



*ST MARY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE  
CASINO*

# *Welfare and Pastoral Care Policy*

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a Catholic Co-educational Year 7 - 12 School based in country NSW. The school was formed by the amalgamation of two schools founded on the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy and the Marist Brothers.*

- We are an integral part of the St Mary's Parish community.
- We aim to integrate Christian values and quality educational practices in order to prepare students to take their place in society.
- We promote the central place of Jesus and His Gospel.
- We are committed to Equity, Justice and an Open Learning Environment in which every person is Encouraged and Respected.
- We have a commitment to the Personal Intellectual, Spiritual, Social, Emotional and Physical growth of members of our school community.
- We will encourage all to achieve their full potential.

# VALUES

At St Mary's Catholic College we value:

- a Catholic Community promoting the central place of Jesus and the Gospel.
- prayer in all its forms as an essential element of our lives.
- the involvement of the Parish Priest in the life of the school.
- contributions made in the past which have created and developed the traditions of our school community.
- excellence as a goal.
- co-operation, tolerance and friendship between all members of the school community.
- respect for and affirmation of the individual person.
- the opportunity for all students to fulfil their potential.
- open and honest avenues of consultation and communication.
- community involvement in the educational process.
- a dynamic approach to a constantly changing educational climate.
- staff growth through mutual support and professional development.
- the opportunity to effect change.
- an environment that enhances the well being of staff and students.
- school spirit.
- the development of socially useful skills.
- the role of education in preparation for life.
- individual responsibility and accountability.
- the right of every student to learn.
- cultural awareness and an expansive view of the world.

# **AIMS OF THE ST MARY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE WELFARE POLICY**

St Mary's Catholic College is a Catholic school in which all activities and relationships are permeated by the Gospel values of freedom and love. The community is one that values and upholds the uniqueness and dignity of every individual.

This pastoral Care policy is premised on the firm belief that all students at St Mary's Catholic College have the right to opportunities to grow spiritually, intellectually and socially in a caring and supportive community.

The St Mary's Catholic College is a community that strives to create a spirit of cooperation, respect and friendliness so that staff, students and parents benefit from their involvement in the school.

The school motto "Reach Out" challenges all students to work hard to realise the potential for excellence which rests within each of them and to reach out to others in the wider community in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Hence the specific aims of this Pastoral Care Policy are

- to express a common understanding and vision regarding pastoral care
- to give living expression to the importance of faith, care, community and positive relationships which characterise the school's Catholic vision and identity.
- to ensure trust, forgiveness and tolerance in all school activities
- to foster positive relationships throughout the school community
- to ensure that each student at the school encounters the love, compassion and challenge of Jesus Christ
- to ensure that all students are treated with utmost dignity at all times
- to ensure that students are affirmed for their positive efforts
- to foster school spirit and pride in the school's achievements
- to ensure fairness and consistency are important elements of discipline procedures at the school
- to maintain close links between the home and the school and ensure that communication processes are kept open at all times
- to support students who are in need
- to promote safe and productive learning environments
- to liaise with parents in all aspects of student pastoral care
- to promote the importance of celebration and affirmation in the school community.

# PASTORAL CARE STRATEGIES

The following strategies and programs exist as part of the St Mary's Catholic College Pastoral Care Policy and Procedure. These strategies enact the aims of this policy.

## CARE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

***“Catholic educators should always remember that true education is not limited to the imparting of knowledge; it promotes human dignity and genuine human relationships, and prepares the way for opening oneself to the truth that is Christ.”***

*Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to the Faith#55*

Pastoral care is founded upon quality relationships and respect for the dignity of everyone in the school community. All staff members share the responsibility of ensuring quality interpersonal relationships at St Mary's Catholic College.

