



## St. Finbar's, Glenbrook Pastoral Care Policy, 2012



### Towards a Definition of Pastoral Care

- Pastoral Care is the integration of the academic, social and religious dimensions of a school's energy so that an atmosphere of care prevails within the school community.
- Each member of the school community - administrators, parents, students and teachers - is invited to become more fully human.
- Pastoral care is developing empathetic relationships so that the people in the school community are nurtured into wholesome maturity.

***Pastoral care is an expression of the philosophy and vision of the school.***  
***Kevin Treston***



### Pastoral Care for Schools

I have come that you may have life and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall be a true shepherd to them. (Ezekiel 34:16)

As the Father loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. (John 15:9)

Pastoral Care has as its focus the life of Jesus Christ. Pastoral Care in the draws its inspiration and strength from the life of Jesus Christ. In Jesus we see God's paramount expression of love, compassion, reconciliation and justice

In all aspects of human life, Jesus is at work, calling, forming and enabling us to be his people, a community of faith. This community welcomes individuals to new understandings of life, it nourishes and sustains life, and it empowers each one of us to respond to the Gospel call.

Jesus demonstrates by his own life what we have been created to be-fully human, fully alive and able to participate in the life and love of God. It is this vision of human life which the Catholic Church and its schools seek to embrace and emulate in approaches to pastoral care.

### As such, Pastoral Care is:

- concerned with the dignity and integral growth of the person
- the responsibility entrusted to all members of the faith community
- a force for healing, reconciliation and liberation
- an expression of and commitment to justice

***“Pastoral care permeates the total climate of relationships within the community of the Catholic School. It has the individual as its focus, and reflects the support, the encouragement, and the tender care shown and experienced in the ethos of gospel-based communities.”***  
***Catholic Education Commission, Victoria***

The community of St. Finbar’s, Glenbrook recognises that there are discrete yet interlinking dimensions of Pastoral Care. These dimensions are:

- i. Quality Relationships are fostered and developed through the implementation of the following policies and strategies:
  - Student Relationships Policy
  - Restorative Justice Practices
  - Community interactions
  - ‘Maintaining Right Relations’ CEO Policy
  - School Expectations of “Be Respectful” ; “Be Fair”
- ii Formation of self discipline and responsibility are developed through class units of work drawn from Personal Development, Health & Physical Education Syllabus. These are further modelled by staff and parents through discussions, class conferences, meetings, behaviour contracts, reward systems.
- iii Pastoral programs are supported through CEO student support initiatives, school practices and ethos, established student IPs and student support processes, behaviour management contracts, parish programs and newsletter advertising of community support programs.
- iv Comprehensive and inclusive approaches to teaching and learning are an ongoing challenge to staff across schools. At St. Finbar’s we endeavour to address this through curriculum initiatives and programs including syllabus implementation, teaching pedagogies of differentiating the curriculum, multiple intelligences, co-operative learning strategies, thinking skills, ICT etc
- v Supportive School / Family Relationships are a key feature of the St. Finbar’s community. This is fostered through staff and parent interactions, school newsletter inserts and messages, open and supportive communication, staff support practices for students/ families in need.
- vi Effective networks of care are hi-lighted through CEO student services structures; St. Finbar’s Pastoral Care Group (parent initiative); Parish Pastoral Care Group; communication channels through office staff, principal, leadership team and staff; liaison with parish team. These networks meet on both formal and informal levels as needs emerge and are identified. All staff assume a responsibility for the transferral of this information as required.
- vii Coordinated and supportive organisational structures are implemented through the following:
  - St. Finbar’s Pastoral Care Group
  - Parish Pastoral Care Group
  - School Staff
  - Parish Priest
  - Principal
  - Assistant Principal- specifically Student Relationships Policy
  - Learning Support Staff- specifically student IPs.



In order to provide appropriate structures, which enable this quality of relationships to be established in the school's daily and routine life, St. Finbar's has a network of staff central to fostering interaction between staff, students and parents. This network is:

