



A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF WELFARE

In the context of a Biblical Worldview, the welfare of students refers to their total well-being and growth as persons created in the image of God.

At the centre of God's purpose for a people and His creation is "Shalom" – the wholeness and completeness of God's original design as revealed in Genesis 1 and 2. Shalom embraces God's desire to restore all things that have been affected by the Fall to wholeness and harmony of relationship. Through the life, death and resurrection of Christ, God's Kingdom is being realised in our world. Thus in the context, student welfare cannot be separated from the College community as "Shalom" at its heart is the restoration of relationship with God through Christ, with oneself, others and the creation. Through the interdependence and interconnectedness of the Body of Christ, students are to be transformed through loving relationship.

THE NESA REQUIREMENTS

These requirements are to be understood in a Biblical context. A Christ-centered learning community is a safe and supportive one where the welfare of the students is integral to its existence. The requirements related to welfare are as follows:

- **Safe Environment**

A safe environment for students is one where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel secure. Harm refers to not only dangers in the built environment, involving such matters as architecture and construction, lighting, space, facilities and safety plans, but also to violence, physical threats, verbal abuse, threatening gestures, sexual harassment and racial vilification.

- **Supportive Environment**

A supportive environment fosters the social, academic, physical and emotional development of students. A supportive environment can be described as one in which:

- Students are treated with respect and fairness by teachers, other staff and other students
- Members of the College Community feel valued
- Effective teaching and learning takes place
- Positive support and encouragement are provided by members of staff and students
- Non-discriminatory language and behavioural practices are defined, modelled and reinforced by members of the College Community
- Consultation takes place on matters relating to students' education and welfare.

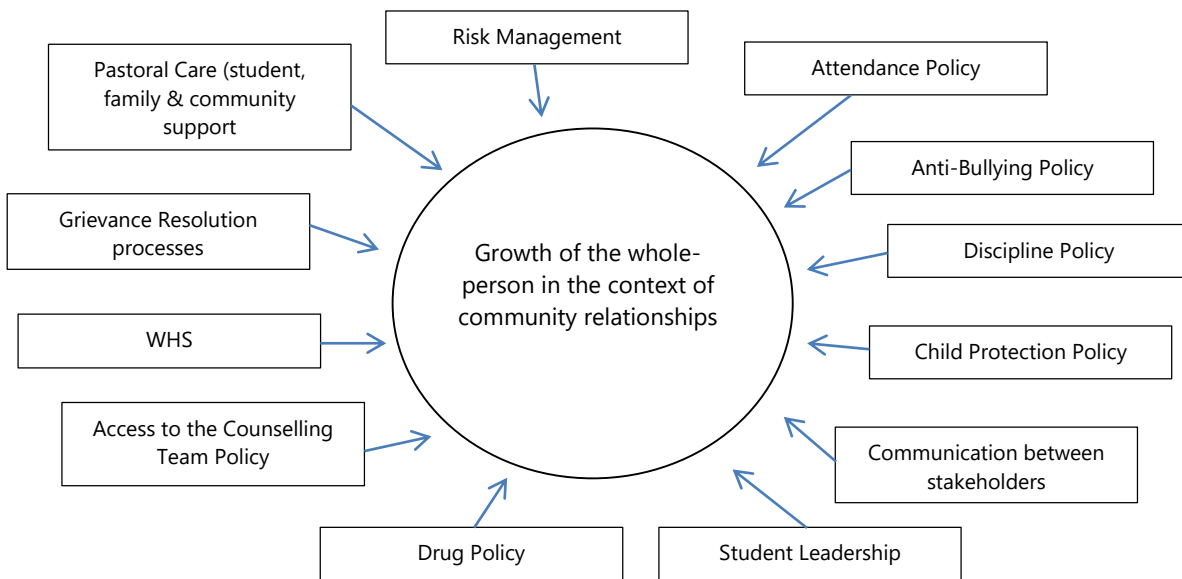
- **Student Welfare**

Student welfare encompasses the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of the student. Student welfare policies and programs are essential for developing a sense of self-worth and fostering personal development. Student welfare could include:

- Programs that the College provides to meet the personal, social and learning needs of the students
- Effective discipline early intervention programs for students at risk
- Student, family and community support networks
- Opportunities that the College provides for students to
 - Enjoy success and recognition
 - Make a useful contribution to the life of the College
 - Derive enjoyment from their learning

The TCC welfare policies and procedures are governed by principles of procedural fairness.