To this end pastoral care is premised upon the following:

- Recognition that each student is an individual and should be known personally, called by name and greeted regularly by teachers
- Belief that every student has unique talents and gifts which should be nurtured by the school through effective teaching, extra curricula opportunities and special programs.
- Recognition that 'forgiveness' is a central tenet of the values of a Catholic school
- Commitment to action in support of students in need
- Development of strong student safety policies
- Celebration of significant events in the lives of students such as birthdays and special achievements.
- Professional and caring response to students who are sick or injured
- Homework Centre, the LAP program, individualized instructions, careers advice, counseling services and other avenues for individual assistance to students will be pursued
- Development of a pastoral care program

## JUSTICE FOR ALL

***“The Catholic School does not stop at the courageous teaching of the demands of justice even in the face of local opposition, but tries to pit these demands into practice in its own community in the daily life of the school.”***

*The Catholic School #58*

All members of the St Mary's Catholic College community must be afforded justice and be encouraged to stand up for justice issues within the community.

This policy will be enacted through the following:

- Awareness of the need of families within the school who are struggling financially when organizing excursions, changing uniform and other events
- Provision of avenues for students, parents and teachers to redress injustice when it arises
- Provision of a strong anti bullying policy with emphasis on racial, gender based, sexual or homophobic marginalisation
- Utilisation of conflict resolution strategies
- Avoidance of any practices which cause humiliation, hurt or division among students and staff
- Commitment to gender equity, racial and cultural tolerance, inclusive practices and the ability of all students and teachers to achieve their best
- Provision of fair and just assessment policies and procedures.
- Provision of quality resources and safe and comfortable classrooms for all students
- Commitment to charitable work within the school and fund raising for those in need in the Casino community and abroad.
- Development of socially responsible and challenging learning activities.

## RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR

***“they are to overcome their individualism and discover, in the light of faith, their specific vocation to live responsibly in a community with others.”***

*The Catholic School #45*

At St Mary’s Catholic College the Pastoral Care Policy and Code of Conduct are founded upon the understanding that self discipline and respect for the rights of others are key to responsible behaviour.

The discipline strategies, Code of Conduct and welfare procedures at the school are also underpinned by the belief that rights are reciprocated by responsibilities

- Expectations of classroom behaviour will be clearly articulated
- The School Planner will be used as a vehicle for recording positive and negative behaviour and effort
- The Coordinators Office will be manned to provide time out for students whose behaviour is affecting the learning of others.
- Year Coordinators will take special pastoral responsibility for students in a particular year group and follow up on discipline issues
- Rules concerning safe behaviour in the classroom and playground will be rigidly enforced
- Responsible behaviour will be affirmed whenever possible
- Students whose behaviour is frequently irresponsible will not be able to access extra curricula activities
- Behaviour modification programs will be available to students in need of this assistance
- Provision of behaviour management inservice for teachers
- Expectation that teachers will teach and model positive behaviour

- Students will be encouraged to own their behaviour as a first stage toward more responsible action
- Articulation of clear consequences for irresponsible, uncooperative or anti social behaviour.

## FOSTERING COMMUNITY

***“what makes the Catholic school distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the gospel spirit of freedom and love.”***

*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School #1*

The development of community is a key characteristic of all Catholic schools.

At St Mary’s Catholic College a community focus will be developed in all areas of school life. Specifically the school will address the building of community through:

- Liturgy and prayer as a lynch pin of community celebration
- Homeroom group organized vertically to foster across form interaction among students
- Student involvement and responsibility
- Student Representative Council
- Fostering of identity through house names, celebrating house days and recognition of the traditions on which the school is founded
- Community days for shared celebration
- Inclusion of the parish priest, primary school staff and students, parishioners, religious orders and other community groups in the life of the school.
- Inclusion of parents in the life of the school
- Prayer for special needs within the school community
- Year group activities
- Support of local charities and involvement in community events.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

***“The first and primary educators of children are their parents...partnership between a Catholic school and its parents must continue to be strengthened: not simply to be able to deal with academic problems that arise, but so that the educational goals of the school can be achieved..”***

*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School #42 #43*

At St Mary’s Catholic College relationships between parents and the school are a matter of great importance. The school seeks at all times to communicate with parents regarding student progress, school events, issues of importance educationally and pastoral issues.

