



## Pastoral Care Policy

### Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person.

### Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students.

**Student** includes any person enrolled in the College, either as a day pupil or as a boarder.

### Definition

At St Patrick's College pastoral care is defined as nurturing the wellbeing of the members of our College community. Following the example and priorities of Jesus and Edmund Rice, we are called to enhance the personal growth of each individual physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually according to their unique circumstances.

### Rationale

Foundational to the nature of pastoral care provided in Catholic Schools is the belief that each person is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), with the inherent dignity that this implies. A further foundational belief for Catholic schools is that in Jesus can be seen God's image and likeness in its most human expression, and that Jesus' values and teachings show all people "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6) by which growth towards human potential is realised. In accordance with this belief, and the College mission, the values to be promoted in the exercise of pastoral care at St Patrick's College will include respect, honesty, justice, commitment and endeavour, honouring diversity, responsibility, compassion, and forgiveness.

St Patrick's College is entrusted by parents and guardians, who are the first and prime educators of the young, with a significant share in responsibility for the education and pastoral care of their children. As a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition, St Patrick's College is an agent in the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church. Pastoral care at St Patrick's College endeavours to provide a guide on which we base our support and care for all in the school community with special consideration being given to those whose circumstances restrict or distort wholesome human growth, relationships and personal fulfilment.

### Scripture

Catholic schools are called to

'Bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, and set the downtrodden free' (Luke 4:18);  
'If one member suffers, all members suffer. If one member is honoured, all members share this joy. You are then the body of Christ' (1 Corinthians 12:25-26)

## **Mission**

The St Patrick's College Mission Understanding states that: We value and nurture the uniqueness of each individual within our community. We provide a school environment where all feel safe and happy.

## **Policy**

As a Catholic community, St Patrick's College recognises the intrinsic dignity of each person and therefore every person's right to be cared for, as well as the obligation to care for others. The College aims to assist each person to move towards the fullness of a life lived as a response to the love of God through the development of the whole person in a Catholic context.

## **Guidelines**

The College attempts to provide an environment that integrates the Gospel values of love, respect, faith, honesty, integrity, service and justice with daily living and learning. In this environment every person is encouraged to grow in self-esteem and to show respect for others without exception. Pastoral care is vitally concerned with the fostering of self-discipline, a disposition that respects oneself and others.

To meet the pastoral needs of the College community the College offers:

- An engaging and relevant classroom curriculum designed to meet the requirements of all learners
- A dedicated and integrated pastoral care and wellbeing-based curriculum to teach emotional intelligence to address issues surrounding respectful relationships, resilience, decision making, coping skills and the management of stress
- A student care and management package which focuses on school wide positive behaviour support, through 3 key tiers of intervention
- As part of the school wide positive behaviour support framework, the college offers:
  - Counselling support accessible for all students.
  - Enhanced learning support and programs accessible for relevant students.
  - Reengagement centre which provides specialised program for students with needs.
  - Pastoral networks in the event the College needs to refer students to professional groups outside the College.
  - Formal and informal programs to allow all boys to engage with their academic studies.
  - Programs and structures to support students with culturally, linguistically and diverse backgrounds to engage in the College community.

The College recognises that the effectiveness of pastoral care depends to a significant extent on the staff's ability to implement it. With this in mind the College:

- employs a Pastoral Care Coordinator to work with staff to develop programs and source resources.
- encourages staff to undertake professional development, to better equip them to deal with the pastoral care of students in all its complexity.
- ensures all members of the College community are accountable for their words and actions in the light of this policy.

While recognising the need to care for each individual, a balance needs to be maintained between the demands of an individual on the resources of the College and the needs of the whole College Community.

---

### **Status of Policy**

This policy has been developed by St Patrick's College.

This policy has been endorsed by the College Advisory Council on 4 February 2020

This policy is due to be updated in 12 months from the date endorsed by the College Advisory Council unless required earlier.