
PASTORAL CARE POLICY

RATIONALE

Pastoral Care means enhancing the dignity of each person within a Catholic faith community. The school Vision Statement should reflect the Pastoral Care Policy of the school.

VISION STATEMENT

*St Maria Goretti's
is a Catholic Primary School
which, with Mary as our patron,
strives to develop the whole person
within a family atmosphere of
Love, Peace and Justice.*

*With the support
Of the entire Faith Community
the individual is given
the opportunity to develop
to their full potential
with Christ as their model.*

GUIDELINES

Pastoral Care means enhancing the dignity of each person within a Catholic Faith community. The school Vision Statement should reflect the Pastoral Care Policy of the school.

The dignity and respect of each person in the school community are considered as fundamental in the entire educational process. Pastoral Care infuses all aspects of the school life. It is concerned with maximizing learning and growth and developing the beliefs, values attitudes, knowledge, skills and practices to enable all to become inner-directed, contributing members of God's creation.

Our school aims to demonstrate 'Christian Forgiveness' and a discipline policy, centred on bullying and behaviour management, has been developed. These policies have been developed in conjunction with the Curriculum Framework. In particular Overarching Statement 13:

- Students recognize that everyone has the right to feel valued and be safe, and, in this regard, understand their rights and obligations and behave responsibly.

It is important for students to see common beliefs, attitudes and goals between their home and their school. Communication with parents, carers and guardians is of vital importance. To prevent misunderstandings, parents need to be informed of changes, encouraged to be involved in the School and have confidence that they have chosen the most supportive school for their child. Parent, staff and student collaboration is an ongoing system, which will help strengthen our Pastoral Care programme over time.

Our Pastoral Care also includes the Non-Government Schools Psychology Service. These services can be accessed but there is procedure that needs to be followed. This is begun by making an appointment with the Principal, who will then make a time to meet with the Psychologist and parents.

In issues pertaining to school occurrences parents are asked to discuss classroom issues with the class teachers first to see if a result can be arrived at. Members of the Leadership team are available to hear concerns and an appointment can be made through the Office so that issues can be dealt with in an appropriate manner and given due time.

Communication is the most important element of Pastoral Care. Issues can be discussed and various strategies implemented with the support and cooperation of all parties involved. Individual programmes and plans may be developed and implemented, in collaboration with parents, teachers and children.

Our framework is flexible in order to account for the individual needs of each student knowing that the Pastoral Care Policy influences all policies within the school. The integration of culture and faith and of life and faith is considered in our policy.

Our school should give witness to genuine Christian simplicity and the gospel spirit of poverty. St Maria Goretti's will aim to avoid affluence and be counter-cultural, as the 'Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia' recommends. Catholic schools are for **all** children; therefore we should not have barriers such as high fees and costs, giving every child the opportunity for a Catholic Education.

Administrators and staff will be role models in the mutual care and support they show each other and the students. It is from the Pastoral dimension of the total school life that students learn their own value and dignity. Every Staff member shares some responsibility for the pastoral dimension of the Catholic School.

Pastoral care at St Maria Goretti's:

- ❖ Has the individual as its focus;
- ❖ Permeates all aspects of the curriculum;
- ❖ Is exercised mutually by all members of the school community; and
- ❖ Promotes respect for the rights of every person.

At St Maria Goretti's we have a 'hands off' approach with the students, but a teacher may take physical action that is appropriate to prevent or restrain a student from acting in a manner which places at risk his/her own safety, that of another student or a member of the staff of the school.

No teacher should be alone with a student in a room. It is wise to ensure that teachers have witnesses to any disciplinary action that may occur.

The school Principal and Assistant Principals will decide on any 'detention' measures if the need be. Reasons may include:

- Disobedience;
- Idleness in school; and
- Unpunctuality.

Detention will not exceed 20 mins during recess and lunch times. Misdemeanours will be recorded in an individual file for Year 1 to Year 6 for students. Any detention that is longer than half an hour will be kept in a 'School Punishment Book' kept by the Principal. Children, who need to be isolated from other children, during school hours, may be isolated for a period of no more than ten days.

The Principal may invoke a suspension, after a discussion with parents, of no more than five consecutive days.

Parent information sessions are offered at numerous times throughout the year with a variety of issues being covered from a wide variety of guest speakers and experts.

Exclusion is an extreme disciplinary step reserved for cases of gross misconduct, serious breaches of school rules or behaviour that is persistently disruptive or contrary to the mission statement of the school. It is used as a last resort; after all other measures have failed. The decision to exclude a student will be the right of the Principal.