



# Pastoral Care Policy

BOS Manual, 3.6.2

**Related policies:**

- Student Welfare Policy**
- Student Discipline Policy**
- Critical Events Policy**
- Suicide Prevention Policy**

## *RATIONALE*

Coffs Harbour Christian Community School (CHCCS) seeks to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment that ensures the wellbeing of its students. We do this by adhering to Biblical principles. We also assist our students to “Grow up into Christ” whereby they may reach their full potential and build strong, positive and peaceful relationships with others within a caring and prosperous community.

Students’ learning and growth is enhanced:

- When they can learn and grow in confidence; and
- Where teaching and learning occurs within a safe and supportive environment; and
- When all members of the school community participate in the learning programs and overall life of the school.

We recognize that God is our Creator who sustains all things. Jesus is our Shepherd who cares for His people. The whole school community is involved in Pastoral Care where we aim to demonstrate Christ-like qualities when caring for each other. This environment would exhibit the following qualities:

- Acceptance of each other as precious in God’s sight
- Forgiveness of each other, as an expression of Christ’s love to sinful people
- Encouragement and the building up of one another, in both word and action
- Awareness and appreciation of the needs of others and a desire to serve them
- Thankfulness to God and others

This school seeks to develop pastoral care policies and practices that increase resilience, reduce vulnerabilities, build connectedness and develop greater links both within this community and with outside communities.

## AIM

The Pastoral Care Policy at CHCCS is closely linked to the Student Welfare and Discipline Policies. Together, they establish a whole-school-approach to foster cooperation and respect which affects all aspects of school life, and provides a caring, safe and supportive environment for our students.

In particular, the Pastoral Care Policy aims to:

- Identify the personnel responsible for pastoral care, including access to counselling services
- Set out the framework that identifies and provides support for students with special needs and disabilities
- Identify and refer to procedures for first aid, which also includes the distribution and monitoring of medication
- Identify and refer to procedures for serious and critical events, including
  - critical events,
  - student personal crisis situations,
  - suicide prevention, and
- Identify and refer to procedures relating to student homework.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. Personnel responsible for pastoral care and counselling

As at the time of last review of this policy, the following arrangements are in place for pastoral care and internal counselling services provided by for students by CHCCS.

#### 1.1. Junior School (Years K to 5)

Each student is directly cared for by their **classroom teachers**. They are the first contact for parents who wish to raise any concerns to provide information about their child. Parents are encouraged to get to know and communicate regularly with their child's classroom teacher.

There are several coordinating teachers who have responsibilities for specific curriculum and student needs such as literacy and disability support. Classroom teachers will be able to give advice to parents as needs require.

#### 1.2. Middle School (Years 6 to 8)

Each class is assigned a **homeroom teacher** who they will have several core subjects. This allows the student to not only make an easier transition into high school, it also allows the chance for students to be known better and cared for by one particular teacher. They are the first contact for parents who wish to raise any concerns to provide information about their child. Parents are encouraged to get to know and communicate regularly with their child's homeroom teacher.

Middle school students also have contact with a number of specialist teachers for specific subjects, depending on the year level. Parents are able to communicate with those teachers for issues related to specialist subjects.

### 1.3. Senior School (Years 9 and 10)

Students in Years 9 and 10 have daily access to their **Devotions teachers (usually two)**, who are aware of the specific medical, parent and family or academic issues of each student and work closely with the Year Advisor and Behaviour Management Coordinator and in the follow-up and care of students.

A Careers Advisor can also provide advice and assistance to Year 10 students and their parents for work experience placements those students considering leaving school for apprenticeships or vocational training prior to completion of their HSC.

