

# **STUDENT PASTORAL CARE POLICY**



**St Francis Xavier College  
Ratified by College Board  
November 2003  
Amended April 2008  
Ratified by College Board, June 2008  
Amended March 2012  
Ratified by College Board April 2012**

# PASTORAL CARE

## RATIONALE

St. Francis Xavier College is a Catholic learning community in which we are bound to each other by a sense of kinship and a sharing of common values and goals. The Mission of the College is to develop an environment where gospel values are proclaimed, lived and celebrated so that our young people may find the Way, the Truth and the Life. Pastoral Care permeates all that we do and encourages the true growth of the individual. The Christian understanding of personhood recognises that fundamental freedom and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities which proactively promote peace, justice and reconciliation. It is for this reason that we recognise the rights, responsibilities and expectations of students, parents and teachers (see Appendices 1-3).

The College Student Pastoral Care policy is based on restorative justice principles aimed at bringing about behavioural change for individuals who do not abide by these expectations. The aim of restorative programs is to reintegrate those affected by wrongdoing back into the community as resilient and responsible members, thereby keeping the College and wider community safe.

## PRINCIPLES

Pastoral Care in Catholic schools draws its inspiration and strength from the life of Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God's greatest expression of love, compassion, reconciliation and justice is revealed. It is this vision of human life which the Catholic Church and its schools seek to embrace and emulate in approaches to pastoral care.

The Christian understanding of personhood recognises that fundamental freedom and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities which proactively promote peace, tolerance, courage, justice, compassion and reconciliation. It is aware of the cultural, social, educational and personal diversity of all.

In practice, at St Francis Xavier College:

- Pastoral Care refers to the total expression of community care for one another.
- We recognise the rights, responsibilities and expectations of students, parents and teachers.
- Pastoral Care aims to provide effective networks of care: everyone in the school community has the right to be safe in the school environment and has the responsibility to be involved in pastoral care.
- Pastoral Care involves a partnership with parents and fosters trust and communication between home and school. It provides a forum of parental input into many aspects of College life and provides opportunities for parental involvement and support.
- Students and staff are expected to develop relationships that are based on trust and respect.
- Pastoral Care aims to develop self-discipline and individual responsibility.
- Our College recognises its duty to provide a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum which addresses the needs of students. Our school community seeks to provide a holistic understanding of the growth of the human person.
- Prayer is a central practice within our pastoral care understanding.

## **STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PASTORAL CARE POLICY**

The following features reflect the College's appreciation of and commitment to the Christian vision of Pastoral Care:

### **1. Quality Relationships**

Pastoral Care is achieved or forfeited in the quality of relationships established in the College. In the school's daily and routine life, the ways in which people interact with one another are a significant determinant of each person's self worth, belonging and well being. The fostering of high quality interpersonal relationships among staff, students and parents is a responsibility shared with everyone. Teachers in particular set the tone of Pastoral Care by their witness and example. There is a special responsibility to attend to the welcoming and supporting of newly enrolled students.

Because quality relationships provide everyone with an environment where Pastoral Care can thrive, we specifically believe that quality relationships:

- Respect each person as an individual with unique talents and gifts.
- Acknowledge and work towards improvements
- Demonstrate trust, acceptance and forgiveness.
- Work towards developing each individual and promoting emotional health and well being.
- Promote a safe and productive learning environment.
- Demonstrate the importance of celebration and affirmation in the school community.

### **2. Formation in Self Discipline and Responsibility**

Pastoral Care at St. Francis Xavier College is vitally concerned with the fostering of students' self discipline. At the heart of this endeavour is the development of persons "who are responsible and inner directed, capable of choosing freely in conformity with conscience" (The Catholic School, Sec 31). Pastoral Care at the College also contributes to students recognising that their fundamental freedoms and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities (see Appendices 1-3). The College's Behaviour Management procedures are based on the belief that we are aiming to develop self discipline in all students. The behaviour management procedures used are in the context of Christian understanding of the need for taking responsibility for one's actions in an atmosphere of healing and forgiveness, are intended to promote the good order of the community and, as such, are based on the principles of restorative justice.

