



Pastoral Care Policy

As a Catholic School in the Brigidine tradition, Brigidine College has always placed a great importance on the Pastoral Care of its students. The actions and words of Jesus form an openly expressed philosophy that seeks to permeate the college. The policies adopted at Brigidine College in regard to the physical, intellectual and emotional needs of the students are monitored for their congruence with the values and attitudes of the Gospel and their relevance to the development of the students at Brigidine College. The college also has a responsibility to recognise the unique struggles of women in contemporary society and to help students become alert to the personal implications of these struggles. Young women at Brigidine College are encouraged to achieve and celebrate excellence while also growing in perseverance and the personal power to manage difficulty.

As learning at Brigidine College takes place in a community, the encouragement of students to negotiate the tension between meeting their own needs and the needs of the College community is regarded as highly educative. The human relationships within the school contribute to the quality of the community which is essential for effective teaching and learning. Pastoral Care of students is integral to the teaching and learning process. Pastoral Care therefore encompasses:

- Quality teaching and learning;
- Effective student management;
- High expectations of student performance;
- Teachers caring for students at the human level.

All members of the College community are expected to be proactive in the creation of quality human relationships within the College. All students participate in a formal pastoral care programme. Students are encouraged to care for other students through specific activities and programmes as well as through providing mutual support. Partnership with parents is fostered and networks with the wider community are developed for the care of our students. The organisational and administrative structures of the College are designed to ensure equity and justice for all students. We strive to create a community where all are welcomed and where we respect and value the rich diversity of culture present in our College community.

Purpose of the Policy

To provide information to parents, students and staff on the scope and procedures of Pastoral Care offered to students at Brigidine College.

Principles and Procedures

Principle One

We promote the fostering of high quality interpersonal relationships between students, parents and staff as a responsibility shared by everyone. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. Formal and informal Pastoral Care educates students about the nature of quality relationships and how they are achieved.

2. Teachers model behaviours which create quality relationships and use language which is intended to make the philosophical aims of the College a reality.
3. Formal and informal Pastoral Care creates an expectation in students that life is challenging and better prepares them to meet challenges.
4. Students are encouraged to recognise their personal power and the positive influence they can have in the world.
5. Students are encouraged to develop resilience when faced with difficulty in relationships and to seek help from significant adults when in difficulty.
6. New students are welcomed and given the support needed to settle in quickly and become part of the Brigidine College Community.
7. Staff recognise when the needs of students require specialised help.

Principle Two

We foster student self discipline and responsibility, wherein students grow progressively in their capacity to exercise moral judgement, democratic values and a concern for the common good. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. Student's rights and responsibilities are clearly articulated in the College and its policies and procedures.
2. The "common good" is defined for the critique of students in the many different communal situations in the College.
3. Meeting deadlines and punctuality are expected of students and allow for the creation of personal excellence as well as the strengthening of the whole community.
4. Students are encouraged to empathise with others and to be helpful to students and staff.
5. Adults in the College model self-discipline, responsibility and democratic values in their work.
6. Expectations of student self discipline, recognition of responsibility and of the needs and rights of others are strengthened by the content chosen for the Pastoral Care programme as well as academic subjects.
7. Students support one another through the Peer Support Programme.

Principle Three

We provide Pastoral Care as a specific and planned means of helping students to value themselves and to experience well-being. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. All home room teachers participate in and actively contribute to Pastoral Care as members of a Year Team lead by a Year Coordinator.

2. The Principal, Assistant Principal, Year Coordinator and School Counsellor meet regularly to create, critique and implement procedures and policies deemed most helpful to the intellectual and emotional needs of young women.
3. The College is committed to all staff recognising their pastoral leadership of students and all staff assuming responsibility for the Pastoral Care of students.
4. Teaching staff show their pastoral care of students in their choice of content for lessons, classroom management, curriculum involvement and their daily contact with students.
5. Ancillary staff are also responsible for sharing the Pastoral Care of students which arises out of their daily contact with them.
6. The College is committed to students being known personally as individuals so that staff might know how to allow each student to value themselves and to experience well being.