### 1.4. Senior School (Years 11 and 12)

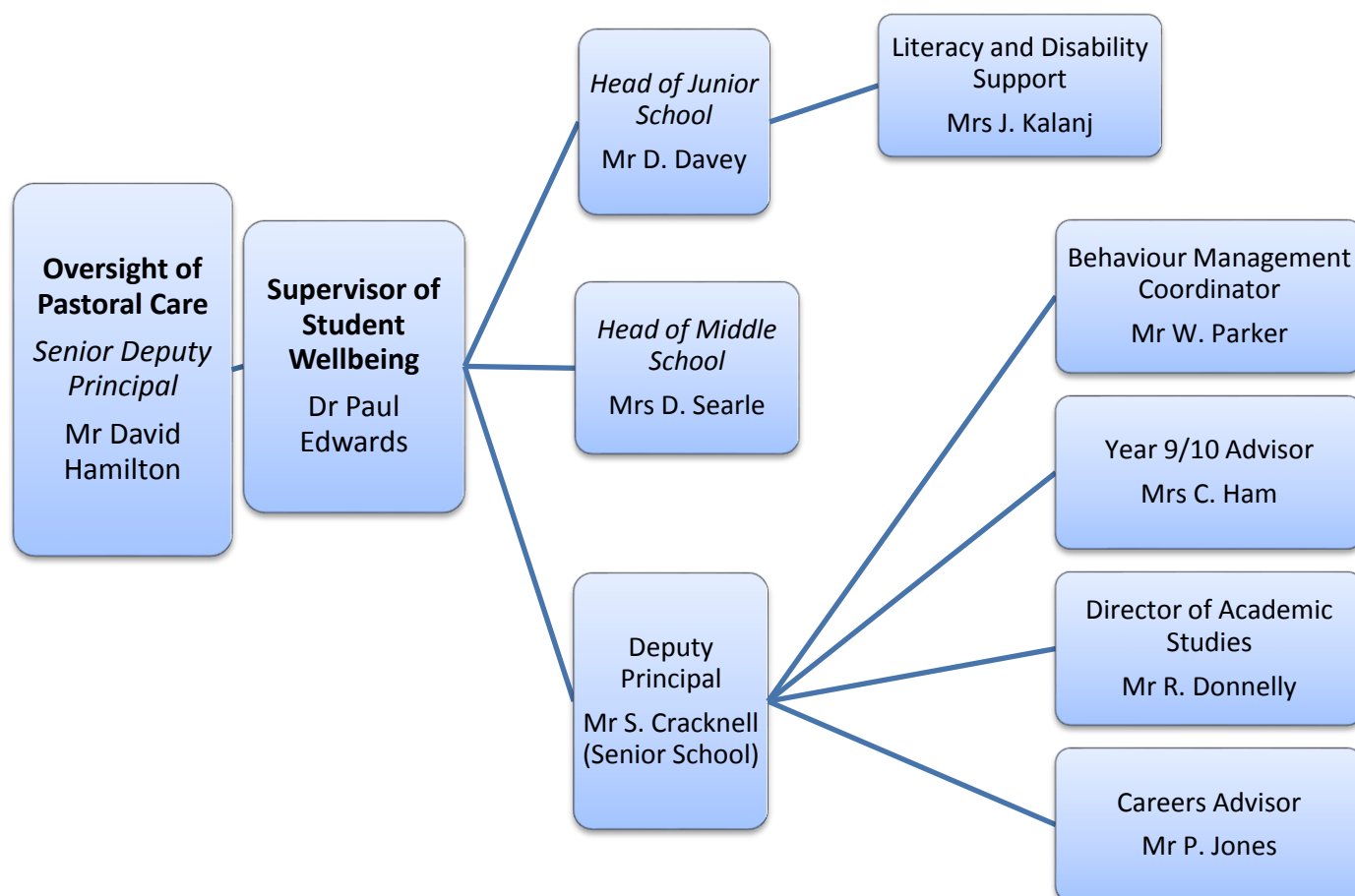
Students in Years 11 and 12 have daily access to their **Devotions teachers (usually two each for boys and girls)**, who are aware of the specific medical, parent and family or academic issues of each student and work closely with the Year Advisor and Behaviour Management Coordinator and in the follow-up and care of students.

A Careers Advisor is also available to provide advice and assistance to Year 11 and 12 students and their parents in relation to the HSC and directions following completion of school, such as tertiary study and careers choices.

**Professionally qualified counsellors** are available at school for both boys and girls in senior school.

Counselling services are also provided for students in Middle and Junior schools in close consultation with our counselling staff, usually with the Heads of each school.

The following flowchart outlines the pastoral care responsibilities at CHCCS



## 2. Special Needs and Disability Support

CHCCS is committed to providing all of our students with access to quality education, including those with disabilities or special needs. We have invested in facilities that enable access for all students to classes and activities run at the school.

CHCCS operates a literacy support program in the Junior and Middle schools. A literacy and study support program is also run for students with English as their second language.

