



STUDENT WELFARE POLICY (WELLBEING)

Date approved	May 2014	Date amended	September 2018	Date of next review	September 2019
Approved by	St Mary Star of the Sea College Board				
Author	Frank Pitt, Principal				
Responsible body	College Board College Staff				
Supporting documents, procedures and policies	College Policies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child Protection 2. Prevention of Bullying and Harassment 3. Pastoral Care 4. Complaints and Grievance 5. Good Samaritan Pastoral Framework 				
Reference and legislation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 2. Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 3. Catholic Church Employment Relations Policies 				
Audience	Public - accessible to anyone				

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1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

This policy statement outlines the purpose and procedure adopted by St Mary Star of the Sea College regarding student welfare. A registered non-government school must provide a safe and supportive environment by having in place policies and procedures that provide for student welfare. The purpose of this policy is to outline and provide a general guide on:

- providing a safe and secure environment for all students
- supporting the protection and welfare of students in every instance
- ensuring that the action of staff and volunteers reflects the highest standards of care for students.

St Mary Star of the Sea College must act in compliance with the Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 and CCER (Catholic Church Employment Relations) policies.

2. DEFINITIONS

Compliance

The policies and procedures that have been developed demonstrate that student security, supervision, management and wellbeing are a priority.

Discipline

The process of establishing the parameters of unacceptable behaviour or disregard for College rules. Policies and procedures relating to discipline are to be based on principles of procedural fairness.

Not all incidents require disciplinary action or the application of remediation of student behaviour. Should remediation be necessary it must be procedurally fair.

Harm

Harm relates not only to the physical environment but also refers to violence, physical threats, rejection, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, psychological, social and racial or religious vilification.

Non-Compliance

Students will be counselled for unacceptable behaviour.

Procedural fairness

Procedural fairness refers to the right not only to a hearing but also the right to an unbiased decision should College regulations be disregarded and a penalty required. Procedural fairness includes making available to students and parents policies and procedures under which disciplinary action is taken. It is that common law duty to act fairly in the making of administrative decisions which affects a person's (student) rights, interest and legitimate expectations.

Safe environment

A safe environment for students is one where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel secure.

Supportive environment A supportive environment fosters the spiritual, social, academic, physical and emotional development of students.

3. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the St Mary Star of the Sea College, Wollongong community. It especially applies to students of the College who have a right to a safe and supportive environment. In this environment students can expect evidence of compliance demonstrated by the existence of policies and procedures that have as a focus, student welfare and procedural fairness.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

St Mary Star of the Sea College strives to provide a safe environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel secure and valued.

A safe environment generally refers to the physical environment but also includes the absence of threats, abuse, harassment and racial or religious vilification. A safe environment is enhanced by a supportive environment which fosters the spiritual, social, academic and emotional development of students - in such an environment where students are treated with respect and fairness by all in the College community. This provides students with security, supervision and risk management for both formal and informal curriculum activities.

Students not only should expect to grow and learn in a safe environment but that their mental, physical and emotional wellbeing would also be a priority. Where student welfare is a priority it is possible for students to develop a sense of self-worth and personal growth.

Students are encouraged to have a profound respect for each other because while each student is different they are all made in the image and likeness of a loving God.

5. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD

The Board will provide good governance and leadership by supporting the Principal in his / her responsibilities to provide a safe and supportive environment in which the students can live, learn and grow spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

It can be expected of the Board that it would support the planned outcome of the formal and informal curriculum to have a student body that feels respected, safe and supported in a caring environment.

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

Where possible the Principal and leadership team utilise the principle of subsidiarity to ensure that procedures developed are appropriate to establishing and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for students and staff.

In such an environment, the risk of harm is diminished by attention to details associated with Work, Health and Safety policy and procedures. In a safe and supportive environment all members of staff are required to treat students and each other with respect so that all might feel valued.

Further, the College administration must ensure that courses of study and programs are designed to meet the personal, social and learning needs of students.

While addressing the spiritual, physical, intellectual, social and emotional wellbeing of students the College administration must provide security, supervision and management of students while at school or at off-site activities.

7. RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF

The staff has a responsibility to be respectful and inclusive of each other and the students and to be sensitive to individual differences and needs.

In order to develop a safe and supportive environment which caters for the wellbeing of students and staff, staff are required to work with the College administration to provide for student welfare.

When working with students, staff must relate to students in such a way that students feel valued and have a positive attitude to themselves and their learning. This can be evidenced by:

- treating students with respect and fairness
- providing effective, relevant teaching
- providing positive support and encouragement
- providing opportunities for students to enjoy success and recognition
- providing security, supervision and risk management for students engaged in on-site and off-site activities
- modelling the behaviours that indicate clearly that student welfare and wellbeing is a priority.

8. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents / Carers should ensure that students attend the College daily and communicate with Student Services (usually) or the Assistant Principal, Dean of Pastoral Care (if necessary) regarding absences.

They should be aware of student progress academically and as a member of the College community. When the need arises parents should avail themselves of the opportunities to discuss the student's education and welfare.

Parents / Carers and the College must work together effectively in providing positive support and encouragement so that the students work towards developing and maintaining a sense of self-worth and derive enjoyment from their learning.

9. RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS

Students are required to work with the College administration and staff so that a safe and supportive environment is maintained.

Working with staff requires a knowledge of procedures and a willingness to follow procedures that are designed for their welfare and wellbeing.

Further, students should strive to make a useful contribution to the life of the College and endeavour to derive enjoyment from their learning.

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version control	Date effective	Approved by	Amendment
1.0	May 2014	Board	Replaced Pastoral Care Policy
2.0	November 2014		Updated as per Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 and Catholic Church Employment Relations Policies
3.0	February 2017	Board	Review of Policy
4.0	October 2018	Board	Review of Policy