This commitment is shown in the following undertakings

- Support of the Parents and Friends organization and its activities
- Involvement of parents in school consultative processes
- Maintenance of sensitivity and confidentiality in matters relating to family relationships
- Contact with parents whenever an issue of academic or pastoral concern arises
- Open door policy for all parents seeking to access teachers, coordinators or executive staff
- Regular communication between home and school
- Provision of detailed academic reports to parents
- Invitation to parents to all school functions including academic assemblies, presentations, masses and other celebrations
- Support for parents when needed
- Use of the planner to maintain contact with parents

## RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

***“Because we are part of God’s creation, human beings are connected with all creatures, the natural world indeed the whole universe. The two accounts in Genesis show that human beings are made in the image and likeness of God and are to be responsible for the care of all creation, a God-given role which, as Christians, we must take very seriously.”***

*The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Social Justice Statement 2002*

At St Mary’s Catholic College all members of the school community are encouraged to respect the environment in which the school exists and to care for the school plant and equipment. This respect for the environment is shown in the following ways

- Provision of environmental education within the school curriculum in each year level
- Support for community groups which promote care for God’s creation
- Provision of green space within the school environment
- Fostering responsible attitudes to littering, water wastage and recycling
- Promotion of environmental health and well being through smoke free school policies, animal welfare strategies, health promotion and care for waterways.

## PRODUCTIVE PEDAGOGY

***“A Catholic school is not simply a place where lessons are taught; it is a centre that has an operative educational philosophy, attentive to the needs of today’s youth and illumed by the Gospel message. A thorough and exact knowledge of the real situation will suggest the best educational methods.”***

*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School #22*

The curriculum offered at St Mary’s Catholic College will be accessible to all students, be based on quality teaching principles and be relevant to the needs of students.

The school is committed to the best possible educational opportunities for all students and recognizes the following



- The need to redress educational disadvantage brought about by factors such as socio-economic status, ethnic origin, disability or family or personal circumstance
- Provision of opportunities for students to work cooperatively and develop team skills
- The need to set high expectations for all students
- Modelling calm and consistent classroom discipline
- Provision of individual attention for all students
- Provision of special assistance when needed
- Provision of a safe environment for students to take risks with their learning
- Adequate resource and library facilities
- Accessibility of technology to all students
- The use of positive encouragement and rewarding of effort in classrooms
- Fair assessment procedures
- Just procedures for enforcing classroom expectations.

## **EVALUATION**

This policy will be evaluated every three years. It is the responsibility of the Deputy Principal to ensure a thorough and systematic review process. The School executive approves any alteration to the policy.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

At St Mary's Catholic College Casino there are a number of policies and procedures which complement this Pastoral Care Policy. Welfare team role descriptions, the Code of Conduct, harassment policies, policy for use of the planner, procedures for accessing the Coordinators Office are all listed in the Staff Handbook (see section 3).

## **CLASSROOM POLICY**

At St Mary's Catholic College we expect total co-operation in the classroom. Our classroom policy is as follows:

- 1 Everyone has a responsibility to act in a co-operative spirit with one another to ensure that efficient and orderly progress can be made by all.
- 2 Everyone has an equal right to hear instructions; thus everyone has a responsibility to remain silent when the teacher is giving instruction to the class.
- 3 Every student has an equal right to be heard; thus everyone has a responsibility to remain silent when the student is invited or authorised to speak to the class.
- 4 Everyone has a right to expect orderly progress through the subject matter without interruption; thus everyone has a duty to arrive promptly at lessons. Should a teacher be delayed it is the responsibility of the class to work quietly and send one member of

the class to the office to inform them the teacher has not arrived. Should a student be delayed with a valid reason he/she should bring a note to explain to the class teacher.

- 5 All students have a responsibility to hand up work on time in order that they may expect their work to be marked within a reasonable time. All work is to be neat and presented appropriately according to subject department policy.
- 6 Everyone has a right to work in clean surroundings - thus all have a duty to keep the rooms and grounds clean. Students are expected to respect school property at all times. Students are also expected to respect the belongings of others.
- 7 Every student has an equal right to answer questions in class - thus students have a duty to put their hands up if they wish to answer and not call out.
- 8 Every student has the right to feel safe and comfortable at the school – harassment of any kind is not tolerated at St Mary's Catholic College.
- 9 Arguing with teachers is not permitted at the school. Students should speak to all members of the school community with courtesy and respect.
- 10 Students are expected to complete all the work set for each lesson and to ensure homework is also done on time.