

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Rationale

The Pastoral Care Policy outlines specific programs and initiatives designed to cater for the implicit and explicit needs of our school community members.

The function of Pastoral Care in Esperance Christian Primary School is to:

1. Provide an environment, a curriculum and a set of practices based on the Bible. Esperance Christian Primary School draws from approaches that understand a school to be a community committed to the students' development as fully integrated people through educational means.
2. 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.
3. Ensure that, within the school, students should see Christian values actively lived rather than merely spoken of, and experience them in sincere interpersonal relationships.
4. Be concerned with the nurturing and well-being of all who impact on the school community. A school's pastoral dimension will show itself in the mutual care and support that administrators and staff show towards each other, as well as through the care they all show for their students. From the pastoral dimension of the total school life, students learn their own value and dignity.

Purpose

1. To instil a sense of family atmosphere and Christian community.
2. To develop a caring environment where respect, understanding and support is nurtured amongst adults and children alike.
3. To integrate specific pastoral care programmes into the daily life of our school.

Actions:

The strategies to be used to implement the Pastoral Care Policy will vary from time to time depending on the circumstances and needs of individuals or groups. The key is to be flexible in terms of the programs, initiatives and structures that are put in place. For Pastoral Care to be effective it must incorporate flexibility also in terms of pace of delivery and duration. The following programs and initiatives are by no means exhaustive and are listed to merely represent some of the range of options that are implemented to meet our needs. The strategies have been grouped into three distinct areas, depending on their target recipients.

STUDENTS:

- **Peer Support** – creates buddies between older students in years 6 & 7 and younger students in Years PP & 1. Younger children have increased confidence in the playground through knowing some of the older children whom they can turn to for help.
- **Collaborative Learning Strategies** – through the teaching of social skills necessary for the approach to work children benefit from greater cooperation skills, better listening skills and an improved ability to work and get along with their peers. All children can experience success and lessen their fears of failure.
- **“Kids Matter” initiative** – a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children. *Kids Matter Primary* provides the proven methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced kids.
- **Religious Education** – In-class Bible lessons, provide opportunities for children to

discuss issues, share ideas and thoughts, personal reflection time, prayer, develop a sense of self and self-worth and recognise their gifts and talents.

STAFF:

- **Mentoring Program** – can be implemented to assist teachers to renew their skills or give support to a staff member struggling to cope with some aspect of their work.
- **Appraisal Process** – designed to be an affirming process by recognising the excellent work of classroom teachers and acknowledging such efforts.
- **Professional Development** – staff members are allocated time for personal professional development during the year.
- **Communication Network and Procedures** – are designed to ensure that all staff members are fully informed of latest information and do not feel “left out”. This is a critical area of school operations in terms of keeping staff morale strong.
- **Social Activities** – are planned on a term basis to give staff the opportunity to mix socially and develop friendships outside of the normal work environment. Some are more planned and others very impromptu.

PARENTS AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY:

- **Parent Information Evenings** – to enable parents to meet their children’s teachers and establish a relationship based upon an understanding of the teacher’s expectations and hopes for the class during the year.
- **Home and School Social Functions** – play an important role in help new families to meet other parents in a social setting. Also provides social interaction for single parent families whose burden is often such that they have reduced opportunities for socialising. Helps to create a sense of community and spirit of friendliness.
- **Interviews** – Staff / Parent – parents are encouraged to arrange an interview at any time of the year to discuss their child’s progress or their concerns. This is considered to be a vital part of the overall communication process so vital to fostering good pastoral care.
- **Assemblies** – provide an opportunity for the school community to come together and share news, present awards to student and be entertained by class items. This is an integral part of coming together as a school community to share our successes and encourage the students.