



L I S M O R E

## St Carthage's Primary School LISMORE

### Pastoral Care Policy

Status: Current

Replace:

Date Issued: 2009

Evaluation and Review: 2014  
2016  
2018

Related Documentation:

# **PASTORAL CARE POLICY**

## **Rationale:**

At St Carthage's we believe that pastoral care is the school's expression of genuine care for all members of the school community. Pastoral care is the way in which the school responds to the various needs of the children, parents and staff. The Pastoral care networks are opportunities for all to develop their full potential and provide the means for all to share their gifts and talents for the good of the individual and the community. In this caring atmosphere everyone is accepted and empathetic relationships are nurtured and strengthened.

## **Pastoral Care**

- ✚ celebrates that we are made in the image of God and transformed in Christ
- ✚ embraces a network of care pervading every facet of the school curriculum and culture.
- ✚ concerned with enhancing stories and hopes of the school family.
- ✚ experienced whenever people in the school community interact creatively to make positive choices about life.
- ✚ invites people to realize more fully their giftedness for the wellbeing of society.
- ✚ recognizes partnership of parents, school, community agencies and church to foster growth and realize potential of each person.
- ✚ embraces all facets of school life eg school policies, learning, playground duty, interviews, staff relations....
- ✚ motivates young people to be committed to promoting justice
- ✚ links school with wider community

## **Pastoral Care is:**

- ✚ Understanding, care and guidance
- ✚ Considered responses to needs
- ✚ Taking time to listen
- ✚ Concern for the 'whole' child
- ✚ Achieving solutions and providing coping strategies
- ✚ Looking for Christ in the other person – how can I see Jesus in this occasion?
- ✚ Being able to show empathy to another
- ✚ Knowing when to seek outside help
- ✚ Searching for the 'lost one'
- ✚ Not making quick judgements

## **Why do we need pastoral care?**

- ✚ fragmentation of families
- ✚ students experience of violence in their lives
- ✚ bullying
- ✚ inclusion of those with disabilities
- ✚ self-esteem deficiencies in families and individuals
- ✚ impact of technology on society
- ✚ changing nature of work and employment
- ✚ changes in society eg drug

## **Principles of Pastoral Care at St Carthage's:**

- ✚ Everyone in the school is involved in pastoral care.
- ✚ Not problem centred – marked by love, kindness and celebration of living.
- ✚ All students need to belong to a significant small group
- ✚ Primary expression is what happens in the classroom.
- ✚ Network of relationships – administrators, students, staff, parents and wider community.
- ✚ Staff pastoral care is a vital component in the culture of the school.
- ✚ Resources to develop pastoral care networks need to be accessible.
- ✚ Parents are entitled to have a staff member who has continuing contact with their child and who can communicate with them.
- ✚ Good practices need to be affirmed and consolidated.
- ✚ Pastoral care respects the individual's rights and freedoms – confidentiality. must be respected at all times.
- ✚ Pastoral care cannot be imposed we can only offer care and support but the family and individuals' response must be respected.
- ✚ Pastoral care has legal implications for the school.
- ✚ There should be a diversity of approaches and strategies to cater for those students who do not fit easily into society and the school curriculum.
- ✚ Implicit pastoral care is evident when caring teachers engage in good educational practices.
- ✚ Explicit pastoral care is planned and programmed according to discerned needs and resources available.
- ✚ Pastoral care is an intentional response to student needs such as – self-esteem, self-discipline, social relationships, breakdown of family affiliations.
- ✚ There is an awareness of students with special needs – disabilities, custody disputes, undernourishment, abuse, domestic violence, aboriginal , ill health, gifted students.
- ✚ Pastoral care utilizes the power of student peers.
- ✚ Pastoral care means there needs to be good communication between the stakeholders.
- ✚ Pastoral care needs to be proactive rather than reactive.
- ✚ Expresses the ethos of the school.
- ✚ Reflects both attitude and process.
- ✚ Attributes of good pastoral care are modelled by staff.
- ✚ The all Staff are witness to, and example of pastoral care and the need to be cared for and esteemed.
- ✚ Pastoral care is multi-disciplinary.

## **Features of Pastoral Care**

We aim to develop our Pastoral Care by focusing on the following features of school and community life -

- ✚ School as Community – Welcoming, Friendly
- Positive school culture developed by
- ❖ Orientation Program
  - ❖ Farewells and Graduations
  - ❖ Myths and Symbols explained and ritualized
  - ❖ School Mission Statement – developed and proclaimed
  - ❖ Family-friendly atmosphere
  - ❖ Needs of students are first priority

✚ A Learning Community – encourage creative learning and life-long attitudes about learning through:

- ❖ learning experiences reflect gospel values
- ❖ nurturing respectful listening
- ❖ providing arrange of approaches to learning
- ❖ encouraging research and evaluation
- ❖ using different levels of thinking
- ❖ awareness of gender and multi-cultural perspectives
- ❖ accepting mistakes as part of learning
- ❖ using the gift of imagination
- ❖ teachers being models of enthusiastic learning
- ❖ evaluating the effectiveness of learning.
- ❖ catering for different modes of learning in classes
- ❖ creating conducive learning environments
- ❖ understanding the different ways students enjoy learning
- ❖ providing remediation and support for students with particular learning disabilities.
- ❖ Encouraging co-operative and communal learning.