Principle Four

We provide a curriculum which is comprehensive and of a high quality so that students are afforded the competence, confidence and right to participate in the cultural and productive life of society. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. KLA Coordinators and Teachers in charge are in contact with the Board of Studies and with appropriate employees of the Catholic Education Office.
2. All teachers update their knowledge of their subject and learning and assessment strategies.
3. A Curriculum Committee (The Learning Forum) is open to all teaching staff and operates to discuss and evaluate curriculum change in the school.
4. The Curriculum Coordinator is aware of initiatives in other schools and systems which could be implemented at Brigidine College.
5. Assessment and Exam procedures are clearly articulated and intended to strengthen the common good as well as create competent and confident students.
6. The curriculum responds to the learning needs of young women.
7. Timetabling of subjects is responsive to the choices of students.
8. Staff have Emergency Care and CPR training to allow students to engage safely in co-curricula activities.
9. Specific staff have responsibility for organising extra co-curricula activities.
10. Staff counsel students who are experiencing difficulty in class and with assessment.
11. A process exists which informs parents of students who are not meeting assessment expectations.

Principle Five

We provide supportive organisational and administrative structures to enhance the climate and experience of Pastoral Care in a way which is flexible and responsive to the needs and well being of students. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. Daily notices are distributed through home room and emails.
2. Home room allows students to be well informed about expectations and possibilities at Brigidine College.
3. Home room includes a time of prayer and reflection which allows students to become centred before their day begins.
4. Home room teachers are encouraged to create discussion during Home room time and Pastoral Care lessons about various aspects of the organisational and administrative structures at Brigidine College.
5. Year Assemblies, community days, reflection days, retreats and camps are used to respond to the needs of a specific year group.
6. The College gathers monthly at whole school assembly.
7. Students are supervised while in classrooms, the playground and sporting grounds.
8. A school counsellor interviews and counsels students in a regular and systematic manner during class or at a convenient time during the day.
9. The Careers Adviser is available for individual interviews during lunch hours or study periods for senior students.
10. The school has a careers room available for student use during lunchtime or during class time.

Principle Six

We promote the development of relationships of trust, cooperation and partnership between the school and family members, and the maintenance by school personnel of respect for and sensitivity to diverse cultural values and family structures and issues. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. The Principal and Business Manager liaise regarding special financial arrangements which may be required by families.
2. Families are contacted when a student appears to be experiencing difficulty.
3. A fortnightly newsletter informs parents of policies attitudes and achievements of the College.
4. The Student College Planner is used as the first means of communicating with parents.
5. Staff are encouraged to use language which will best communicate the procedures and philosophy of the College to parents.

6. Religious festivals of students who are not Catholics are respected.
7. All staff are welcoming of parents and prospective parents.
8. The correct wearing of the uniform is enforced with the intention of unifying the students.
9. Open Day and enrolment material articulates clearly the procedures and philosophy of the College to ensure the highest level of knowledge by parents when they choose Brigidine College for their daughter.
10. Parent committees are informed of any major changes in the College.
11. The Parents and Friends organisation is well advertised throughout the parent's body and invitations for involvement are given regularly.
12. The school organises formal parent teacher interviews and encourages staff to regard themselves as being available to parents at mutually convenient times.
13. Parents are invited to be involved in the learning experiences and Pastoral Care of groups of students in the College.
14. Parents are informed of the Student Behaviour Policy and the philosophy and expectations that guide it.
15. The College presents itself to parents as a learning community and expects that parents will encourage their daughter to exercise her rights and responsibilities as a member of a community.

Principle Seven

We provide effective networks of Pastoral Care due to our partnership and shared responsibility among Staff, Students, Parents and family members and the wider community. As a consequence of this principle, at Brigidine College:

1. Teachers and Year Coordinators communicate closely about and with students.
2. Year Coordinators create teams with home room teachers.
3. When required, teachers and Year Coordinators meet with the Assistant Principal and/or the Principal to receive the Pastoral Care needs of individual students.
4. The Year Coordinator leads the home room team in the implementation of the formal Pastoral Care offered to each student through the formal Pastoral Care programme.
5. The Year Coordinator and the home room team are responsible for writing and evaluating the Pastoral Care programme for the year and for completing a formal annual review of the program.
6. The School Counsellor may be involved in the implementation of certain aspects of the Pastoral Care Programme.

7. The School Counsellor has knowledge of the expertise of outside specialists who may be helpful to students and liaises with these specialists.
8. The Careers Adviser arranges work experience (for interested students), liaises with prospective employers and provides opportunities for relevant speakers to address students.
9. Guest speakers are invited as part of the College's academic curriculum, extra curricula activities and Pastoral Care programme.
10. Experts employed by the Catholic Education Office are available to the College and inform the College's policies.
11. The Careers Adviser works with teachers who are involved in the student subject selection process.