Lutheran Education Queensland Model Policy

Student Well-being and Relational Management

Insert School / College Logo here

Policy Name	Student Well-being and Relational Management Anti-Bullying Policy; Code of Conduct (based on National Safe Schools Framework; A vision for Learners and Learning)

Approval Authority	
Approval Date	
Approval Signature	
Responsibility	Principal
Point of Contact	All Staff
Audience	All Staff
Next Review	November 2012
Policy Source / Legislation	

Purpose

The purpose of this overarching policy is to commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school approach that is aligned to *[insert name of school / college]*'s Mission Statement and to Lutheran Education Australia's (LEA) ethos and values.

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This policy focuses upon:

- Working proactively to develop individual social and emotional competence
- Building a positive code of conduct for all members within the community
- Outlining anti-bullying strategies and procedures
- Adopting a whole-of-school, educative approach when things go wrong so that all members of the school community feel safe and accept responsibility for developing and sustaining a save and supportive environment

Scope

This policy applies to behaviour within the school grounds and classroom, when representing the school in public and on camps and school excursions

Point of Contact

The Principal / All Staff

Background

1. Lutheran Education Ethos

Restorative Practices: The basis for developing well-being and building strong relationships

[insert name of school / college] Student Well-being and Relational Management Policy is inspired by the Gospel and reflects the love and forgiveness that God shows us each and every day. Within a restorative *practices* framework, discipline is carried out in the context of forgiveness which allows a repentant student to restore relationships. As we experience God's forgiveness we can then pass it on by forgiving others. Forgiveness brings reconciliation and restoration of relationships. While forgiveness is practised, consequences for inappropriate behaviour remain an integral part of the policy as a way of building mutual respect, self-worth and creating positive relationships.

In the spirit of the Christian Gospel, *[insert name of school / college]* is committed to using Restorative Practices with all members of our community to build harmonious relationships and resolve issues of concern or conflict, openly and respectfully.

In LEA's *A Vision for Learners and Learning,* (2005) the importance of community and relationships is affirmed. Key values such as forgiveness and hope, justice and love are experienced and expressed when living in community. Aspirational lifelong qualities for learners who attend Lutheran schools include treating themselves and others with consideration as well as fostering 'a respectful, inclusive atmosphere in which people can communicate confidently and with trust' (p. 7)

The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008) not only

encourages the development of successful learners but also highlights the importance students who are able to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being who develop respect and empathy for others and who accept responsibility for their own actions. The importance of healthy relationships is also emphasised. In addition, the Australian Curriculum (2010) features the importance of ethical behaviour and personal and social competence. These capabilities are to be developed throughout students' schooling.

From our foundation, *[insert name of school / college]* has attended to developing policies that align with our beliefs and values. Therefore a range of proactive programs to foster the development of relationships are implemented across *[insert name of school / college]*. These programs foster healthy and caring relationships that build community and contribute to effective teaching and learning.

In addition, Restorative Practices (RP), a philosophy and continuum of processes based on the premise that repairing harm done to people and relationships, is a very effective way to resolve conflict. A core belief is that the wrongdoings and misbehaviours that bring disruptions to classrooms, and the hurtful behaviours that are so often associated with conflict, are primarily not just 'breaking rules', but actually result in harm to individuals, groups and the whole school community.

In a school setting, restoration of relationships for effective learning is the ultimate goal of restorative practices.
In response to this, RP encourages a profound fairness, and a culture of listening across our school community. It is based on core values that build an ethos of respect, inclusion, accountability, taking responsibility, commitment to relationships and the development of social and emotional competencies. People involved develop personal awareness and responsibility while learning and using lifelong skills such as active listening, expressing emotion, facilitating dialogue and problem-solving.

RP is also based on the belief that the people involved in a conflict, wrongdoing, or misbehaviour, need to be actively involved in the process of resolution. Imposed (and purely punitive) solutions can be less effective and less educative.

