



Our Lady of Mt Carmel School Mullewa

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Originally released: 1997
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RATIONALE

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School is in essence the face of Christ for its whole community and as such our Pastoral Care Policy infuses all aspects of school life and is aimed at enhancing the dignity of each person within our Catholic faith community.

The dignity and respect of each person in Our Lady of Mount Carmel School community is considered as fundamental in the entire educational process. As a school community we strive to translate the words of our Mission Statement:

“With a pioneering spirit, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mullewa, aspires to foster Christian Community living in harmony with each other and the environment,”
into daily living by the caring response school community members show towards each other.

PRINCIPLES

1. In its daily operation Our Lady of Mount Carmel School aims to provide an environment, a curriculum and a set of practices that are based on the Gospels and to be a community committed to the students’ development as fully integrated people through educational means.
2. The overall education of the child is centred on enabling students to attain the beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and practices which will enable them to achieve Christ’s vision of the human person. The school aims to provide the knowledge and experiences necessary for students to be capable of making informed, value-judgements. This occurs through its teaching of Religious Education, its Evangelisation Policy, and the myriad of shared experiences which occur in the daily life of the school.
3. Pastoral care is the concern of all within the school community. All members of staff, the parent body, and the Parish are encouraged to be actively involved in the Catholic education the school provides. A major emphasis is building a spirit of commitment and an agreed expectation between all staff and parents of the need to actively contribute to the educational process. No single body is responsible for the overall development of each child, it is the shared responsibility of all actively involved in the school community.
4. The staff of the school, both administrative and teaching are constantly reminded of the need to reflect and model respect and concern for each other, as well as towards the students in their care. Staff members committed to demonstrating a lived, active concern for others in the total school life enables students to learn and appreciate their own value and dignity.
5. The relationships students share and build with others, their peers, children of other ages, and adults are seen as vitally tools in the students growth towards becoming actively involved community members with a willingness to help others and live the school motto: “Love one another as I have loved you.”

PROCEDURES

The school environment is thoroughly infused with the Catholic notion of Pastoral care:

- Students and staff have opportunities to share together in prayer, liturgies, celebration and participation in the Sacraments
- The school community fosters daily the values of the Sacraments
- The traditions of the Church are taught and observed. The school celebrates important days in the Liturgical calendar and relevant feast days, including the feast of Our Lady of Mt Carmel
- The Pastoral Care Policy infuses all aspects of the school's Behaviour Management Policy that includes statements on discipline, which establish clear guidelines for students' behaviour and challenge them to self discipline.

In building community:

- A positive working relationship is practiced with the local Parish Priest, Parish members, the School Board, Parents and Friends Association, school parents, Mullewa Shire Council and the wider local Mullewa community
- Relevant cultural aspects of the school are embraced. The local Aboriginal dialect is taught to each class within the school when the human resources with the relevant knowledge are available
- All staff members are reminded of the need to be aware and support those who are alienated within the school community and to be particularly aware of the school's stance on bullying, according to its Bullying and Harassment Policy
- The school staff are to always be provided with opportunities to recognise the importance of building and fostering relationships within the school including – between teachers and students, students and their peers, buddy classes, teachers and parents.
- The whole school community is encouraged to strive toward the school's vision and its motto of *'Love One Another as I Have Loved You'*

In the administrative sector:

- Leadership is valued as a positive opportunity to build school community by directing and nurturing the wider school community towards fulfilling the overall vision of the school
- Through its small size and caring nature the school is able to positively support students as they move from one stage of schooling to another. It allows students to experience a 'family feeling' which is nurtured and appreciated by all staff members
- Pastoral care of staff is deemed a priority so that the positive benefits experienced may be passed along to students within classes. 'Happy staff = Happy school = Happy students'

- The school's Strategic Management Plan involves consultation, involvement, participation and ownership by the Principal and members of the School Board
- All school personnel are conversant with the school's Pastoral Care Policy and relevant practices through a continual sharing and reminding of the school vision and motto, along with the need for shared responsibility of what is happening within the school

In recognising the face of Christ in others:

- Staff are encouraged to focus on building students' self-esteem by identifying individuals and recognising the contribution they are able to make to their class and to the whole school
- Students and staff are encouraged to value the worth of every child, effectively to maintain the low rate of 'bullying' behaviour and children adhering to peer group pressure
- The school fosters in each child a strong sense of identity and belonging, so as to give them the confidence to believe in themselves, respect the dignity of the human person and make decisions based on Christ-like actions toward others

In communicating effectively:

- Respect is encouraged amongst all students and adults and it is acknowledged that all children do not come to school with the same family and home experiences. Liaising between the home and school is an integral part of the students' schooling. This includes both positive and negative aspects and occurs through fortnightly newsletters, a school pinup board, individual student communication books, school assemblies and the myriad of opportunities that occur incidentally and on a daily basis within the school, as teachers and parents come into contact
- Students and adults are expected to take responsibility for their actions when and where they can

For Our Lady of Mount Carmel School to be true to its vision

"With a pioneering spirit, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mullewa, aspires to foster Christian Community living in harmony with each other and the environment",

it is essential that the Church's teaching on Social Justice be an integral part of all school policies and procedures. As such the school's Social Justice and Equity Policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Pastoral Care Policy.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel aims to provide students, through the whole school community, the opportunity to participate in a school life filled with experiences that reflect Jesus' actions and the choices he would have made, so they are able to lead by example. These experiences need to be filled with personal example and charity, to encourage participation and a concern for others. The overall feeling of 'community' which surrounds the school plays a huge role in building the self-esteem of students and adults alike, which in turn builds relationships based on both justice and love. All of this is reflected in the school's motto, "Love One Another as I Have Loved You".