### **3. Pastoral Opportunities**

Pastoral Care endeavours to discern the life needs of students, to provide them with every opportunity to value themselves and to experience well being. Some of the opportunities provided at St. Francis Xavier Catholic College for Pastoral Care are:

- Liturgy and prayer, as part of the faith and liturgy program.
- Care Groups
- Co-curricula Activities
- Student leadership, including SRC
- Camps, excursions and Retreats.
- Student Wellbeing Services (First Aid and Counselling)

#### **4. Comprehensive and Inclusive Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

The school's curriculum provision needs to be accessible to all, comprehensive and of the highest quality so that students are afforded the competence, confidence and right to participate in the cultural and productive life of society. At St. Francis Xavier College we acknowledge that curriculum provision involves an understanding of how individual students learn, improvement in the quality of teaching and the establishment of fair and just assessment procedures. Our curriculum is responsive to students with special needs, and it endeavours to redress educational disadvantage brought about by such factors as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin and race.

#### **5. Supportive School/Family Relationships**

For the majority of students, the family and the school are amongst the most formative influences in their lives. It is therefore essential that relationships of trust, co-operation and partnership be developed between the College and family members, and that at all times College personnel maintain respect for and sensitivity to diverse cultural values and family structures. The College believes a student's well being is deeply dependent upon family support of College expectations, rules and practices.

#### **6. Effective Networks of Care**

Everyone at St. Francis Xavier College is involved in Pastoral Care. A commitment to partnership and shared responsibility among staff, students, parents and other family members is an integral feature of Pastoral Care. Every student at the College needs to be known personally by someone on the school staff. In a period when schools are being asked to play a greater role in supporting the special needs of students and their families, it is a major priority of the College to establish Pastoral Care programs that are based on co-ordinated networks of care.

#### **7. Co-ordinated and Supportive Organisational Structures**

The effectiveness of our school's Pastoral Care is directly related to the structural and organisational arrangements of the school. If the ideals of Pastoral Care are to be achieved, pastoral structures must be collaboratively constructed, well co-ordinated, adequately resourced and subject to ongoing evaluation.

## STRUCTURE OF PASTORAL CARE

The Care Group Teacher is the foundation of the Pastoral Care Program in the school. Through the efforts of each Care Group Teacher we know that every student in the school is known well. The effectiveness of this rests on the following:

The *Care Group Teacher* (Refer to role description in Section 2 of Staff handbook)

- is the source of information about the students in his/her Care Group;
- is able to offer ongoing support to students because of daily contact with them;
- is the first point of contact concerning a student's progress and wellbeing;
- helps the student to take responsibility for his or her behaviour, and works with him or her to reflect on mistakes made.
- affirms student success and encourages them to meet challenges.

The House Co-ordinator is responsible for the overall pastoral development of the members of his/her group of staff and students. The effectiveness of this rests on the following:

The *House Co-ordinator* (Refer to role description Section 2 of Staff handbook)

- maintains the general morale and discipline of the whole House with a positive tone and spirit by highlighting student achievements, challenging them to improve and leading them in prayer;
- ensures each student has a positive relationship with the school;
- oversees administrative details of the House;
- acts in consultation with Care Group and/or subject teachers about those students who indicate specific needs whether they be of an academic, attitudinal, behavioural or personal nature;
- takes an interest in the activities of the House by holding regular House assemblies, and other House activities;
- keeps the Deputy Principal - Head of Campus informed about any students who are at risk;
- provides support for teachers experiencing difficulties with a particular class.

The Deputy Principal - Head of Campus is responsible for consulting with parents and families about students who are at risk and arranging case meetings between parent/guardian and relevant others when required.

The *Deputy Principal - Head of Campus* (Refer role description Section 2 of Staff handbook):

- keeps the Principal informed about such students and families;
- informs House Co-ordinators of new students and indicating any special considerations which are appropriate for the student;
- ensures that appropriate information is passed on from one year level to the next;
- gives support to House Co-ordinators in performing their duties.

The Subject Teacher (Refer to role description Section 2 of Staff handbook) is responsible for the Pastoral Care of each student in his/her class by:

- showing respect for the human integrity for each person;
- carefully preparing and delivering appropriate learning programs;
- having regular contact with parents when a student is not performing according to ability or at the academic ability required;
- being responsible for class discipline and insisting on appropriate behaviour from each student in accordance with school policy.