CHCCS determines its standards for disability support upon the Disability Discrimination Act, 1992, and its associated regulations. Students can enroll at CHCCS on the same basis as other students, and without experiencing discrimination. The school takes reasonable steps to ensure that in making a decision whether to offer a placement, a student is treated on the same basis as other students, and without experiencing discrimination.

CHCCS consults with a prospective student about whether the disability affects the prospective student's ability to apply for enrolment. It may be necessary to make **reasonable** adjustments to enable the prospective student to apply for enrolment on the same basis as a prospective student without a disability.

An adjustment is **reasonable** if it balances the interests of all parties affected, taking account of all relevant circumstances, including:

- The student's disability;
- The views of the student;
- The effect of the adjustment on the student's ability to achieve learning outcomes, participate in courses, and independence; and
- The effect on anyone else, including CHCCS, staff and other students.

CHCCS takes reasonable steps to ensure that a student is able to participate in courses or programs (which includes use the facilities and services provided), on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination. This includes the design of such courses or programs. The school will consult with the student about their ability to participate, and decide whether a reasonable adjustment is necessary to ensure participation on the same basis as a student without a disability.

Course or program requirements will be reviewed to include activities in which a student with a disability is able to participate, and they will then be negotiated, agreed and implemented. Additional support will be provided to assist a student to achieve intended learning outcomes. If a student is unable to participate in any activity, a reasonable alternative will be provided. Any activities outside the classroom or extra-curricular activities are designed to include the student.

CHCCS will take reasonable steps to ensure that the student has access to both general student support services and any necessary specialised support services, on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

CHCCS maintains a culture of tolerance and fair treatment for all. We ensure that students with disabilities are protected from harassment or victimisation. Students and staff are informed and reminded of their rights and responsibilities regarding the prevention of harassment and victimisation of students. Any complaints of harassment or victimisation is handled promptly with due regard to the severity of the matter.

In order to achieve our commitments, CHCCS has a Special Needs and Disability Support Unit at both the Junior School and Senior School (which includes Middle School) campuses. The staff members working within these units include specialist teachers and support staff who assist with the provision and documentation of appropriate adjustments for students with special needs or disabilities. Professional development workshops and courses are provided for staff to brief and inform them of the standards for all aspects of our disability support program.

### 3. Student Health and First Aid

Where a student has a diagnosed medical condition and requires regular or periodic medication managed and/or administered whilst in the care of the school, the school will follow the procedures set out in the **Medical and First Aid Procedures**.

This policy does not apply to the use or possession of medication for the treatment of short-term illnesses and infections with antibiotics, or drugs commonly used for pain relief such as paracetamol. The administration of these medications requires written parental consent and is the responsibility of the First Aid Officer in the school.

Student medical information is to be recorded in the student's file.

Where the needs of the student require the administration of the medication by school staff, schools will ensure that at least one staff member is appropriately trained to administer the student's medication as required. To mitigate risks associated with the administration of the medication, the school will ensure that at least two staff members have a current Senior First Aid Certificate.

### 4. Serious and Critical Events

Each year several schools in NSW experience critical events which affect the welfare of students, staff and the community at large. Critical events may include the death of a student or a member of staff in tragic circumstances such as the result of an accident, murder or suicide; a natural disaster which destroys all or part of the school; or an accident on an excursion involving the death or injury of students and/or staff.

Schools are a focus of community attention when Critical event incidents occur and we have a responsibility to respond with a well considered management plan that aims to assist all those affected if such a need arises.

**The Critical Events Policy** has been prepared primarily in response to the perceived need for this school to have a management plan for crisis situations, known as *critical events*. The policy describes the **Critical Event Management Plan** which will enable the school to act in such a way that the trauma following a critical event is minimized for all those concerned.

There is a growing incidence of students experiencing personal crisis situations which, while often related to events outside of the school environment such as family or home life experiences, have a significant impact on their ability to function at school within normal expectations. In many instances, personal events may lead to a crisis situation in a student's life which requires intervention within the school setting. Specific pastoral care action is required for these students. In order to respond in the event of a student crisis situation, the school has formulated a **Student Personal Crisis Management Plan**. It is based upon the principles of an Action Response Plan, and is established by the school's pastoral care team for a specific student at risk of, or experiencing a personal crisis that is impacting them at school. The Action Response Plan and a template for a Management Plan for a specific student is described in **ATTACHMENT 1**.