TCC STUDENT WELFARE OVERVIEW



PURPOSE STATEMENT

Toongabbie Christian College's Purpose Statement is:

To function as a Christian community in supporting families by providing quality education to develop the whole person in a Christ-centred, caring environment for life and eternity.

PASTORAL CARE STRUCTURE: PRIMARY (K-6)

Class Teachers are responsible for ensuring that each student experiences a safe and supportive learning environment. Teachers monitor the well-being of each student. If teachers are concerned about the well-being of an individual student, they will discuss this with the Head of Junior Primary or Head of Senior Primary. The student's parents will be contacted and a management plan will be developed. This management plan may include consultation with the College counselling team and health professionals. The Deputy Principal Primary will always be notified by the HoJP or HoSP of any concerns about student well-being.

Classroom teachers will ensure they develop teaching and learning strategies that meet the individual learning needs of each child. This will result in a positive learning environment that nurtures all children.

Teachers will plan sessions in Devotions and Health which address needs that groups of children may experience. Children are encouraged to and given opportunities to pray for each other.

From time to time teachers will organise special activities that are designed to improve the ability of students to relate to each other. This may include activities like a girls or boys' afternoon.

Regular opportunities for teachers to help students gain ideas for living in community include:

The College Counselling Team

The College Counsellor works with individuals and groups to develop the social, emotional and spiritual understanding and skills of the students. The Counsellor is available to meet with staff and parents to discuss student needs and strategies for assisting a student.

Outside Agencies

From time to time the College will consult with professionals from outside agencies to seek advice regarding effective strategies for helping students who are struggling with the requirements of school life.

Management Plans are developed for students experiencing a range of problems, for example, serious medical issues, emotional/behavioural problems, family and social problems.

Communication with Staff

All staff (including relief teachers) are informed of management plans on a "need-to-know" basis. Relevant information is included in the Casual Teacher Relief Pack.

Assemblies

Where the children are taught biblical principles for relating to one another. Awards, encouraging a variety of positive behaviours, are presented at assemblies.

Morning Assemblies

Children are briefly instructed on topics such as safe behaviours at recess, lunch and before and after school. Awards for extra-curricular activities, eg. sport, chess, debating and academic competitions are awarded during morning assemblies.

Chapels and WAVES

The children receive regular instruction on godly living.

Year 6 Camp

The students learn about dealing with issues they face at this age.

Special Programs

From time to time staff will invite visiting speakers or someone from the TCS community to speak to the children about topics such as bullying. The annual One Day event is a K-12 initiative where students are taught about aspects of treating each other well.

Health Lessons

Social and Emotional learning forms part of the Health program for all students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Kids Matter

TCC has undertaken to develop the Kids Matter Framework for improving mental health and wellbeing of the students. TCC is using the methods, tools and support from Kids Matter to develop a more positive College culture and to improve the social/emotional well-being of the students.

PASTORAL CARE STRUCTURE: SECONDARY (7-12)

1. Family Group Structure – Years 9 – 12

In the Secondary School pastoral care groups are called Family Groups. In Years 9-12, students are divided into groups of up to 25 boys or girls. These groups meet each day for morning roll call and this provides an opportunity for discussion of issues relevant to the age and experience of those in the group.

Stability of these groups from year to year is seen as desirable so that a bond of friendship, knowledge and confidence might emerge between student and teacher as well as among students.

Family Group Teachers provide regular student support and are asked to provide comments on student reports concerning the spiritual and social development and extra-curricular activities of those in their group.

2. Stage 4 – Years 7 & 8

The students have a homeroom teacher for a significant part (up to 15–20 periods/cycle) of their education. This teacher is to be their primary pastoral carer and is to foster a learning community with this group where students bond and have a positive environment in the first stage of their secondary education. The teacher also has the same responsibilities as Family Group Teachers.

