

# Mary Queen of Heaven Pastoral Care of Students Policy



Pastoral Care at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School means enhancing the dignity of each person within the Catholic Faith community of Mary Queen of Heaven. It is an expression of the love of Christ for each individual and the school community as a whole, within an environment of Love, Hope and Unity. It is the school's concern for the development of all individuals in its community and its ongoing response to their various needs. It involves a holistic approach centred on the human person as made in the image of God. It is informed by and given its spirit by the school's place as a part of the ministry of the Church. The Catholic school is in essence the face of Christ for its whole community and its pastoral role needs to infuse every aspect of its operation and its relationships.

Recognising the uniqueness and dignity of each person, Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School strives to develop the whole child within a positive and caring environment, where each one is affirmed and supported with Christian love.

At Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School we believe that all members of the school community have a fundamental right to be treated with respect and, for students and school staff, to learn and teach in a safe and supportive environment. We believe in fostering and nurturing attitudes and values which will encourage the students to make right choices for behaviour that is morally and socially acceptable.

We believe that our working together with parents and guardians is essential for the development of responsible behaviour of students who are in the care of the staff at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School.

Formulation of Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School's Pastoral Care policy requires a collaborative approach, designed within the guidelines of the Framework for Pastoral Care in Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS).

## Defining Pastoral Care

"Pastoral Care may be defined as the expressions of care in the school community which bring together the diverse aspects of school life, academic, social, physical and religious. Pastoral Care is love in action. It invites students, staff and parents to make choices about life which fulfil their destiny as sons and daughters of God, created in God's likeness. Pastoral Care embraces the whole gamut of the curriculum and grounds the school's mission statement in the quality of daily relationships" (Treston, 1992 pp. 2,-28).

Pastoral Care at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School means enhancing the dignity of each person within our school community. It is concerned with maximising learning and growth and developing the beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and practices of each member of this community within a caring environment that is totally committed to supporting and living the Catholic principles and ideals. Our Pastoral Care Policy is intricately linked to our school's Vision and Motto.

We strive to :

- Give witness to the Gospel message.
- Foster a loving and meaningful relationship between God and each individual.
- Promote the cultural identity of the Catholic School through story, word and action.
- Assist in the development of self-worth and the dignity of each individual.
- Provide opportunities for each person to develop his/her potential-spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially.
- Acknowledge and respond to the uniqueness of each individual.
- Promote an awareness of the need to respect and care for all creation.
- Provide an environment, a curriculum and a set of practices based on Gospel Values.
- Enable students to attain the beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and practices which will enable them to achieve Christ's vision of the human person.
- Ensure that the care and development of each person takes place within the Catholic faith community through Christian values which are actively lived and experienced in sincere interpersonal relationships.
- Be concerned with the nurturing and wellbeing of all who impact on the school community.
- Aspire to be more like Mary Queen of Heaven

The Pastoral Care Policy at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School is the umbrella from which a number of other policies evolve. These policies support the aims of and the practical aspects of the implementation of the Pastoral Care Policy.

Together these policies aim to:

- Encourage the spiritual growth and personal development of students, staff, parents and families.
- Encourage good communication and positive relationships at all levels.
- Provide and maintain a caring network within the school community and through support systems that meet the particular needs of its members.
- Provide a positive, affirming environment which is conducive to the well-being of all community members.
- Develop school structures and policies which will reflect the values and vision of the school.
- Employ approaches to discipline, emphasising the development of self-discipline and resilience.
- Encourage participation and leadership in all areas of school life.
- Encourage critical awareness and discernment regarding values espoused in the broader world community.

#### IMPLEMENTATION:

The function of Pastoral Care at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic School is to:

- Provide an environment, a curriculum and a set of practices based on the message of Christ;
- Enable students to attain the beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and practices which will enable them to achieve Christ's vision of the human person;

- To develop as confident Christians, secure in their strengths, aware of their needs, capable of free choice, responsible decision making and able to work academically to the best of their ability.

## PROCEDURES:

### Students:

Pastoral Care of the students takes place through staff and our programs. The following are the responsibility of all staff members with the children. Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School encourages students to develop as confident Christians, secure in their strengths, aware of their needs, and able to work academically to the best of their ability.

