St Ambrose Primary School Pottsville

Pastoral Care Policy – 2015
(Incorporating Restorative Justice Practices)
Mission Statement

At St Ambrose Primary School, Pottsville we take our school mission from the words of St Ambrose himself. He taught: "Omnia Christus Est Nobis! If you have a wound to heal, he is the doctor; if you are parched by fever, he is the spring; if you are oppressed by injustice, he is justice; if you are in need of help, he is strength; if you fear death, he is life; if you desire Heaven, he is the way; if you are in the darkness, he is light. Taste and see how good is the Lord: blessed is the man who hopes in him!"

Omnia Christus Est Nobis speaks to a Magis (greater) approach to life – to consider that our imprint on this world is far greater and deeper than any of us could ever possibly fathom. Our actions in this world, if guided by a love of and devotion to Christ enrich the lived experiences of all people around us.

It is our deepest desire, our most salient goal, to strive each day to provide a quality education in a Christ centred community, encourage a love of learning and nurture the potential of all.

OMNIA CHRISTUS EST NOBIS

( TO US CHRIST IS ALL)
Vision for learning

Core Values

Responsibility  Safe  Fair  Trustworthy  Friendly
Co-operation  Just  Community Member
Tolerant  Generous  Honest  Caring
Collaborative  Unified  Inclusive  Loving  Service
Supportive  Equitable  Compassionate
Equitable  Accountable  Empathetic
Understanding  Understanding

Integrity  Risk takers  Persistent  Achiever  Engaged  Leader
Resilient  Passionate  Creative  Innovative  Confident
High expectations  Successful  Challenged  Motivated  Positive  Excellence
Rationale

The St Ambrose Primary School community strives to nurture the growth of all individuals through a supportive, inclusive and Catholic learning space where all members can grow. St Ambrose Primary School actively engages our conviction that our school is a faith community promoting the values and teaching of Jesus and the Catholic Church.

Our Pastoral Care Policy seeks to reinforce and extend Christian teachings within the school environment. This is achieved by all members – teachers, children, parents, parishioners and members of the community - leading and caring for each other in a way that expresses the teachings of Christ in our daily lives. We believe that all members of the community should be treated with dignity and respect. All members of our community should feel that they are valued and loved infinitely.

This conviction affects what we teach and how we teach.

Beliefs

As one community, we believe:

- All students have the right to learn, grow and play in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment
- Each of our learners have the capacity to be successful
- All community members have the right to feel safe all of the time
- Behaviour management should be holistic with the focus being directed to the behaviour or action and not the individual
- Restorative Justice focuses on repairing the harm done to people and relationships, rather than on punishing offenders
- Students should be aware of consequences so they take responsibility for their behaviour and develop self-control
- A consequence is a result of an action and consequences must always be fair
- Consistent and effective behaviour management nurtures Christian values

St Ambrose Primary School does not permit corporal punishment of students attending the school, and the school does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by any non-school person (including parents) to enforce discipline at school or at home.

Rights & Responsibilities

Every member of the St Ambrose community has the right to learn, feel safe and be respected all of the time. In order for these rights to be upheld, each community member must be respectful, be courageous and act responsibly. It is these values that form our St Ambrose Code of Behaviour.
The purpose of the St Ambrose Catholic Primary School Code of Behaviour is to affirm the rights of all students within the school community to achieve success, feel valued and safe at school.

**Respect** – all people at St Ambrose are treated with respect and dignity. This means we will:

- Respect the rights of other to learn
- Respect and care for our own, our peers’ and school property
- Cooperate with staff and others in authority
- Communicate with others using respectful language
- Listen to the opinion of others and appreciate our different ways of knowing and doing

**Responsibility** – all people at St Ambrose have the responsibility of creating a positive learning and growing community. This means we will:

- Come to school ready to learn, on time and prepared
- Participate actively in the schools learning program
- Be responsible for all of our actions
- Be dressed appropriately for activities
- Follow reasonable instructions from adults who are entrusted to care for us
- Keep our school free from bullying and harassment
- Take pride in our work

**Courage** – all people at St Ambrose have a responsibility to learn about our world and develop an awareness of ourselves as learners. This means we will:

- Develop dispositions allowing us to take risks as we learn so that we can find new solutions to problems
- Persist with challenging work and new learning experiences
- Be resilient when learning tasks seem insurmountable
- Grow as learners so that we have the ability to learn from our mistakes
- Develop confidence in ourselves as learners
- Give our very best efforts when showing what we have learnt
- Encourage the growth of an inquiry mindset in each student

**Restorative Justice**

Restorative Justice focuses on repairing the harm done to people and relationships, rather than simply punishing offenders. The process involves all parties affected and all have a say.

Restorative Justice practices aim to restore relationships that have been damaged by a wrongdoing: be it a playground conflict, bullying or misbehaviour. They also aim to ‘engage students in meaningful dialogue’ in order to change behaviour (Thorsborne and Vinegrad, 2004).
**Restorative questions**

By engaging in Restorative Justice practices, students take responsibility for their own actions and work with those who are affected by their actions to repair the harm done. Conflict resolution skills are enhanced by the use of restorative practices.

