



ST JOSEPH'S MALVERN CATHOLIC PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Joseph's Malvern Pastoral Care Policy

This policy relates to **Child Safe Standard 1, 4, 6 and 7**

At St. Joseph's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children at St. Joseph's will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Child Safety Rationale:

St Joseph's, Malvern has met the minimum standard for the care, safety and wellbeing of students, and to achieve a *Zero Tolerance* approach to child abuse as specified by **Ministerial Order No. 870**.

At *St Joseph's, Malvern* we have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe.

A fundamental belief at *St Joseph's, Malvern* is that in Jesus is seen God's image and likeness in its human expression, and that Jesus' values and teachings show all people 'the way, the truth and the life' (*John 14:6*). In accordance with this belief, values to be promoted within *St Joseph's, Malvern's* understanding and practice of pastoral care include: love, respect, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, repentance, reconciliation and justice.

Overview

Pastoral Care has its source in the life of Jesus Christ. He demonstrates by his own life what we are called to become- fully human, fully alive and be able to share the life of God.

Pastoral Care permeates the total climate of relationship within the community of *St Joseph's School*. It has the individual as its focus, and reflects the support, the encouragement, the tender care shown and experienced in the ethos of Gospel- based communities.

Pastoral care is concerned with the dignity and integral growth of each person and is a responsibility entrusted to all members of *St Joseph's School's* faith community to contribute to one another's growth and journey towards wholeness.

It is a force for healing, reconciliation and an expression of and commitment to justice.

Principles

At St Joseph's School we believe that each person is created in the image and likeness of God (*Genesis 1:27*), with the inherent dignity that this implies, and all are created as social beings, with the mutual rights, obligations and needs that this implies.

Pastoral care at **St Joseph's School** affirms and gives expression to the belief that 'the person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is our goal at **St Joseph's School**.

At **St Joseph's School**, we exercise our pastoral responsibilities under the leadership of the Principal. Parents exercise their responsibility by providing positive support and collaborative engagement with the school in support of student and school community wellbeing.

Respectful and cooperative school-family relationships provide an effective channel of pastoral care for students. Schools and families share responsibility for developing and maintaining relationships of trust, characterised by respect for the goodwill of the other and a willingness to engage collaboratively.

Student wellbeing is best achieved within the **St Joseph's School** environment that is safe, supportive, inclusive and empowering, where diversity is respected and valued, where human rights and the common good are honoured, where inter-relationships are positive, where students experience connectedness and engagement, and where those experiencing difficulty or special need receive particular care and support.

Enhanced student wellbeing contributes significantly to improved student learning outcomes. Effective pastoral care promotes the achievement of learning outcomes and thus contributing to a School Improvement Framework.

At **St Joseph's School**, effective 'Whole-school approaches' to pastoral care requires age-appropriate behavioural education and skilling of students, and pastorally driven management of student behaviour through processes focused on both individual and community wellbeing, ensuring a just and reasonable balance of individual and community rights, needs and responsibilities.

Effective school-community partnerships offer opportunities for networks of pastoral care for students. Appropriate local services and agencies have been identified, and links or partnerships developed, to support the needs of students and their families and to enhance **St Joseph's School's** own pastoral initiatives.

Procedures

Policy development and review

St Joseph's School's pastoral care policy, and all related policies and procedures, are developed collaboratively and reviewed periodically. They are published and readily accessible to staff, students, parents and guardians.

Safe and supportive learning environments

St Joseph's School has policies and procedures in place to address issues of bullying, harassment, child abuse and neglect.

Management of critical incidents

Procedures have been developed for ensuring appropriate care for individuals and for the **St Joseph's School** community in times of stress, including a critical incident or a death in the school community. Support for school leadership personnel and school communities is available through Catholic Education Melbourne.

St Joseph's School has arrangements in place for engaging external providers of care when needed.

Student behaviour management

Positive student behaviour management at **St Joseph's School** seeks to protect personal and school community safety, heal destructive behaviours, restore relationships, encourage reconciliation, enhance wellbeing, foster responsibility, enable personal growth, and promote the common good.