✚ Modifying Behaviour

- ❖ Creating understanding that responsible behaviour contributes to wellbeing of the school community
- ❖ Accepting responsibility of the school for providing structures for modifying behaviour
- ❖ Modeling good behaviour encourages students to see how it works in every day life
- ❖ Placing consequences on unacceptable behaviour.
- ❖ Developing an attitude of self-discipline is the goal.
- ❖ Responding proactively to

✚ School Environment

- ❖ Creating a welcoming feel to the Administration area
- ❖ Maintaining a calm and structured environment
- ❖ Developing routines to ensure all needs are met
- ❖ Developing a sense of responsibility for learning and play areas
- ❖ Sharing the care of the school surrounds with all classes
- ❖ Displaying children's work

✚ Participation of all in the school community

- ❖ Eg student participation – school assemblies, SRC, class leaders, community projects, planning events, leadership formation, peer pastoral care, buddy system.
- ❖ Training parents for roles within the school
- ❖ Inviting parishioners and community members to be part of the school's life.
- ❖ Encouraging staff to take on different roles involving students outside their own class.
- ❖

✚ Leadership

- ❖ Encouraging staff, parents and children to take on areas of responsibility within the life of the school

- ❖ Providing training for student leaders
- ❖ Providing opportunities for students to experience out of school life and aspects of leadership
- ❖ Planning activities which enable the leaders to be proactive in the life of the school – leading assembly and prayers, being responsible for school procedures, being class buddies with younger classes, arranging activities to involve the student body in community and mission events.
- ❖ Introducing an SRC to the leadership plan

#### ✚ Communication

- ❖ Developing effective communication systems between staff, students and parents – newsletters, staff noticeboard, school assemblies, staff meeting records, parents meetings, person to person interaction.
- ❖ Encouraging staff to actively participate in the school Newsletter.
- ❖ Speaking respectfully and positively.
- ❖ Confidentiality is respected
- ❖ Chit – Chat Presence – greeting staff, parents and children by name, showing personal interest in children and parents, spending time with children in non academic setting, attending school and class functions.

#### ✚ Special Programs eg

- ❖ Personal Safety – Protective Behaviours
- ❖ Self-Esteem
- ❖ Grief and Loss – Seasons
- ❖ Early Intervention – Transition program
- ❖ Integration Support
- ❖ Bounce Back to Resilience
- ❖ VOO Program – Valuing ourselves and others
- ❖ Anti-Bullying Program

#### ✚ Parents and the local community

- ❖ Communicating examples of pastoral care in school
- ❖ Involving parents and community in pastoral initiatives
- ❖ Inviting parents to participate in liturgy and prayer celebrations
- ❖ Encouraging family and community participation in school activities
- ❖ Linking with marginal groups in the community
- ❖ Allocating resources to help families in crisis
- ❖ Planning social gatherings to provide opportunities for families to meet.
- ❖ Regular reporting to parents about children's progress
- ❖ Arranging parent education and information sessions

#### ✚ School Structures and Policy – Most pastoral care happens in the ordinary happenings of each day. The day-to-day activities of the school are the foundations of pastoral care –

- ❖ Learning experiences are planned and organized appropriately so that students are motivated to learn.

- ❖ Ensure integration of learning in the school curriculum
- ❖ Adapt curriculum to meet the changing educational demands and the needs of the children and the expectations of parents.
- ❖ Checking absenteeism – if children are away for three days or more without contact from the family staff will contact the parents/caregivers to check on the child
- ❖ Organizing excursions and camps according to school policies and regulations.
- ❖ Greeting children, parents, staff and visitors in a welcoming manner.
- ❖ Maintaining routines and a consistent approach to school expectations.
- ❖ Developing a personal relationship with the children.
- ❖ Following up homework
- ❖ Managing classrooms with sound management principles
- ❖ Administering the school with justice.
- ❖ Development of meaningful assessment procedures.

#### Signs of Pastoral Care in our school:

- ✚ Attendance record
- ✚ Happy children
- ✚ Parents feel welcome
- ✚ Guidance through messages in RE, Mass, Assemblies etc
- ✚ Needs identified and compassion shown to all
- ✚ Provision of support programs – Seasons, Leadership Training, Wellbeing groups
- ✚ Welcoming atmosphere to visitors
- ✚ Valuing ourselves and others
- ✚ Genuine love of children demonstrated each day
- ✚ Forgiveness is a key feature
- ✚ Gospel values are lived out in actions not just words
- ✚ Self-respect
- ✚ Manner and tone of exchanges
- ✚ Responses of most parents when there is a problem

#### Pastoral Needs in our school:

- ✚ Parent and family support and education
- ✚ Develop more opportunities for peer support eg K – 6 buddies
- ✚ Access to professionals
- ✚ Set of affirmations to share good news about what's happening
- ✚ Balance between males and females on staff
- ✚ Confidentiality and respect for others in small community
- ✚ Teachers own mental health
- ✚ Support for one another
- ✚ Responding to individual needs of students and their families and provide the personal and professional support they need.
- ✚

### **STUDENT WELL-BEING**

With funding from Catholic Education Office the school is committed to providing counselling services to individual students who are experiencing personal, social, emotional and/or behavioural well-being issues. This service will also provide students with social skill development opportunities and equip parents and staff with

strategies to deal with wellbeing issues. The Learning support unit also provides information relating to the services available from outside agencies which maybe recommended when the need arises.

This policy to be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Management Policy and Child Protection Policies.