community is responsible for the wellbeing of others and is actively involved in the provision of Pastoral Care.
Pastoral Care is valued and implemented in a variety of ways by all members of staff. The delivery of pastoral care is both proactive and reactive and aims to provide support, guidance and education for students, staff and parents.

We aim to educate with Christ as our model and use the School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework to:

- be role models for our students, for each other and for the general community
- provide opportunities for the Community to pray together and share liturgies.
- show hospitality and be a welcoming community
- nurture positive relationships based on respect
- be inclusive and to promote the acceptance of cultural and religious diversity and the uniqueness of the individual
- provide opportunities for counselling for staff and students
- provide support to those who experience loss or grief
- recognise our limitations and seek the help of external professionals for the care of our students and staff when needed
- implement the St Mary’s College Conduct, Anti-harassment and Grievance Guidelines with fairness and forgiveness
- provide a curriculum that promotes equity and caters to the needs of students and staff
- promote resilience within our community
- maintain fair student and staff assessments and reporting
- encourage students to observe “the right to teach and the right to learn”
- acknowledge and celebrate the efforts and successes of staff and students
- provide staff and students with opportunities for leadership and mentoring within the College community
- provide and maintain a safe physical environment on school grounds
- promote positive and effective communication between members of the College Community
- encourage students to be physically active and to participate in extra-curricular activities
• encourage staff to be involved in the student extra-curricular activities
• promote an appropriate sense of play, fun and humour
• promote social justice through the support of the St Vincent de Paul Society and other charities that support the Catholic ethos
• Promote care for the world in which we all live.

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