It is expected that students will:

- be active learners
- respect the rights of others
- share in the responsibility for forming and maintaining positive relationships
- adhere to the Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures

### Strategies:

- Provide situations which encourage children to recognise and believe in themselves and celebrate life with one another.
- Provide personal development and self-esteem programmes for children.
- Plan programmes which develop interpersonal relationship skills.
- Implement the full curriculum based on MACS expectations and department of education requirements, modify these to suit the children by providing for specific needs, catering for individual differences and valuing the uniqueness of every student..
- Encourage the individuality of children by extending to them the courtesies expected in a caring society – Addressing them by name; taking time to listen to them; making realistic demands which recognise a variety of abilities and qualities.
- Know the children including their family background and education history of children considered at risk.
- Communicate with parents frequently and at any point of need

### Staff

Pastoral Care of the staff occurs through staff and is the responsibility of all staff. Staff work and lead together under the principles of MACS with the aim of improving student learning and enhancing teacher instruction. A friendly, supportive and co-operative atmosphere amongst members of staff is essential to the whole school's well-being. Parallel in importance is the maintenance, development and application of teaching skills which include not only the ability of class teachers to teach a comprehensive range of subjects in an interesting way but also, being able to nurture and develop the talents of all children.

It is expected that staff:

- foster and share in the responsibility for developing and maintaining quality interpersonal relationships with students, parents and other members of the school community

- provide opportunities for children to have their opinions and thoughts heard on matters affecting their classroom and school
- celebrate birthdays and special times with the children
- promote the classroom as an affirming place where good work and behaviour are rewarded
- affirm the strengths in each child and encourage his/her efforts in all areas
- encourage all children in the classroom to be active participants rather than passive observers
- be supportive by using positive correction when disciplining children to achieve positive behaviour
- receive regular visits from the Principal and Leadership Team members
- develop within the school an empowering atmosphere that facilitates the personal and professional growth of each staff member
- communicate with parents in an open and honest manner
- prayerfully support families in need

### **Strategies**

- Providing opportunities through staff prayer and in-services for ongoing faith development of all staff members.
- Regularly gather as a professional learning community, share our knowledge, plan and attend in-service to develop teaching skills, techniques and update knowledge.
- Sharing knowledge gained at such in-service e.g. by reporting to staff at Professional Learning Committee (PLC) meetings.
- Accepting responsibility for organising and developing some areas of the curriculum.
- Support and attend school and parish celebrations such as the celebration of Sacraments and Parents and Friends fund-raising and community building events.
- Organising celebrations and programmes within the school for annual events such as Book Week, Feast of The Assumption, Mary MacKillop Feast Day, Multicultural Week, Lent and Project Compassion.
- Implement effective programming which reflects the spirit of the school goals and policy, significant church and educational statements and the professional image of the informed and caring teacher.
- Further Professional Development of individual staff members.
- Upgrading of religious knowledge and appropriate Accreditation to ensure the children are nurtured into the Church.
- New staff at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School will be introduced and have an opportunity for staff induction.
- Teachers new to the profession (graduates) will be offered mentoring and support by more senior members of staff including support in developing classroom management skills and strategies.
- Support policy decisions and enforce school rules consistently.

### **Parents and the Wider Community:**

Pastoral Care of the parents occurs through staff. Responsibilities are shared among staff members. The staff recognise and respect the role of parents as prime educators of their children and parents and the school share the commitment to the education of children. Multicultural issues, socio-economic pressures, family situations, language differences and religious situations require understanding and mutual respect.

The staff are responsible for maintaining avenues of cooperation and communication.

It is recommended that parents:

- support the spiritual development and faith formation of their children
- be aware of and support the school's policies and procedures
- support their child with his/her learning
- inform the school of matters relevant to their children which may impact on their school life
- use opportunities to be actively involved in the school community.

#### **Strategies:**

- Be welcoming and readily available to parents.
- Conduct regular consultation and reporting with parents on the individual development of students.
- Parent orientation meeting early in Term 1 to explain class systems of discipline, homework etc.
- Education meetings e.g. Sacramental Programme, Literacy, Numeracy and Parent Information Meetings.
- Parent/teacher availability for discussion outside school times.
- Utilising parents' resources and welcoming and encouraging their participation in the school.
- Weekly newsletter.
- Use the Parents and Friends as a forum for consulting with the parent body on issues related to the management of the school and the teaching/learning program provided.
- School activities e.g. camps, incursions and excursions.
- Social and fund-raising occasions.
- Special Occasions e.g. Mother's Day, Father's Day, School Sports Carnivals.

#### [Protocols within the Policy](#)

### **WELLBEING APPROACH**

Wellbeing and Pastoral Care in our school is approached in a multifaceted way. We are guided by the MACS eXcel: Wellbeing For Learning In Catholic Schools document.