The Learning Area Leader (Refer role description Section 2 of Staff handbook):

- inspires students with a passion for learning;
- is a link between the subject teacher, the Directors of Learning and the Deputy Principal-Mission;
- ensures that the teaching/learning program is of the highest standard and caters for the full range of students;
- ensures that staff maintain a well-documented and resourced curriculum;
- ensures regular evaluations of units of work;
- distributes resources to subject teachers;
- assembles a bank of extras to be used in case of unexpected absences;
- ensures that assessment and reporting are integral components of teaching and learning;
- gives support to House Co-ordinators in performing their duties.

## **EDUCATING FOR PASTORAL CARE**

The St. Francis Xavier College Student Pastoral Care Policy is founded on the premise that every member of the community will be cared for. Fundamental to the successful implementation of the Student Pastoral Care Policy is the education of interested parties. This process will involve the school community of students, teachers and parents. Our aim is to build a positive environment by emphasising values of equality, respect, inclusion and self-discipline. Strategies used to achieve these goals could include activities similar to the ones outlined below.

### **Education for Students**

- Camps and Retreats
- Modelling assertive behaviour as opposed to passive or aggressive behaviour.
- Educating students on the language and procedures involved in restorative justice
- Providing opportunities for student leaders to speak at assemblies on issues relating to pastoral care and welfare
- Guest speakers (eg. Reach Youth)
- Special activity days related to health/wellbeing (eg. Year 8 Healthy Relationships Day)
- Peer Support program for Year 7 and 11 students
- Peer Mediation

### **Professional Development for Teachers**

- Establishment of a sound understanding of the Student Pastoral Care Policy, its procedures and responsibilities.
- Ongoing in-servicing on Restorative Justice principles and procedures
- Teachers and parents to undertake sessions with invited speakers.
- Effective communication with parents when dealing with breaches of the Pastoral Care Policy.
- Integration of the values which underpin the Pastoral Care Policy within units of work and teaching strategies.

### **Awareness for Parents**

- Explanation of the Pastoral Care Policy through the College newsletter.
- Parent evenings to explain the policy and ways of communicating with the school to develop a good working relationships.
- Transition Evenings/Information Evenings to clarify expectations for parents and students

## **COLLEGE/CAMPUS WELLBEING TEAMS**

In order to develop a whole school approach to wellbeing, the College has established a College Wellbeing Team on each campus consisting of key staff from the pastoral and curriculum areas. The teams are accountable to the Principal through the two Heads of Campus, and draw together existing priorities such as School Renewal, VELs, NSSF and Drug Education. The teams meet on a regular basis (at least once per Term) to co-ordinate and review all College/Campus Pastoral Care policies and practices. Major functions of the Wellbeing Teams include, but are not limited to:

- Establish/review College structures relating to pastoral care, in line with recommendations from School Renewal, NSSF, etc
- Develop skills amongst staff to enable the College to respond appropriately to student wellbeing needs.
- Review individual student concerns and adopt a whole-school approach to addressing needs
- Co-ordinate the care provided to individual students in need.
- Liaise with CEO Wellbeing Co-ordinator.
- Case Management of high risk students.

## **STUDENT WELLBEING SERVICES**

Members of the Student Wellbeing Team (Educational Psychologist, Counsellors, Careers Advisor and First Aid Officer) are responsible for the Pastoral Care of particular students in need and will be in contact with students and parents through a system of:

- self-referral;
- referral from teachers, House Co-ordinator and /or parents;
- working with teachers of students with difficulties;
- consulting with other agents where required;
- consulting and working with parents of students when appropriate;
- providing tangible support to House Co-ordinators and Care Group teachers where students are at risk.

## **STUDENT EDUCATION SUPPORT & INTEGRATION AIDES**

The Director of Education Support, with the assistance of the Teacher Aides, is responsible for the Pastoral Care of those students with particular learning difficulties and will be in contact with students and parents through a system of:

- Referral by House Co-ordinators
- Referral from subject teachers
- Working with integration students and students with learning difficulties
- Consulting with other agents where required
- Consulting with and working with parents
- Providing tangible support to subject teachers
- Provide leadership and support to staff.

