

**Definition**

Pastoral care has been defined as the total care of the student. It is a term used to describe both an attitude and process, and is based upon a belief in the dignity of the individual. In a school it is expressed through:

- the development of quality relationships
- the provision of satisfying learning experiences
- the establishment of an affective care network

**College Vision and Values**

Our Mission Statement expresses the context and the goal of pastoral care at Marist College North Shore:

At Marist College North Shore we encourage all students to fulfil their potential by providing each with a high quality holistic education in a nurturing community and Christian environment, richly modelled on the charism of Marcellin Champagnat.

Our interest is the whole life of each student. We are therefore concerned with the range of potentialities, capabilities and attitudes that impact on a person's life. Ours is not a narrow interest only in the academic and intellectual; the spiritual, emotional, social are also arenas for our care and endeavour. Marist Education at North Shore fosters a family spirit, where each boy experiences belonging and acceptance. This community is real, nurturing and expressive of strong Christian values. In light of St. Marcellin's axiom to 'love all students equally' teaching and pastoral activity within the College is conducted in an equitable manner that takes account of the special gifts and needs of each student.

**Guiding Principles**

The following principles guide the philosophy and practices of pastoral care at Marist College North Shore:

1. The College, as a Catholic school, is part of the pastoral ministry of the Church.
2. There is a pastoral dimension to the role of every staff member.
3. Every member of the school community should experience a sense of belonging to a caring Christian Community.
4. The intellectual, spiritual, physical development of a person cannot be divorced from their social, psychological or affective development. They are all integrated and interdependent elements.
5. Every member of the community needs to treat others with respect, courtesy, dignity and fairness. This is particularly the case for teachers and staff in their dealings with the boys. It is above all the adults of the school community who must model appropriate Christian values and attitudes to the students and the wider community.
6. Every teacher can express his or her pastoral concern for the boys by teaching to the best of his or her ability. Lessons that are well prepared, carefully taught, attempt to engage the students, and a learning environment that is well managed, are basic expressions of pastoral concern.
7. Recognition of individual students should be made through greetings, use of Christian names, birthday greetings, comments on special achievements and so on.
8. Students can experience pastoral care in a variety of settings: both formal, such as classroom or laboratory, and casual and incidental ones, such as playground or sports

- field. All staff are encouraged to engage with students in a variety of settings. Establishing quality relationships with the boys is a fundamental responsibility of staff, a practical aid to effective teaching, and a basic expression of pastoral care.
9. Tutors and House Coordinators should work assiduously at becoming familiar with their students. They should be aware of significant personal issues and times of greater need or anxiety in the life of the boys in their care.
  10. House Coordinators will oversee the general pastoral needs of the students in their Year groups. They will use the Assembly Period each cycle to address significant pastoral issues, as outlined in the annual Pastoral Care plan. (see appendix) This plan will be reviewed annually, and revised as needed.
  11. Professional Counsellors are available at the College to assist with the pastoral needs of boys.
  12. If it becomes apparent that a boy would benefit from more professional counselling the House Coordinator will refer him to one or other of the College Counsellors.
  13. The weekly House Coordinator Meetings will consider pastoral issues and work collaboratively to address them as they arise. Executive members and College Counsellors will attend and contribute to these weekly meetings.
  14. The College Discipline policy is to be viewed as an expression of general pastoral care. Its procedure and practices will be based on the welfare of students individually and collectively.
  15. Communication with parents is an important adjunct to pastoral care. The student diary is a first means of contact. This can be followed up with phone conversations or more formal written communication or interviews. Subject teachers, Tutors and House Coordinators are encouraged to initiate contact if the situation is warranted.
  16. The Years 7 and 9 Camps and the Year 12 Retreat have a definite and obvious Pastoral intent.
  17. Special programs will be implemented to assist students cope with particularly challenging situations and issues. The MACE (Modified Adolescents Coping with Emotions) and Seasons (of Grief) programmes are currently operating examples of such.
  18. It is appropriate for students, especially senior ones, to be skilled to assist with pastoral care within the school. Some possibilities of this are the Peer Support group, Peer Mediation and the roles of student leaders.
  19. The introduction of vertical tutor groups aims at establishing pastoral relationships across all Year groups. One of its clear purposes is to provide positive role modelling and mentoring opportunities from the senior students for the junior students of the College.
  20. Particular help will be offered to Year Seven students as they make the transition from Primary school and adapt to the challenges of secondary education at Marist College North Shore. Orientation, Peer Support and Homework Support programs currently operate within the school.
  21. Extra Curricular opportunities will be utilised as appropriate to deal with issues of special pastoral concern to the boys of various Year Groups. House Coordinators will generally be responsible for organising such experiences.
  22. Outside specialist agencies will be utilised to support and enhance the pastoral work of the College. The Counsellors in particular will access and refer students to such agencies as deemed necessary. Champagnat House at Eastwood and the Berne Educational Centre are two examples of agencies currently used by the College.
  23. The College Executive and Middle Management will be conscious of, regularly consider, and act to address, the pastoral needs of the staff.
  24. All personnel who work with or on behalf of the College in the care of its students are expected to comply with all facets of this Pastoral Care Policy.

**Policy Review**

All College policies are subject to constant monitoring. The College's policy on Pastoral Care will be reviewed annually and adjusted as deemed necessary by the College Executive to ensure that the principles enunciated in this document are enshrined in the practices and procedures of the College. Pastoral care policies, practices and procedures need to be formally reviewed every three years, so that recommendations for improvements can be considered and implemented. This was done in 2002, (See Separate Report) and should be again undertaken in 2005. To ensure the practices of Teachers, Tutors, House Coordinators and other staff are in accord with the principles of this policy, the Director of Students and Deputy Headmaster will monitor them regularly.