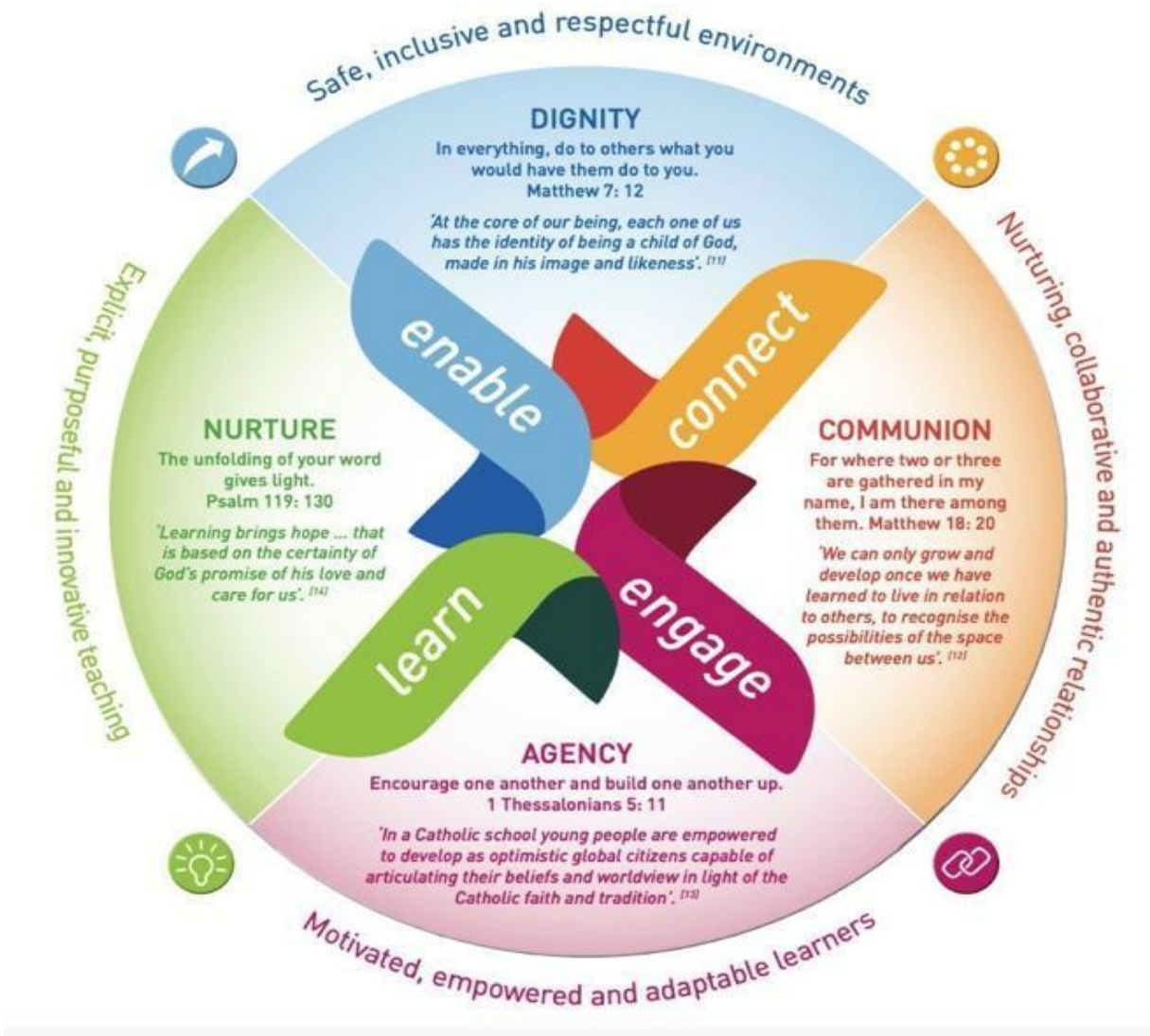
We understand that there are four key areas that assist students to realising their unique potential through physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development.

**Enable:** We enable students by creating safe, inclusive and respectful learning environments.

**Connect:** We connect students by encouraging nurturing, collaborative and authentic relationships

**Engage:** We engage students to become motivated, empowered and adaptable learners

**Learn:** We ensure learning by providing explicit, purposeful and innovative teaching.



## SCHOOL PROGRAMS

All staff and students are fundamental in supporting pastoral care at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School.

A number of pastoral care programs have been identified and offered to members of the school community. Programs supporting students include;

- Seasons for Growth - Coping with Grief and Loss
- Access to Counselling
- Friendship Groups
- Berry Street- All staff at Mary Queen of Heaven will be trained in the Berry Street Education Model which explores classroom strategies when implementing trauma-informed learning and the science of wellbeing.
- Circle Time
- Well planned Social and Emotion Learning (SEL) sessions to coincide with the Personal, Social and Ethical Capabilities set out in the Victorian Curriculum
- SEL Foci and Learning Intentions built into the weekly planner. These are needs based, but linked to SEL competencies: Self -awareness, Self - management, Social - awareness, Social management

## CIRCLE TIME PHILOSOPHY

The daily routine at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School will incorporate Circle Time. Our Circle Time adopts a solution - focussed, strengths based approach. It promotes group agency to encourage our students to take responsibility for themselves and each other. Specific problems and incidents are never discussed in Circles, only issues and directions for change. The focus away from the personal to consideration of topics that impact young lives and make Circles a safer and more comfortable place for both teachers and students.