## **CRITICAL INCIDENTS**

Members of the College Executive will be responsible for dealing with critical incidents and liaising with the CEO. The College emergency procedures are outlined in the Critical Incident Management Manual.

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

Although St. Francis Xavier College encourages students to develop co-operative attitudes and respect for the person and property of others, as part of the overall educational objective of self-discipline, there will be occasions when various disciplinary actions must be undertaken to ensure adequate standards of behaviour. The College Student Pastoral Care Policy is based on Restorative Justice principles aimed at bringing about behavioural change for individuals who do not abide by these expectations. The aim of restorative programs is to reintegrate those affected by wrongdoing back into the community as resilient and responsible members, thereby keeping the College and wider community safe.

Suitable consequences which may be applied for failure to accept responsibilities include: (refer to Section 5 of the Staff Handbook)

1. Warning through restatement.
2. Written work.
3. Lunch-time yard duty.
4. Lunch-time supervision.
5. Time-out
6. After-school detention.
7. Tracking Card.
8. Contract.
9. Suspension.

## **SERIOUS WRONGFUL BEHAVIOUR**

Under the most serious and extreme circumstances, a change of school or a move to an alternative setting may be judged by the Principal to be the most appropriate means by which a student's wellbeing can be responsibly supported or restored. This is seen as a last resort after all other attempts to improve student behaviour have been exhausted, including suspension(s). At this point, the College Principal, together with the Head of Campus, House Co-ordinator, parent(s) and child will meet to discuss alternatives, which may include:

- Negotiated transfer
- Work placement, with the option of a return to study at a later date
- Expulsion

## **RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Refer to Section 10 of the staff Handbook for specific details regarding the following College policies.

Anti-Bullying Policy  
Attendance Policy  
Curriculum Policy  
Education Support Policy  
Excursion Policy  
Homestudy Policy  
ICT Policy  
Privacy Policy  
Sunsmart Policy  
Mandatory Reporting Policy  
Mobile Phone Policy  
Progression Policy  
Sexual Harassment Policy  
Student Drug Policy  
Submission of Work Policy

Critical Incident Management Manual  
Emergency Management Procedure

**Students' Rights**

1. To be treated with respect, courtesy and justice in a non-discriminatory environment.
2. To receive an education that is up to date with current practice/government requirements in a Christian environment that is safe, happy and conducive to learning, and to expect that school life prepares me for life after school.
3. To receive respectful, just and relevant discipline.
4. To have my sense of self-worth fostered and encouraged.
5. To be recognised as a member of the school community
6. To expect that my property be safe.

**Students' Responsibilities**

1. To treat others with respect, courtesy and fairness.
2. To participate fully in and contribute to school activities (in and out of class) and to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
3. To endeavour to meet all behaviour, uniform and learning requirements.
4. To strive to be my best and to foster excellence in myself and others.
5. To be loyal to and an ambassador for the school in the wider community.
6. To take care of my own and the property of others.

**Students' Expectations – As a student, I am expected to:**

1. Behave in ways that safeguard, enhance and promote the rights of individuals to a fruitful, productive and enjoyable experience at the College.
2. Work with teachers, parents and peers in fully completing all learning tasks to the best of my ability and submitting them for a realistic assessment.
3. Abide by all school rules and accept consequences for breaches of them.
4. Participate as best I can in all learning opportunities provided by the school
5. Uphold the image and good name of the school in the wider community.
6. Ask permission before using another's property.

**Parents' Rights**

1. To be treated with respect, courtesy and justice in a non-discriminatory environment.
2. To be recognised and respected as the prime educator of my child.
3. To expect that my child will be given the opportunity to reach his/her full potential.
4. To be involved in discussions about my child's progress.
5. To expect that my child will be in a safe physical and emotional environment.
6. To be a contributing member of a partnership between school and family.

**Parents' Responsibilities**

1. To treat others with respect, courtesy and fairness.
2. To be open to the professional advice of teachers.
3. To respect my child's individuality and his/her responsibility as a member of our community.
4. To provide relevant information and to keep the channels of communication open.
5. To support the ethos and pastoral care policy of the school.
6. To respond positively to the formal and informal structures provided by the school.