Negotiated Transfer of students in circumstances of a serious nature

In some serious circumstances, a change of school or a move to an alternative setting may be judged the most appropriate means by which a student's wellbeing can be responsibly supported or restored. This change, or **negotiated transfer**, offers opportunity for personal growth, and for a fresh start in an environment more suited to the student's needs and circumstances.

Negotiated transfer may also be an appropriate move by which the wellbeing of **St Joseph's School** community can be protected (e.g. when a student's continuing presence poses a threat to that community's safety).

Student Wrongful Behaviour of a Serious Nature

Suspension and Expulsion of students

Under the most serious and extreme of circumstances, when a student attending **St Joseph's School** has repeatedly engaged in serious wrongful behaviour and all other

appropriate behaviour management processes have proved unsuccessful and the serious behaviour persists, it may be judged that the only responsible action left is expulsion. As this is to be avoided at **St Joseph's School** wherever possible, the principal has the only authority to expel a student, after seeking prior approval of the diocesan Executive Director of Catholic Education.

At **St Joseph's School** we ensure that policies and processes associated with negotiated transfer, suspension and expulsion align with Catholic Education Melbourne's Policy 2.26 Pastoral Care of Students.

Belief Statements

At **St. Joseph's School** we believe:

- In the innate dignity and uniqueness of each person
- That we are a community of faith who welcomes all new comers regardless of creed, race and social standing
- That we are a school community, providing a strong sense of well-being, belonging and security
- In the values of compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation
- Genuine Pastoral care and Christian role models strive to make a difference in the lives of the children at **St. Joseph's School**
- Pastoral Care is an expression of the ethos of **St. Joseph's School** especially endorsing gospel values of justice, inclusion, reconciliation and respect
- Pastoral Care embraces a network of relationships among administrators, staff, students, parents, parish and the wider community of **St. Joseph's School**
- Pastoral care considers and respects the cultural dynamics, history, ethnicity and socio-economic environment, all of which makes **St. Joseph's School** unique
- Students are encouraged to develop as responsible, self disciplined, self-directed individuals, capable of choosing freely with an informed conscience
- Pastoral Care upholds the individual's rights and freedoms, respecting the privacy of people's lives by ensuring confidentiality of family information
- Students are encouraged to recognize that their fundamental freedoms and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities
- Students will feel safe in a caring, supportive and pastoral environment
- Pastoral Care has legal implications for the school, e.g. issues of negligence, custody and indemnity.

Goals of Pastoral Care:

At **St. Joseph's School** we:

- Foster high quality interpersonal relationships within our whole faith community
- Foster the development of empathy and social awareness in our students
- Provide an inclusive curriculum that nurtures the individual needs of students and engenders a sense of self-esteem, self-respect and well-being
- Establish and coordinate networks of specialist support groups utilizing staff personnel and the wider community

- Establish school structures which are flexible and responsive to the needs of each student
- Deliver programs for children about the school's child safety strategies.

Administration:

At **St. Joseph's School** we develop and maintain a positive school culture by:

- Being welcoming and open in our communication with our whole faith community
- Distributing weekly newsletters to inform parents and others of curriculum initiatives, social events, sacramental nights, parent-teacher interviews and other items of interest
- Developing and publishing the school mission and vision statements for parents
- Interviewing newly enrolled parents and students, welcoming them to the St. Joseph's community
- Providing transition structures from kindergarten to primary school, and primary school to secondary school
- Celebrating **St. Joseph's School** feast day and other special occasions
- Creating a family atmosphere by acknowledging achievements at weekly assemblies, welcoming and farewelling families to and from our community and supporting families in times of crisis
- Developing and maintaining a safe and pleasant environment
- Being aware of and accommodating the special needs of particular families and children
- Affirming the importance of families as an integral part of our **St. Joseph's School** community, and welcoming participation at school events, curriculum programs and on formal and informal committees.