The RP continuum of interventions and processes is applicable across all levels of our school community: from more formal responses such as our round tables to more informal restorative chats. It is the cornerstone of our anti-bullying, relational management and pastoral care procedures and policies. Trained staff facilitate the processes. Staff, students, and parents are all encouraged to participate in a 'restorative pedagogy' that builds a school culture that is fair, safe, and encourages effective relationships and learning.

We seek, not just to put a stop to harassing or discriminatory behaviour, but also to repair harm, 'put things right' and bring about reconciliation between the parties in the spirit of Matthew 18:15.

RP forms the cornerstone of all policies and procedures relating to relational management, staff / student welfare and complaints / conflict resolution.

All staff and students are expected to be supportive of and participate in Restorative Practices when they are involved in a conflict or issue. Parents are asked to support a 'restorative pedagogy' that builds a school culture that is fair, safe, and encourages effective learning.

2. Definition: What are Restorative Practices?

Restorative Practices (RP) are a philosophy and a continuum of processes from informal chats to formal structured conversations or mediation. RP is based on the following premises:

I. Conflict causes harm that needs to be repaired. "Pain that is not transformed will be transmitted." Richard Rohr

II. The use of fight or flight is generally inappropriate responses to conflict. We do not run away or give in to conflict. We do not pay back.

III. Conflict needs to be addressed by all parties, preferably face-to-face, in a structured, safe environment. (Exceptions to this are detailed in *[insert name of school / college]*'s Child Protection Policy when there are special circumstances relating to sexual harassment or abuse)

IV. People involved in a conflict, wrongdoing or misbehaviour need to be actively involved in the process of resolution. Imposed solutions or punishments can be less effective and less educative.

V. Using RP is not a 'soft option'. Core values include respect, inclusion, accountability and commitment to relationships.

VI. Participants learn social and emotional skills they will use throughout their lives such as: active listening, facilitating dialogue, problem-solving, expressing emotion appropriately, developing personal awareness, empathy and taking responsibility.

VII. Logical consequences and sanctions (e.g. withdrawals / detentions, suspensions, staff disciplinary procedures) are still used but in the context of RP (e.g. 'what can you do to make things right?').

3. Special Conditions: The use of Restorative Practices

The use of RP is NOT PERMITTED under the following circumstances (but RP may be used to conclude a matter on the advice of legal personnel):

- Where mandatory reporting is required e.g. alleged child sexual abuse. Advice of Police or Department of Child Safety to be followed.
- Where an adult wishes to make a complaint through the Safe Place Process. Advice of Safe Place Committee to be followed.
- Where a matter involves unlawful behaviour and it is deemed necessary to report it to the Police. Advice of Police or Department of Child Safety to be followed.
- Where a parent expressly forbids the use of RP with a child under the age of 18.
- Where a staff member, after discussion with the Complaints Contact Officer, chooses to follow another path to achieve resolution of a complaint.

The use of Restorative Practices MAY NOT BE RECOMMENDED:
- Where the matter is a very sensitive one (e.g. sexual harassment), or involves particularly sensitive students or staff members.
- Where there is a significant disparity of power or status between parties to the conflict.
- Where considerable time has elapsed since the dispute and parties have clearly 'moved on'.
- Where one party has initiated legal proceedings.

The use of Restorative Practices WILL GENERALLY BE REQUIRED by the School:
- Where a student or staff member has admitted to wrongdoing or harmful behaviour (intentionally or unintentionally)
- Where the School requires Restorative Practices to be used as part of disciplinary proceedings in response to alleged harmful behaviour by a student or staff member.

4. Principles and Values: At *[insert name of school / college]*

1) Pastoral Care (Element 1, 2, 7 National Safe Schooling (NSS) framework)
We ensure that each student at ***[insert name of school / college]*** has at least one staff member who knows them well, cares for their well-being and monitors their learning needs. This person is the first staff member who should be contacted by the parent if there is a question or concern relating to their child.

2) Celebration (Element 1, 2, 7, 9 NSS framework)
We provide many opportunities for students to experience the joy of life, learning and relationships. Because we are thankful for the wonderful gifts God has given us, we frequently have special times of celebration, both formal and informal. These occasions affirm our vision and values, and enhance our sense of community.

3) Christian Values (Element 1, 2, 7 NSS framework)
In the lives of students and staff we value and promote the qualities of forgiveness, reconciliation, humility and self-sacrifice. Jesus Christ modeled these qualities in his life and death. The 'good news' of the gospel of Jesus is the means and motivation for inviting, encouraging and developing healthy relationships within the school community. **In particular, we emphasise the need to create peace by repairing harm (RP).**

4) Partnerships with Parents (Element 1, 9 NSSFramework)
We consistently involve parents when student well-being or behaviour issues arise because students benefit most when there is a strong partnership between the school and the families of students. Behavioural change is most likely where parents and the school have shared expectations.

5) Relationships with staff and students (Element 1, 4, 5, 7 NSS framework)
We provide many opportunities for formal and informal social interactions among staff

and students focusing upon mutual respect. We want students to enjoy school, to develop friendships and thus to grow in self-esteem and self-discipline. Positive relationships with peers and adults are a key to healthy social and emotional development. Learning opportunities for students and teachers will feature.

6)   High Expectations (Element 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 NSS framework)

We present and uphold high expectations of behaviour for staff and students. These expectations are clearly communicated to all members of the community.   Learning opportunities for students, staff and parents will feature.

7)   A Supportive Learning Environment (Element 1, 4, 6 NSS framework)

We are committed to creating a secure, success-oriented, empowering learning environment. We insist that students have the right to learn and teachers the right to teach: both parties should treat each other with dignity and respect. We aim to ensure that all students have the opportunity to be happy and successful - to be able to participate, to be heard and to work harmoniously with others.

8) An Effective Process: Repair. Rebuild. Restore. (Element 1, 3, 5, 8 NSS framework)

We apply clear and fair procedures to manage student behaviour, recognising that individuals are imperfect, even in a Christ-centred community. Behaviour is managed in a loving and caring environment that promotes faith, hope, justice and reconciliation. A consistent philosophy of relational management underpins procedures K-12, but specific code of conducts and guidelines are determined for students of different ages with regard to their different developmental needs.

9)   Application of Consequences (Element 1, 3, 5, 8 NSS framework)

We consistently reinforce positive behaviour and strive to ensure that consequences for inappropriate behaviour are fairly administered and follow due process. Consequences are applied in an attempt to support behavioural change and enhanced relationships. Corporal punishment is not permitted to be used in Lutheran schools; indeed, any physical interaction between teacher and student when implementing disciplinary measures is unacceptable.

It is the aim of the whole school community to explicitly teach, model and actively promote appropriate behaviour in our school.
REPAIR. REBUILD. RESTORE.

5. Mission Statement

At ***[insert name of school / college]*** we aim to establish:
EXAMPLE
- close and supportive **communication between home and school** is established to maintain and promote the expectations of the school's policy, and that parents are empowered to support the language and processes applied at school;
- a **whole-school approach** is provided to ensure a consistent success-oriented learning environment for students;

- students who feel confident, happy and secure and experience success in a **supportive environment**;
- staff who work with students to develop an attitude of **responsibility** for their own actions by teaching skills and decision-making processes which should enable them to **participate as members of the school community;**
- opportunities for students to be heard, to express opinions and to ask questions in a **nurturing environment**;
- opportunities for students to form friendships and to **learn co-operatively** with others in an environment where all individuals and their property are respected;
- opportunities for students to deal with conflict using a **supportive, restorative and guided approach**.
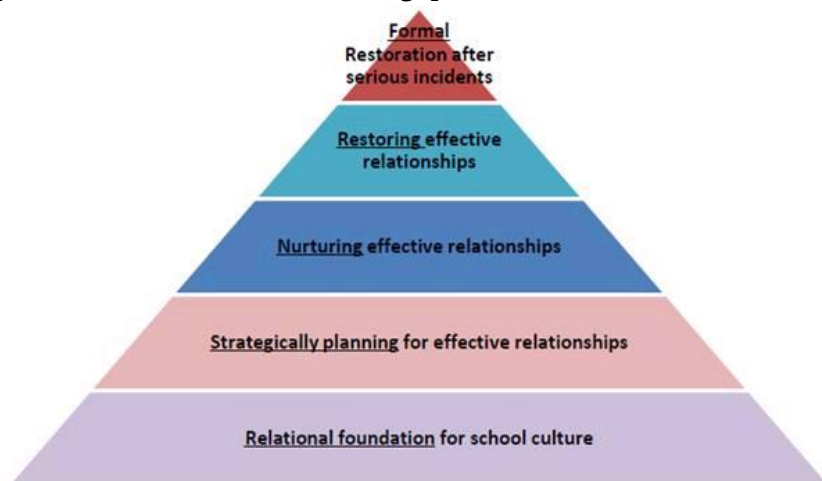
POLICY

Therefore at *[insert name of school / college]* we:

EXAMPLE

- Provide as a foundation, an array of learning opportunities to develop personal and social competence to maximize educational opportunities and outcomes for all students
- Strategically maintain and develop healthy relationships within the school community at all times
- Support processes for maintaining a positive learning environment within the classroom as well as a harmonious, peaceful and safe playground
- Encourage students to acknowledge and learn from their mistakes, reconcile and resolve problems
- Recognise and learn to manage the underlying causes of behaviour
- Facilitate repair processes using restorative processes and language.

The accompanying diagram demonstrates how working restoratively applies to all levels of school life at *[insert name of school / college]*.

A Relational Foundation for Whole-of-School Culture, adapted with permission from a diagram by Lesley Oliver

CODE OF CONDUCT

To enact the policy at *[insert name of school / college]*, there is an emphasis upon developing a positive code of conduct and expectations for all students and staff in a school setting:

The following is expected of a student at *[insert name of school / college]*. A student will work towards:

- positively supporting and actively upholding the School's Mission Statement
- making optimum use of educational activities within and outside the classroom by being at the right place, at the right time, with the right materials for productive work
- respecting the rights of others to also derive maximum advantage from the educational opportunities provided by the school by being co-operative and supporting quality learning
- displaying self-respect in terms of appearance and behaviour by following the requirements of the school dress code, displaying good manners and behaving appropriately at all times
- displaying respect for others and building a sense of community by developing positive relationships and ensure that language and behaviour at all times. This includes showing respect to other community members, school facilities and resources
- recognising the need for a safe and healthy environment by following the school's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and by adhering to Workplace Health and Safety
- affirming and supporting those disadvantaged in our community and the wider community by resolving conflict peacefully.

In the classroom *the classroom teacher will:*

- Set clear expectations for classroom and playground interactions and relationships and establish clear consequences
- Create positive relationships between students and teachers through a variety of in-class strategies (e.g. 'circle time')
- Implement a variety of pro-active, school-wide strategies that enhance the personal and social competencies of students
- Display general school expectations and class-negotiated expectations in the classroom
- Use restorative language, (what has happened?, what were you thinking?, who have you affected?, what can we do to fix things up?) when addressing the choices students make
- Be responsible for tracking and recording an individual child's classroom actions and record
- Contact parents when necessary
- Refer and re-direct students needing to reflect on an inappropriate interactions or actions

- Where necessary establish/monitor Individual Support Plans for children who are experiencing difficulty
- Direct any children on Individual Support Plans to the Principal and inform other teachers as necessary
- Liaise with school leaders and refer children for further support.

In the playground *the playground duty teacher will:*
- Use restorative language when addressing the choices children make
- Refer and re-direct students needing time to reflect on an inappropriate behaviour
- Direct any children who are unable to work restoratively or involved in incidences that are serious, or require more time, to the Principal immediately
- Direct any children on Individual Support Plans to the Principal as necessary.