The **Suicide Prevention Policy** aims to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for students, with targeted support for students at risk of harm to self.

The Student Welfare Coordinators (Heads of Junior, Middle & High School) will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and for staff professional development with regard to student welfare & suicide prevention awareness. The school shall implement welfare support structures and programs that prioritise and address the identified needs of students.

### 5. Homework

Homework serves a valuable role in extending the learning opportunities for students and provides an effective format for developing study and revision skills, especially in the senior years. Syllabus requirements sometimes make it necessary for students to complete activities at home or in the community, and an effective homework policy can facilitate and optimise the outcomes achieved. Finally, with the ever-increasing content requirements of most KLAs, homework can sometimes be necessary in order to meet content requirements of a syllabus.

Our aim at CHCCS is to provide regular homework throughout each subject area and Syllabus stage in order to optimise the effective delivery of teaching and learning strategies. However, homework activities are to be focused to meet a specific, identified need, and should not be given for the sake of giving homework.

### **Primary objectives and practices of the homework policy**

Homework is to be set for an identified need. It may entail regular homework activities, such as revision or summaries, or it may be designed for class activities, such as exams or assessment tasks. Unfinished class work should always be required to be completed for homework.

Teachers should use discretion when setting homework, taking into account specific needs of individual students, as well as other school or community events and activities. Each of the Junior, Middle and Senior schools may establish protocols for homework as part of their curriculum development or student welfare programs. However, homework loads should not exceed the following for any single subject.

Syllabus Stage	Homework load (averaged over 1 term)
Stage 4	10 minutes per week
Stage 5	15 minutes per week
Stage 6 Preliminary	40 minutes per week
Stage 6 HSC	60 minutes per week

It is each teacher's responsibility to notify parents when a student consistently fails to complete homework. Teachers should seek to work closely with parents to initiate strategies to encourage recalcitrant students to complete homework (such as reward and/or punitive actions) and to follow up on progress

# ATTACHMENT 1

## Student Personal Crisis Management Plan

Action Response Pyramid





# Action Response Plan

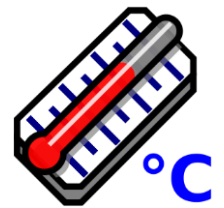
## Tier 1 - Crisis Response

- If the student has:
  - Self-harmed
  - is at imminent risk of self-harm
  - is not responding to verbal commands and directions
  - Has gone missing
- The teacher will send one student to the office with a "red card". Once the senior executive staff member arrives they will determine a plan of action and direct staff as required.



## Tier 2 – Response to Early Warning Signs

- The teacher is to confirm the presence of the student in their class.
- Utilise the Stress Thermometer to identify specific strategies for the student to employ at different stress ratings (an ongoing work-in-progress)
- If the student is exhibiting any of the following behaviours:
  - Appears distracted and/or is not responding to verbal prompts;
  - Face in hands or head on desk;
  - Distracted and not engaging in class activities.
- Teacher will send a 'blue card' with a student to the First Aid/Sick Bay office and contact Supervisor of Student Wellbeing. Student remains in Sick Bay until reviewed.
- If the student is unwilling or unable to comply with the blue card procedure, the teacher will escalate the response to a red card incident.

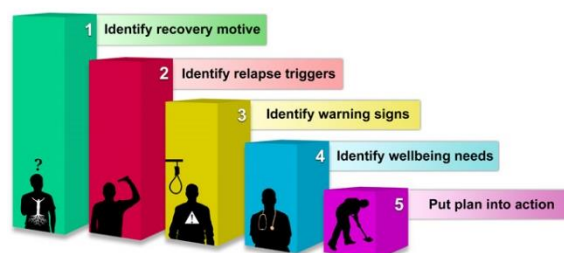


## Tier 3 – Prevention Plan

- Prepare an "Energy Account" to identify "energisers" and "depleters" on the student's timetable;
- Use the Stress Thermometer to specify strategies at specific stress ratings. This will be developed on an ongoing basis of review and reflection;
- Monitor food and fluid intake;
- Weekly mental health counselling at school;
- Identify and record contact persons for the student when failing to cope.