Learning community

At **St. Joseph's School** we develop an effective learning community by:

- Providing leadership in curriculum development
- Providing a consistent structure for school organisation, that is evaluated regularly
- Providing suitable time release for teachers to facilitate collaborative planning
- Resourcing the school appropriately to allow for planned curriculum development
- Providing integration support as required
- Meeting the needs of highly able children
- Providing Student Welfare support for children when required
- Reinforcing the positive behaviour of students by implementing a pro-active and consistent discipline policy
- Supporting staff in all areas of need

Staff:

At **St. Joseph's School** staff:

- Share a clear understanding of the mission and vision that directs and drives all of our goals, procedures and endeavours
- Engage in on-going professional development to ensure best practice in all areas
- Model Christian values in all of our interactions with each other and members of our school community

- Participate in the school's decision-making process through staff formation meetings, the Consultative Committee, Leadership Team and other formal and informal structures
- Participate in team-building activities, which affirm our sense of unity and common purpose
- Provide formal and informal support networks with each other
- Demonstrate support for the **St. Joseph's School** and parish community by participating when possible in social functions

Implementation of Pastoral Care

At **St. Joseph's School** we:

- Provide a warm and inviting atmosphere in the school
- Model and provide the children with opportunities to make choices and value judgements
- Encourage and provide opportunities for the Faith development of the staff
- Provide parent education and information
- Model Gospel values.
- Make ourselves openly available for parents
- Access outside agencies when required to further support the students, families and staff
- Establish a Student Wellbeing Action Team
- Acknowledge the skills and talents of each individual
- Develop Peer/ Cross Age support, multi- age groupings for various activities
- Focusing on the individual's safety through the implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour model

Roles and Responsibilities

Within the **St. Joseph's School** community all members experience care and support. Each member participates in Pastoral Care, and each is a recipient of Pastoral Care.

Evaluation

At **St. Joseph's School** we determine and respond to:

- Quality of relationships
- Pastoral Programs
- Catering for the needs of each individual student
- Relationship between home and school
- Effective networks of care
- Coordinated and supportive organizational structures
- Identifying the strengths and positive aspects of current practice
- Identifying areas requiring improvement or further development.

Resources

The National Safe Schools Framework: resource for developing, implementing and monitoring policies and procedures

<https://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0>

Whole school Approaches to Supporting Positive Student Behaviour:

<http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/getmedia/9a82dbf1-965d-41c7-922c-ea5dd86cc52a/Positive-Student-Behaviour.aspx?ext=.pdf>

Catholic Education Melbourne: Guidelines for Behaviour Support- principles, expectations and recommended procedures for student behaviour management;
[file:///C:/Users/faye/Downloads/Guidelines%20for%20Behaviour%20Support-updated%20\(3\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/faye/Downloads/Guidelines%20for%20Behaviour%20Support-updated%20(3).pdf)

Procedures for student Behaviour Management CEVN (Negotiated Transfer):
<http://www.cem.edu.au/publications-policies/policy/policy-2.26-procedures-for-student-behaviour/#3>

Student Wrongful Behaviour of a Serious Nature:
<http://www.cem.edu.au/publications-policies/policy/policy-2.26-procedures-for-student-behaviour/#1>

Suspension or Expulsion
<http://www.cem.edu.au/publications-policies/policy/policy-2.26-procedures-for-student-behaviour/#2>

Catholic Education Melbourne's Policy 2.26 Pastoral Care of Students:
<http://www.cem.edu.au/publications-policies/policy/policy-2.26-pastoral-care-of-students-in-catholic-schools/>

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2014, *Industrial Relations*, accessed 16 May 2016 <http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Industrial-Relations>

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2013, *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse website*, accessed 16 May 2016 www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au. For information about the focus of the Royal Commission including its research agenda and reports

State of Victoria, Commission for Children and Young People 2015, *A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Environment*, Version 2, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne, accessed 20 May 2016 www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/downloads/creating-a-childsafe-organisation-guide.pdf.

State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) 2015, *An overview of the Victorian child safe standards*, State Government of Victoria, Melbourne, accessed 16 May 2016
www.dhs.vic.gov.au/data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safestandards_overview.doc.

Key legislation affecting pastoral care policy and procedures include:
Working with Children Act 2006 (Vic); the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic); and the Children and Young Person's Act 1989 (Vic).

Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos 1878–1882.

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, no. 9. Quotation is from Pope John Paul II, Address to First National Meeting of the Catholic School in Italy, Nov 1991.

Australian Government's Safe Schools framework 2004 via the website of the Department of Education and Training (DET): <https://www.education.gov.au/>

Revised by Faye Forbes, December 2016
Review Date: 2018
Responsibility: Student Wellbeing Leader