At St Ambrose, we encourage staff to utilise restorative questions in order to assist students accepting responsibility for their actions and work towards healing relationships that may have been harmed by their actions.

**Sample questions for any person who has hurt someone:**

- What happened?
- What was it that caused the problem?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- Who has been affected? In what ways?
- What do you think you could do to put things right?
- What will you do next time?

**Questions for a community member who has been hurt:**

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- Can you tell XXXX how you are feeling right now?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

These questions are designed to be to alleviate conflict situations on that may arise in the classroom or playground. The questions also form the basis of the Time out reflection.

**Time out**

(Refer also to [Behaviour Management Program](#))

Time out is a preferred consequence for repeated inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and on the playground at St Ambrose Primary School. At times, teachers may need to send a student to a ‘buddy class’ for a short time out. The teacher should send the student with work to be completed while they are having time out of their own classroom.

Keeping in mind that all students have the right to feel safe, learn and be respected, no child should ever be left in an unsupervised situation as a negative consequence e.g. outside the classroom.
Bullying
(Refer also to Anti-Bullying Policy and Anti Harassment Policy)

At St Ambrose Primary School, we believe that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships.

All members of our school community have zero tolerance for bullying and intimidation. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and students, staff and parents all share a responsibility for preventing it.

Schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing these values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

Whilst there is no universally accepted definition of bullying, there is general consensus that bullying behaviour:

• is deliberate and often repeated
• intends to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another
• is action by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful individual or group

We believe it is vital to educate students, parents and staff at St Ambrose about the differences between bullying and conflict. While conflict can be managed and typically resolved on the spot, instances of bullying in the classroom or playground require coordinated, timely and collaborative intervention.

Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:

• Physical - hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others etc
• Verbal - teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours etc
• Non-Verbal - writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures etc
• Exclusion - deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone etc
• Extortion - threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money etc
• Property - stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property etc
• Cyber - any form of bullying which is carried out through electronic means such as mobile phones, email, chat room, social networking, 'sms', web page etc

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously. Members of staff who learn of bullying actions will respond and report the actions to the Principal or Assistant Principal.
Practices for restoring relationships

• Be civil and respectful
• Don’t exclude anyone
• Show loyalty
• Think before acting or speaking
• STOP. THINK, DO
• Try to understand the feelings of the other person
• Think about the effect of words and actions
• Build trust by not engaging in gossip or spreading rumours
• Talk through problems with a trusted friend
• Give others a fair go
• Let go of things from the past
• Think about the consequences first

Student Attendance

Attendance falls very much under the auspices of our holistic pastoral care program. It involves the school working closely and in collaboration with the home in ensuring that St Ambrose Primary School is in the very best position to identify and intervene in attendance issues in a timely and effective manner.

Managing attendance is very much embedded in our school’s ethos – to endeavour to ensure that each student at Glengarry PS is engaged in meaningful, challenging and intrinsically rewarding learning experiences in a supportive, non-threatening and fun learning environment.

When attendance does become an issue, we follow the procedures as set out within the St Ambrose Student Attendance Policy.

Procedures

Teachers use Schoolworx to ensure that accurate attendance records are kept for each student enrolled. Attendance is recorded in the morning session (as close to 9am as possible) for all students.

• Whilst on any school endorsed activity (excursions, off campus sporting events etc) students are not to be recorded as absent.
• Suspended students are to be marked as suspended on Schoolworx.
• Records to be kept on Schoolworx, where they can be printed if required.
• Attendance records and notes are kept at St Ambrose for seven years.
• Unsatisfactory attendance reports on students are retained in a student’s records for 25 years from date of birth.
Monitoring

When a student has been absent from school and an acceptable explanation has not been forthcoming, the school is to send a written request for an explanation to the student’s family.

Record all details when a parent or caregiver provides the school with a verbal reason that we believe is an acceptable reason for an absence.

If a student’s attendance rate falls below 90% over a ten week period, St Ambrose Primary School Executive will conduct an investigation looking as to the reasons why the student is not attending school and proactively address the issues affecting attendance.

Enhancing self esteem

If we envisage all community members being Courageous, Responsible and Respectful, we continually refine our practices in order to enhance the self esteem of our students, their families and our staff.

- Let them know they are important and unique as individuals - know them personally and talk to them about their own interests.
- Respect and protect the rights and feelings of each person and ensure that other community members do too.
- Acknowledge their strengths and assets to them in specific terms.
- Have confidence in each person.
- Maintain non-judgemental attitudes - guide, lead and coach.
- Help each student at St Ambrose Primary School set realistic learning and growing goals for themselves and plan to achieve them.
- Assist all community members to acknowledge and accept the responsibilities of group membership.
- Teach students to make choices and decisions weighing up all the available information.
- Model how to gracefully accept recognition, acknowledgment and rewards.
Related Policies & Support Material

School Policies

St Ambrose Anti-Bullying Policy

St Ambrose Anti Harassment Policy

St Ambrose Behaviour Management Program

St Ambrose Student Attendance Policy

External Support Material


Towards Healing, National Committee for Professional Standards, 2000

Racism – no way. A guide for Australian Schools, Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Cultural Affairs, 2001
