POLICY AND GUIDELINES

PASTORAL CARE

Introduction

Every member of the Huntingtower community aims to provide an environment in which each child/young person feels safe**,** nurtured**,** recognised and affirmed, is assisted to grow to the fullness of their potential and to experience a feeling of belonging and connectedness to the whole community.

Pastoral Care assists in the cultivation of wisdom, joy, life, love, enthusiasm, diligence, obedience, thoughtfulness, truthfulness, perception, freedom, control and excellence which are understood to be natural qualities inherent in everyone as the expression of God. Students are encouraged to recognise their limitless potential to demonstrate God's qualities and achieve their desired goals. Huntingtower seeks to express these qualities in all its programs and activities.

Huntingtower students are encouraged to support and be understanding of children and young people who have a physical, emotional or mental disability.

Students need to ensure that, within the school, they should actively live the values of Huntingtower rather than merely speak of, and experience them in sincere interpersonal relationships. From the pastoral dimension of the total school life, students learn their own values and dignity.

Pastoral Care is the responsibility and the right of all, students, parents, families, employees and the wider Huntingtower community.

Purpose

This policy is to inform the students, parents, families, employees and the wider Huntingtower community of the principles and responsibilities in providing effective pastoral care.

To develop a caring environment where respect, understanding and support is nurtured amongst the students and employees alike. This is integrated through specific Pastoral Care programs and activities in the daily life of Huntingtower.

Principles

- Pastoral care is for everyone and is everyone's responsibility
- Pastoral care is enacted in school environments that are safe, supportive, inclusive and empowering
- In responding to pastoral issues and concerns, appropriate confidentiality must be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally
- Pastoral care requires that the integrity of the family unit is respected
- Purposeful training of staff in pastoral care is required for the wellbeing of all members of the school community.

Definitions

Pastoral Care is a set of practices, procedures and programs which attempt to meet the totality of needs of students so that each child and young person has the opportunity to reach his/her potential, and are equipped with the skills to cope with life. Pastoral Care addresses social, spiritual, mental, emotional and physical needs. The staff share a belief in the value of each individual student and are committed to working with students to produce a love of learning, self-respect and a real sense of community.

Pastoral Care and Support Services

Classroom staff, Mentors and Learning Support staff all offer individual and group support in relation to the academic, social and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people through comprehensive support programs:

Senior School
Senior School Pastoral Care is based on a Mentor system, Year Level Coordinators and the House system.

In *Years 7 - 10*, the Mentor system is based on class groups rather than House groups. The Mentors are responsible for the Pastoral Care of the group. The Mentor meets with the students daily, gets to know them at a more personal level and keeps a general eye on their welfare. The Mentor is in regular contact with each students' teachers and is often the first port-of-call for parents. Parents are welcome to contact the Mentor about any issue relating to their child/young person.

Due to the nature of VCE classes the students in *Years 11 and 12* will continue to operate in House Mentor groups.

Year Level Coordinators are responsible for overseeing the progress of the Year group. They can be contacted for any issues relating to the year. The Year Level Coordinators work closely with the Mentors to ensure all students are progressing well. They also confirm that the year level has a clear identity and that the educational program is meeting the needs of the students. The Year Level Coordinators are responsible in coordinating the year level camp.

Learning Enrichment

Huntingtower acknowledges the uniqueness of every student and the necessity to provide appropriate programs to satisfy the needs of all learners, the Learning Enrichment Centre enables the gifted and talented, students with learning difficulties and those students who may need support for a specific skill or strategy to become confident learners. All students are encouraged to develop their self-esteem and self-belief.

The Centres purpose is to provide a high standard of education in which each child/young person are encouraged to recognise and demonstrate his/her ability to achieve in any area of the curriculum.

Junior School

All students are part of a class group with their own classroom and class teacher who, in addition to teaching them for most of their subjects, is responsible for the individual pastoral care of those in the class group. There are many programs to build self-confidence and develop positive interactions between all students.

Any concerns are addressed by class or specialist teachers, or the Head of Junior School, as appropriate. A Junior School Counsellor is available to provide individual advice to the student and their parents.

Relationships are promoted across year levels, and with the Early Learning Centre and the Senior School, to widen our sense of responsibility and community.

We support a smooth passage from Junior to Senior Schools through our transition and orientation program from Year 6 to Year 7, where the Year Level Coordinator, Head of Middle School, meets every student.

School Counsellors

The School Counsellors offer confidential support and information to students and parents. A comprehensive counselling program is extended to all students from Preschool to Year 12. The service is also available to parents who may be concerned about particular aspects of their child/young person's development, or seek information and support for issues related to the care of their children or young person, parenting or family life.

The School Counsellors work very closely with teachers and are members of the student pastoral team. They assist with professional development for teachers through formal and informal training and consultations. They also provide advice about the development of students in the school to maximise learning and engagement.

Expected Outcomes

- Students become successful lifelong learners, confident and creative individuals, active, informed and hope-filled citizens contributing to a just society
- Students display knowledge and appreciation of self and others
- Pastoral care is active and visible
- School community members work respectfully and collaboratively with families and communities
- Student wellbeing and learning outcomes are strengthened
- Students recognise their uniqueness and strive to reach their potential
- Growth in understanding of pastoral care is evident

Communication

This policy will be available to staff on the School Intranet and to parents and students via the parent portal. In addition, relevant aspects will be raised with students at meetings, highlighted in Bulletins and newsletters and discussed at Staff meetings.

Related Policies

- Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Child Protection – Failure to Protect Policy
- Child Protection – Failure to Disclose Policy
- Protection of Children – Grooming Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Privacy Policy
- Staff Social Media Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Critical Incident Management Policy
- Emergency Management Policy

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle or as required.

Authorisation

This policy was authorised by the Principal May 2016