The principles of Circles; respect, agency, positivity, inclusion, democracy and safety should be embedded throughout the day and across the school so that our outcomes can become more sustainable.

Circles aim to promote wellbeing for all students, both vulnerable and the achieving. This includes healthy relationships, resilience in the face of adversity and responsible behaviour. We believe these three aspects together lead to more effective learning environments and flourishing individuals.

## PRIMARY STUDENT AWARD SYSTEM

### Purpose

Recognising children's accomplishments and efforts serves to affirm, encourage and motivate all students. It also provides positive reinforcement and peer role models for continued successful achievement in all dimensions of school life here at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School. For these reasons we regularly acknowledge, through various awards at weekly assemblies, desirable academic, personal and social behaviours. All awards are meritorious in nature and seek to identify and reward students who make significant and positive contributions in classroom performance, behaviour and service to others.

## Awards

### Mission Awards

These awards are given to those children whose words and actions reflect the teachings of Christ. Both playground and classroom behaviours are taken into account when issuing these awards. These are awarded at assemblies.

### Learning Culture Awards

These awards are given to those children who have demonstrated sustained effort and achievement within different Key Learning Areas. These are awarded each week at assemblies.

### Wellbeing Awards

These awards are given in recognition of extraordinary and exceptional behaviour. They contribute to making our community a place where everyone feels safe and happy. These are awarded each week at assemblies.

### Principal's Awards

These awards are given at the final assembly each term except Term 4. They are an acknowledgement by the class teacher of a student who has consistently worked hard in class, are models of the gospel's Good News of Jesus and genuinely care for the wellbeing of all.

## MARY QUEEN OF HEAVEN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL RULES

To help make Mary Queen of Heaven a happy, safe and caring place to learn and play, we have 3 main rules:

### 1. Respect ourselves and others

- Know the rules
- Follow the rules
- Use our bodies safely- 'Safe Hands'
- Speak politely to everyone
- Include others
- Discourage bullying
- Take pride in our appearance (one set of sleepers/studs, one watch, school coloured hair accessories only, no nail polish or make up, hair tied back and off the face, natural hair colours only). A change of the uniform will require a note signed by a parent or guardian.
- Wear a hat in the sun- 'No hat, play in the shade'
- Take pride in our work
- Play within the boundaries
- Walk safely around the school
- Play safely
- Take care of all property
- Move around the school with a buddy
- Play on the playground equipment sensibly and safely
- We ask before we take



- Accept one another's differences

## **2. Respect our school environment**

- Take pride in our playground areas
- Take pride in our classrooms
- Play within the boundaries
- Only enter classrooms with teacher's permission
- Tidy up after ourselves
- Use equipment carefully
- Be reverent in God's house
- Keep our school clean
- Recycle
- Take care of our gardens

## **3. Respect everyone's right to learn**

- Listen to each other
- Take turns
- Respond to bells
- Work quietly
- Work cooperatively
- Take responsibility for our own learning
- Allow others to learn
- Have a go
- Try our best
- The aim of these rules is to encourage positive behaviour

## **STUDENT LEADERSHIP**

### **Purpose**

Leadership at Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School is a process through which students, regardless of their role, strive to create positive change in their community. To accomplish this, they must be able to develop and articulate a vision of what they hope to achieve and foster meaningful relationships to advance the goals that lead to the accomplishment of the vision. Throughout this process, students will be committed to understanding themselves, others and the community in which they serve while striving to recognize and appropriately address the challenges they face.

At Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School leadership is to be guided by the school's Mission and Vision statements. All students at the College have the potential for Leadership and are called upon to exercise it as part of their role of discipleship.

There are many opportunities to be a leader and involved in student leadership at Mary Queen of Heaven.

All students are called to service. This group is monitored by their responsibility and reliability:

Being an excellent role model – wearing their correct uniform with pride; behaving appropriately, participating enthusiastically and working conscientiously in class.

Leaders are expected to be involved in the following: assisting with school tours, attend Parent and Friends run events, attend school masses, be leaders in Book Week, help organise events, attend all

school events and to assist with any organisation. E.g. sporting days, Welcome Day etc.