



# Pastoral Care Policy for MACS Schools

## Introduction

Pastoral care is a demonstration of profound respect for the human dignity of each person who is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1: 26–27). This call to respect each person is inspired by the sacred Scriptures and brought to life by the person of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' life and teachings show all people 'the way, the truth and the life' (John 14: 6), inviting each to fullness (John 10:10). 'Throughout the Gospel, Jesus illuminates for us how we are called to live out our mission, approach our work and conduct our relationships with love, hope, dignity, compassion and forgiveness' (eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities, 2018, p.4).

The Church's teachings are central to the moral, legal and mission driven responsibility of all Catholic schools to create nurturing environments where children and young people are respected, their voices heard and where they are safe and feel safe. This is particularly so for the most vulnerable children, recognising that some children and young people are more vulnerable than others, and Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) commits to providing the care and services required to support them and their families, and to ensure their safety within all Catholic schools (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

In Catholic schools, all relationships, including those with students, staff and parents/guardians/carers, are built on unconditional positive regard. Every person has a responsibility to understand the integral role they play, individually and collectively. For adults in Catholic schools, nurturing the pastoral care, wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

'Pastoral care' is brought to life in Catholic school communities through the actions, interactions and attitudes of all community members. It is evident in the school's vision and mission statements, policies, procedures, curriculum, student support services and partnerships with parents, who are the first educators of their children (General Directory for Catechesis 226 & 227).

## Purpose

This policy documents strategies for creating and maintaining a culture in MACS' schools which is culturally safe, and which ensures that children and young people are known, and feel safe, valued and respected. The policy articulate strategies and practices that:

- develop and enhance every student's wellbeing and sense of connectedness and belonging to their school as a faith-filled learning community
- cultivate safe, physical, emotional, mental, social and online environments that comply with relevant legislative and legal requirements
- ensure that the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued.

## Scope

This policy applies in all MACS schools, including specialist schools operated by Melbourne Archdiocese Specialist Schools Ltd (MACSS) and school boarding premises operated by MACS schools.

## Principles

Pastoral care in MACS school communities:







## Student

Student means a person who is enrolled at or attends a MACS school.

## Student wellbeing

A sustainable state of positive mood and attitude, resilience, and satisfaction with self, relationships, and experiences at school (Noble & Wyatt, 2008, p.21).

In MACS school settings, a positive sense of pastoral care and wellbeing supports a base for rich learning that enables children and young people to flourish, give expression to their authentic selves and realise their unique potential. This holistic view recognises the sacredness, dignity, and giftedness of each person (Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing, 2017, p.3).

## Related policies and documents

### Related MACS policies and documents

Anti-Bullying Policy (including cyberbullying)  
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy  
Pastoral Care of Students Relating to Gender Policy  
Student Behaviour Policy  
eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities  
Horizons of Hope: Vision and Context  
Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing  
Horizons of Hope: Learning Diversity  
Horizons of Hope: Families as Partners  
Identity and growth: A perspective for Catholic schools

### Resources

Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (2018)  
Student Wellbeing Hub

## Legislation and standards

*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic.)*  
*Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)*  
*Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)*  
*Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic.)*  
*Privacy Act 1988 (Vic.)*  
*Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic.)*

## Policy information

<b>Responsible director</b>	Director, Learning and Regional Services
<b>Policy owner</b>	General Manager, Student Wellbeing
<b>Approving authority</b>	Executive Director
<b>Assigned board committee</b>	Child Safety and Risk Management
<b>Approval date</b>	October 2023
<b>Risk Rating</b>	High
<b>Date of next review</b>	March 2025
<b>Publication</b>	CEVN, MACS website

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
<b>Assigned framework</b>	Care, Safety and Welfare of Students
<b>Supporting documents</b>	See list of supporting documents and related policies above
<b>Superseded documents</b>	MACS Pastoral Care of Students Policy – v2.0 – 2022 MACS Pastoral Care of Students Policy – v1.0 – 2022
<b>New policy</b>	