

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

Pastoral Care

By virtue of the Catholic nature of the school, Pastoral Care is intrinsic to the mission of the school and the Gospel values it upholds. Faithfulness to our ethos about educating the whole child, needs to ensure that the wellbeing of each student is paramount in all aspects of their school life. The Pastoral Care policy supports the right of each student at James Sheahan Catholic High School to learn in a safe, supportive and caring environment.

To ensure that this is the case for every student, there exists a tiered Wellbeing structure, comprised of Year Coordinators, the Assistant Principal, School Counsellor, School Psychologist, Aboriginal Educator and the Learning Enhancement Team. Year Coordinators get to know their students well and have both formal and informal communication with them. In addition, students are encouraged to report incidents of concern including bullying and harassment in an atmosphere of trust. Any issues which extend into the discipline area of Wellbeing are dealt with accordingly.

All teachers have the responsibility to care for the needs of the students in their charge by giving their best to ensure their academic progress in each class in a positive learning environment. Moreover, this care extends to the referral of students to the appropriate personnel, who can deal with any issues that deter this progress.

Student Wellbeing

Our Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy focuses on building positive, personal relationships within the entire school community whilst promoting a safe, supportive and respectful environment that fosters learning and faith development. At Sheahan, we promote a Positive Behaviour for Learning framework and students are encouraged and taught to make positive decisions in regards to their behaviour. We model school expectations around the universals "Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a Learner".

Staff and students follow a whole school approach to consistent classroom expectations. These can be seen displayed in every classroom within the school and are all linked to the three main universals of "Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a learner". Students are encouraged to make choices in regards to all their actions by linking them to this approach.

Furthermore, our school Senior Student Leadership Team, in particular our school Vice Captains, regularly promote positive education and reinforce the idea of having a positive mindset. Each fortnight, a positive focus is promoted amongst the school community and displayed on the school street noticeboard. This message is also communicated in the Daily Notices. It is hoped that these small reminders and inspirational thoughts will have a positive effect on the mental health of both staff and students.

Student Wellbeing is enhanced, supported and added to the curriculum in a variety of mediums that are relevant to individual year groups that include but are not limited to:

- Pastoral Care lessons
- Academic Care lessons
- The Rite Journey
- Year 9 Outdoor Education program
- Education across the curriculum in many subjects such as PDHPE, Religious Education, Science, TAS etc
- The Peer Support program
- External presentations such as Brainstorm Productions, Burn Bright, Brent Sanders, Justin Coulson, RYDA and many others.

Behaviour Management

Student behaviour is monitored and recorded by using the school's administration system Compass. By recording behaviour, we can see what areas of student behaviour need more attention. Additionally, we can keep track of positive student contributions and achievements. If a student needs intervention over a negative behaviour, it is determined whether it is a minor or a major issue. Ordinarily, all minor issues should be dealt with by the classroom teacher. Staff are aware of the importance of consistent classroom approaches and appropriate and effective responses to help them in the classroom to deal with issues before they became major. If the situation is classified as major, then support is called upon and a KLA or Year Coordinator may assist. Parent contact should be made and measures such as interviews and detentions may need to be implemented. In other instances, students may need to be placed on a Positive Behaviour for Learning card.

As Positive Behaviour is a focus, our behaviour management policy is centred around a Merit Level System where students are rewarded for making positive contributions to the school by going up the Merit System.

It is also an expectation of all students to follow and adhere to the Junior and Senior Enrolment agreement that both students and their parents sign upon enrolment.

Students can sometimes be involved in issues that require investigation and the FAIR policy is followed in these instances (please refer to specific FAIR policy). Follow up actions and consequences may need to be taken and these involve but are not limited to counselling, parent interviews, detentions, withdrawal from class, internal or external suspension.

If a child has ongoing behaviour and wellbeing issues, we recognise the need to link both our Student Wellbeing Policy and our Behaviour Management Policy to enable us to best support them.

The James Sheahan Catholic High School Merit Level System

The Merit Level System promotes both respect and responsibility. To progress to the higher levels within the system, students have to display respect for their education and the school community by demonstrating commitment across all areas of the curriculum. Students need to reflect on the positive approach they have to school life and complete a form that then needs to be signed by their teachers. They also need to make the most of opportunities the school offers them by participating in a number of activities outside the classroom such as the Red Shield Appeal, singing in the school choir, sporting teams, social justice events etc. As they progress to the highest level, they need to complete two terms of community service. This demonstrates that they are responsible and caring young citizens who are willing to give up their time to help others.

Please refer to the link on the school website for more details about the school's Merit Level System.

Future Directions

We are currently developing an overview of the strategies, initiatives and resources we have in place to address the growing incidents of interpersonal conflict, harassment, bullying and overall mental health issues that are developing within society and spilling into school community. We acknowledge the successful programs we currently have in place (eg Peer Support, Academic Care, The Rite Journey) and other initiatives (eg web resources such as School TV, counselling availability, presentations, parent resources). We are now focusing on developing a systematic, continuous and defined program of support from Year 7 to Year 12 and how we can support students, parents and staff in addressing interpersonal relationships, stress and related mental health issues. We are looking to adopt a more contemporary view where Learning, Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care are seen as inextricably intertwined.

This policy approved June 2017; Next due for review 2018

