

SIENA COLLEGE CAMBERWELL STUDENT PASTORAL CARE POLICY



SIENA
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CAMBERWELL

POLICY TITLE: STUDENT PASTORAL CARE POLICY

DEVELOPED / REVIEWED BY

Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy
Heads of House
Siena College Policy Committee
MACS (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools)

REVIEW SUMMARY

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 origin of the phrase 'pastoral care' is in the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd given to us in John's Gospel (John 10: 1–18). Here the Good Shepherd is the one who looks after his sheep and who is prepared to lay down his life for them. Likewise in the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15: 1–7; Matthew 18: 12–14) is found the image of a shepherd who has compassion for the 'little ones' who are at risk. Pastoral care of students then, is the kind of care that is exemplified for us by the person of Jesus Christ.

The Church's teachings are central to the moral, legal and mission driven responsibility of Siena College 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, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and /or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with disabilities (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

At Siena College, all relationships, including those with students, staff, and parents/carers, are built on unconditional positive regard. Every person has a responsibility to understand the integral role they play, individually and collectively. Nurturing the pastoral care, wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is the priority of all staff at Siena College.

'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).

The Dominican Ideals are a commitment to truth explored in dialogue, a vibrant preaching of the Gospel, a critical appreciation of culture and cultures, and a love of the beautiful. Our goal in each of our Educational Ministries is to foster these values, together with a spirit of prayer and contemplation, respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each individual, and the pursuit of excellence. (Dominican Education Australia)

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DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This document was first developed by Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy, Antonella Rosati, and the four Heads of House in July 2022 considering the new Child Safe Standards that came into effect from 1 July 2022.

RATIONALE

The Student Pastoral Care Policy ensures that Siena College documents strategies for creating and maintaining a culture which is culturally safe, and which ensures that children and young people are known, and feel safe, valued, and respected. The College Student Pastoral Care Policy should articulate procedures and practices that:

- develop and enhance every student's wellbeing and sense of connectedness, and belonging to the College 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

DEFINITIONS

inclusion	<p>The right to access and receive a full and engaging education.</p> <p>Siena College welcome all members of the community as equal, embracing diversity as a means for dialogue, engagement and deeper understandings of self, others, and God. The uniqueness and sacred dignity of each person is celebrated, driven by the Gospel message of love and justice. These convictions guide the encounters, actions and pedagogical approaches that enable all children to learn and thrive.</p>
pastoral care	<p>A demonstration of profound respect for the human dignity of each person who is created in the image and likeness of God.</p> <p>Pastoral care includes the decisions, structures, and practices that nurture, support and assist a student to flourish and reach their spiritual, physical, cognitive, social, and emotional potential so that they may come to a deeper understanding of their own humanness. The pastoral care of students at Siena College is focused on actions that promote health, wellbeing, resilience, academic outcomes, social capital, and ethical decision making (Cross, 2014).</p>
student wellbeing	<p>A sustainable state of positive mood and attitude, resilience, and satisfaction with self, relationships, and experiences at school (Noble & Wyatt, 2008, p.21).</p> <p>At Siena College, 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).</p>

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PRINCIPLES / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Pastoral care at Siena College:

- involves a commitment to creating safe, supportive, inclusive and hope-filled learning environments of welcome where human dignity is respected, diversity and inclusiveness are valued, and authentic relationships are fostered
- nurtures the wellbeing of every young person at the College, 'their unique story, giftedness and temperament must be understood and valued in a way that enables love, respect, compassion, forgiveness and hope to thrive' (Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing, 2017, p.3)
- ensures that all members of the school community are responsible for creating a positive pastoral climate. Staff, students, and parents/guardians/carers share responsibility for developing and maintaining open and cooperative relationships characterised by respect, trust, goodwill and a willingness to engage collaboratively. It is vital that all members of the school community work together to provide a consistent and supportive environment in which students may develop and grow towards maturity
- identifies and nurtures partnerships with appropriate services and agencies to support the pastoral care and wellbeing needs of every student
- responds to the pastoral and wellbeing needs of students and maintains appropriate confidentiality and privacy. Information is communicated, with necessary permissions, to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

PROCEDURES

Siena College demonstrates effective pastoral care through the following strategies.

Siena College supports staff to develop their pastoral care and wellbeing strategies by:

- providing coherent policy frameworks, guidance, and resources
- developing targeted professional learning
- monitoring compliance through existing protocols including cyclical review as part of school improvement and Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) requirements.

The Principal and school leaders enhance the College's pastoral care and wellbeing by:

- utilising the Siena College Student Pastoral Care Policy, Horizons of Hope education framework, eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities, Identity, and growth: A perspective for Catholic schools and the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework as the basis to inform and guide their curriculum planning, policies, and practices
- supporting staff, through appropriate professional learning, to strengthen their understanding of core Catholic principles including the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person
- engaging students and their parents/guardians/carers to collaboratively develop and periodically review practices
- ensuring whole-college approaches are known, understood and readily accessible to all members of the community.

Teachers and staff at Siena College support the pastoral care and wellbeing of students by:

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- creating and maintaining safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments that enable the unique potential, gifts, and innate qualities of each student to unfold and thrive
- understanding their professional duty of care and accountability regarding legislation and compliance
- using relationship-based approaches to establish consistent expectations for student behaviour
- working in partnership with parents/guardians/carers and families to build resilience and promote a positive sense of self.

Students contribute to developing positive pastoral learning environments and their own and other's wellbeing by:

- treating all members of the College community with respect and courtesy
- following College policies, procedures, and guidelines
- taking responsibility for their actions
- reporting concerns about wellbeing and safety
- co-operating with teachers, College staff and their parents/guardians/carers.

Parents/guardians/carers contribute to developing positive pastoral learning environments for their own and other children's wellbeing by:

- working respectfully, collaboratively and in partnership with staff and members of the College community to create high expectations
- explicitly teaching, modelling, and promoting socially responsible behaviours
- promoting and upholding the core values of the College by supporting College policies and procedures.

RESPONSIBILITY

- Principal (Primary responsibility)
- All Siena College Staff

RELATED LEGISLATION

- 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.)

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RELATED SIENA COLLEGE POLICIES

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy June 2022
- Student Behaviour Policy September 2022
- Anti-Bullying Policy July 2022

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV), 2018, *Positive Behaviour Guidelines*,
http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/getmedia/bc1d235d-9a98-4bb4-b3ac-84b50fa7c639/CECV-Positive-Behaviour-Guidelines_FINAL2.aspx?ext=.pdf

Catholic Education Melbourne, 2018, eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities,
<https://www.macs.vic.edu.au/Our-Schools/Curriculum-Learning-Programs/Student-Wellbeing/eXcel.aspx>

Catholic Education Melbourne, 2017, *Horizons of Hope: Vision and Context*,
<https://www.macs.vic.edu.au/Our-Schools/Curriculum-Learning-Programs/Horizons-of-Hope/Vision-Context.aspx>

NEXT REVIEW

July 2025

POLICY LOCATION

<https://sienacentral.siena.vic.edu.au/send.php?id=62800>

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