3. Staff to Support Student Welfare

- The Principal
- Assistant Principal (Secondary)
- Heads of Stage
 - The key role of the Heads of Stage 4, 5 and 6 is to facilitate a range of pastoral care provisions to create and sustain a safe and supportive environment for student learning in the Secondary School. The role descriptions below reflect that aim.
- The College Counsellor & Psychologist

Head of Stage 4 Role Description

- Developing a distinctive Stage 4 culture that is Christ-centred, welcoming and inclusive of all current and new students to the College
- Overseeing the implementation of the Discipline, Welfare and Anti-Bullying policies for Stage 4 students
- Providing opportunities for students to use and grow in their God given gifts
- Overseeing the initial placement of students and monitoring academic progress of all students through a review of reports and by liaising with Heads of Curriculum and parents
- Liaising with the Head of Educational Support with regard to students with additional needs
- Regular meetings with Stage 4 teachers either in a group or individually
- Meeting and liaising with Stage 4 parents as needed
- Liaising with the counselling team
- Liaise with the Police Liaison Officer
- Specifically meeting and planning with the Head of Stages 3 & 5 to prepare students for continuing their journey in secondary education
- Oversight of 5-8 Chapel in liaison with the Head of Stage 3
- Oversight of Year 7 and 8 camping program
- Leading in collegiate activities (staff meetings, etc) in relation to student welfare
- Setting an example to students, staff and parents in matters of faith and conduct
- Participation in the Secondary Leadership Team (Heads of Curriculum and Stages)
 - Work as a unified team member of the leaders overseeing secondary curriculum and welfare
 - Liaise thoughtfully and collaboratively with other leaders on the Secondary Leadership Team.

Head of Stage 5 Role Description

- Developing a distinctive Stage 5 culture that is Christ centred, welcoming and inclusive of all current and new students to the College
- Overseeing the implementation of the Discipline, Welfare and Anti-Bullying policies for Stage 5 students
- Providing opportunities for students to use and grow in their God given gifts

- Overseeing the initial placement of students and monitoring academic progress of all students through a review of reports and by liaising with Heads of Curriculum and parents
- Liaising with the Head of Educational Support with regard to students with additional needs
- Liaising with Heads of Curriculum about student matters
- Liaising with the counselling team and Careers Adviser
- Liaising with the Police Liaison Officer
- Overseeing the Year 9 and 10 camping program
- Working with the Head of Stage 6 in overseeing 9-12 Family Groups
- Working with Head of Stage 6 and the Prefect Adviser to oversee Chapels
- Regular meetings with Stage 5 teachers either in a group or individually
- Meeting and liaising with Stage 5 parents as needed
- Specifically meeting and planning with the Head of Stages 4 & 6 to prepare students for continuing their journey in secondary education
- Leading collegiate activities (staff meetings, etc) in relation to student welfare
- Setting an example to students, staff and parents in matters of faith and conduct
- Participation in the Secondary Leadership Team (Heads of Curriculum and Stages)
 - Work as a unified team member of the leaders overseeing secondary curriculum and welfare
 - Liaise thoughtfully and collaboratively with other leaders on the Secondary Leadership Team.

Head of Stage 6 Role Description

- Developing a distinctive Stage 6 culture that is Christ-centred, welcoming and inclusive of all current and new to TCS students
- Overseeing the implementation of the Discipline, Welfare and Anti-Bullying policies for Stage 6 students
- Providing opportunities for students to use and grow in their God given gifts
- Overseeing the patterns of study of students and monitoring academic progress of all students through a review of reports and by liaising with Heads of Curriculum and parents
- Liaising with the Head of Education Support with regard to students with additional needs
- Overseeing Distance Education courses provided for Stage 6 students
- Overseeing the Year 11 camp program
- Working with the Head of Stage 5 in overseeing 9-12 Family Groups
- Working with Head of Stage 5 and the Prefect Adviser to oversee Chapels
- Regular meetings with Stage 6 teachers either in a group or individually
- Meeting and liaising with Stage 6 parents as needed
- Specifically meeting and planning with the Head of Stage 5 to prepare students for continuing their journey in secondary education
- Liaising with the Counselling team and Careers Adviser
- Liaise with the Police Liaison Officer
- Facilitating rite of passage events
- Helping to prepare students for life after College.

4. The Camping Program

The Years 6 –11 camping program creates “spaces” for students to bridge the gap between learning and living. These camps are designed specifically to foster students’ growth in their ability to live in community.