**Parents' Expectations – As a parent, I am expected to:**

1. Support the Catholic ethos of the College.
2. Work with teachers to develop strategies that will help my child have a productive, fruitful and enjoyable experience at the College.
3. Encourage my child to participate fully in all curricular and co-curricular activities.
4. Be available for discussions regarding my child's performance.
5. Support school policy regarding behaviour, homework and uniform.
6. Attend information sessions, Parent/Teacher/Student meetings and support Parents and Friends activities as far as possible.

**Teachers' Rights**

1. To be treated with respect, courtesy and justice in a non-discriminatory environment.
2. To be recognised, respected and supported as a professional educator.
3. To teach in a safe and well-resourced environment conducive to effective learning and be given adequate time to be an effective teacher.
4. To expect support from all sections of the college community when carrying out disciplinary procedures.
5. To have access to resources and professional development activities.
6. To expect that my person and my property are safe at all times.

**Teachers' Responsibilities**

1. To treat others with respect, courtesy and fairness.
2. To keep up to date with current practice, and to develop a relevant curriculum.
3. To have adequate classroom management strategies and to apply consistent, relevant and just disciplinary procedures.
4. To prepare lessons which cater for the different learning styles and present them in a stimulating manner.
5. To work in partnership with parents and to promote school/family partnership.
6. To ensure that all reasonable care is taken with regard to personal safety and security of all property.

**Teachers' Expectations – As a teacher, I am expected to:**

1. Image Gospel values and support the Catholic ethos of the College.
2. Behave in ways that safeguard, enhance and promote the rights of individuals to a fruitful, productive and enjoyable experience at the College.
3. Consistently use appropriate classroom management skills and balance active and passive learning. Apply school rules in a fair and just manner to all students.
4. Set and assess students' work at designated times, and suggest strategies for improvement.
5. Keep students, parents and relevant staff informed regarding students' progress.
6. Actively supervise students at all time in an endeavour to maintain a safe environment for students and property.

## **APPENDIX 4            Discipline Guidelines**

### **STEP 1        Classroom teacher to deal with issue**

Strategies include:

- Tactical ignoring of behaviour
- Rule re-statement (rules must be established first)
- Clarify choices for student misbehaviour
- Separation within the class
- Keeping student back after class
- Issuing community service
- Discuss concerns with Care Group teacher

Wherever possible, the teacher should attempt to use Restorative Justice questions to help the student realise what they have done wrong. The teacher must inform the House Co-ordinator/Care Group Teacher of what action has taken place.

### **STEP 2        Time Out**

Sometimes it is necessary for a student to be isolated from the class during a lesson if they do not respond to repeated requests to conform.

The procedure is:

- Send another student to Student Reception. An available House Co-ordinator will be notified.
- The House Co-ordinator will come to your class to remove the student
- Student answers questions on “Student Reflection’ sheet using a Restorative Justice approach
- Student remains in Time Out for the remainder of the lesson
- House Co-ordinator arranges meeting between the student, subject teacher and Care Group Teacher within 24 hours
- Parents informed by the teacher who timed-out the student as soon as possible.

### **STEP 3        Repeat Offences**

If you have tried steps 1 and 2 and are still experiencing difficulties with a student, inform the Care Group Teacher. The House Co-ordinator may then take appropriate action (eg Community Service, Thursday Detention, Tracking, etc).

### **STEP 4        Contract**

If a student does not demonstrate improvement following steps 1-3, s/he may be placed on a behavioural contract with clear expectations of what is required for continuing enrolment at the College. The contract will be put together by the House Co-ordinator. The Head of Campus may be involved in the parental interview at which the contract is signed.

### **STEP 5        Interview with the Head of Campus**

If a student breaks the conditions of a contract, s/he will meet with the Head of Campus, together with the House Co-ordinator, Care Group Teacher and parents to discuss continuing enrolment. Depending on the circumstances, the Head of Campus may recommend:

- One more try
- Suspension (internal or external)
- Options for enrolment elsewhere
- A meeting with the Principal