### Relapse Prevention Plan



# The Stress Thermometer

Developed By Terence T. Gorski (© Terence T. Gorski, 2011)  
www.cenaps.com; www.relapse.org; www.facebook.com/GorskiRecovery

Level 20:	<b>Traumatic Stress:</b> I get dissociated and feel like I am floating out of my body, things are unreal, and I eventual pass out.
Level 15:	<b>Traumatic Stress:</b> Stress overloads the brain and we go into a state of daze or shock and can only use automatic over-trained behaviors.
Level 10:	<b>Lose Control:</b> Fight = Anger-based, Flee = Fear-based, Freeze = Depression-based.
-----The Brain Shift Gears -----	
Level 9:	<b>Overreact:</b> Anger, fear, or compulsion get out control & starts running our intellect.
Level 8:	<b>Get Defensive:</b> Automatic defenses are used; we start acting out compulsively. The ability to think becomes a servant to hidden fear, anger, & depression. Strong craving and urges to fight, run, hide, find a rescuer, blame others, or loose motivation & hope.
Level 7:	<b>Space Out:</b> My brain can't handle the stress, turns off for a second, and I gone blank and don't even realize it until my brain turns back on a few seconds later.
----- The Brain Shift Gears -----	
Level 6:	<b>Free Flow Activity With Effort</b> I'm getting tired and have to push myself to keep going.
Level 5:	<b>Free Flow Activity With No Effort:</b> I'm totally into what I'm doing and get lost in the process. I'm on automatic pilot.
Level 4:	<b>Become Focused and Active With Effort:</b> I make a decision to dig in and get to work. It takes effort to get started.
----- The Brain Shift Gears -----	
Level 3:	<b>Relaxed – Aware But Not Focused:</b> I'm relaxed and aware of what's going on around me. I'm beginning to realize that I need to get going.
Level 2:	<b>Very Relaxed – Not Aware &amp; Not Focused:</b> I'm so relaxed that I'm not aware of what's going on around me. I'm disconnected and don't want to notice anything.
Level 1:	<b>Deeply Relaxed - Nearly Asleep:</b> I'm so deeply relaxed that I'm drifting in and out of a dreamy type of sleep state filled with active fantasy or daydreaming.

**The Most Important Stress Management Tool is  
The Conscious Awareness of the Rise and Fall of Your Stress Levels.  
This is Achieved Through Self-monitoring.**

Read: **Starting Recovery With Relapse Prevention** By Terence T. (Terry) Gorski  
www.cenaps.com - info@cenaps.com - www.relapse.org

Personal Crisis Management Plan		
Student Name:	Insert Student Photo	Date of Plan:
Specific Difficulties:		
<b>Tier 1 - Crisis Response</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If _____ has:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-harmed</li> <li>is at imminent risk of self-harm</li> <li>is not responding to verbal commands and directions</li> <li>Has gone missing</li> </ul> </li> <li>The teacher will send a reliable student to the office with a "red card". Once the senior executive staff member arrives they will determine a plan of action and direct staff as required.</li> </ul>		<b>Resources:</b>  Red Card  Blue Card
<b>Tier 2 – Early Warning Signs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The teacher is to confirm the presence of the student in their class.</li> <li>Utilise the Stress Thermometer to identify specific strategies for the student to employ at different stress ratings (an ongoing work-in-progress)</li> <li>If _____ is exhibiting any of the following behaviours:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appears distracted and/or is not responding to verbal prompts;</li> <li>Face in hands or head on desk;</li> <li>Distracted and not engaging in class activities;</li> <li>Sitting alone (plus ONE other sign)</li> <li>Red eyes, teary, hiding eyes</li> </ul> </li> <li>Teacher will send a 'blue card' with a student to the First Aid/Sick Bay office and contact Supervisor of Student Wellbeing. Student remains in Sick Bay until reviewed.</li> <li>If the student is unwilling or unable to comply with the blue card procedure, the teacher will escalate the response to a red card incident.</li> </ul>		
<b>Tier 3 – Prevention Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare an "Energy Account" to identify "energisers" and "depleters" on the student's timetable;</li> <li>Use the Stress Thermometer to specify strategies at specific stress ratings. This will be developed on an ongoing basis of review and reflection;</li> <li>Monitor food and fluid intake;</li> <li>Weekly mental health counselling at school;</li> <li>Identify and record contact persons for the student when failing to cope.</li> </ul>		
Developed by: _____ (Boy's/Girl's Welfare)		Review Date:
Approved/signed: _____ (Deputy Principal)		