Responsibility for Organisation

- Year 7 Camp_____Head of Stage 4: to develop a sense of belonging in Secondary School
- Year 8 Camp _____Head of Stage 4: to develop “beyond their limits”
- Year 10 Camp_____Head of Stage 5 to prepare for future study or work
- Year 11 Camp_____Head of Stage 6: focussing on personal and study issues relevant to senior students

Separate Gender Camps

- Year 9 Camp_____Head of Stage 5: gender issues relevant to their stage of development

5. An Integrated Personal Health & Development Curriculum

The curriculum will be integrated with year gender meetings held in each year, and parental seminars and the camping program. The Head of PDHPE has oversight of the PDHPE Curriculum. The Welfare Committee (DP, Heads of Stage 4, 5 & 6) oversees the ongoing integration and development of the Welfare Policy for the Secondary School.

6. Student Mentors

The Years 11 & 12 Prefects, under the direction of the Prefect Coordinator and the Prefect Adviser, provide peer support to Year 7 and Year 8 students.

7. The Support of Parents

The “Parents and Friends” are encouraged to support the pastoral care of the College by providing parental services that seek to build up the families’ capacity to raise their children in the nurture of the Lord.

8. The Mindmatters Framework

The TCC Secondary School is developing an approach to mental health using the *MindMatters* framework. It aims to promote mental health, prevent problems and enable early intervention.

MindMatters is a mental health initiative for secondary schools that aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people. It is called a ‘framework’, in that it provides structure, guidance and support while enabling schools to build their own mental health strategy to suit their unique circumstances. *MindMatters* provides College staff with blended professional learning that includes online resources, face-to-face events, webinars and support. All content has been informed by strong evidence in the area of school mental health and wellbeing. The use of *MindMatters’* comprehensive resources has mental health benefits for the entire College community – including students, families and College staff.

MindMatters is based on the principle that the best mental health strategy is one that prevents issues from arising in the first place. For this reason, *MindMatters* helps schools promote positive mental health through the whole College community, and aims to prevent mental health difficulties in students by taking steps to improve relationships and resilience. *MindMatters* provides staff with practical advice and guidance so that they can support students who may be struggling with mental health difficulties in a timely and appropriate way. **Promotion, prevention and early intervention** are central tenets of the *MindMatters’* approach.

General Implementation Procedures

1. The Counselling and Welfare teams will provide in-servicing about the framework through a session each January and July Professional Development weeks. This might involve staff completing an online module or taking one aspect of the framework and having intensive training.
2. All Secondary teachers have an online account and are progressively working through the modules.
3. An action team for *Mindmatters* comprises: the Heads of Stage 4 and 6 and the Counsellor. The action team will oversee the initiatives in the Secondary School in liaison with the Deputy Principal.
4. Staff and student surveying on wellbeing.
5. The Anti-bullying Day each year aims to use some aspect of the *MindMatters* (and *KidsMatters* in the Primary) Framework as the basis for the day.
6. Celebrate Afternoon, on the last day of Term 2, allows students the opportunity to show case some of their skills and talents.

9. Weekly Assemblies

Each Tuesday, all Secondary students meet to have assembly. The time together allows for teaching about safe and supportive practices, to remind students about events where they can be involved and contribute to the community, to receive commendation and to listen to a student’s devotion. The assembly is usually led by students. Announcements about student – led pastoral care initiatives are also announced.

10. Regular Chapel Times

Stage 4 Chapel

The Head of Stage 4 will organise Chapel services where students from Years 7 and 8 can meet together to worship God through music, to share their gifts and talents and to enjoy the company of others in their Stage. The students are very involved in the running of the chapel.

9-12 Chapel

The Head of Stage 5 and 6 will oversee a group of student leaders who organise Chapel services each fortnight. The students in Stages 5 and 6 meet together to: worship God through music, to share their gifts and talents and to enjoy the company of others in their Stages. Announcements about student – led pastoral care initiatives are also announced.

AFFIRMATION STRATEGIES: SECONDARY (7-12)

1. Teacher Level

There is no substitute for excellent teaching practice ie: the clear implementation of classroom strategies plus planned focussed and relevant lessons. Our students should be the beneficiaries of good teaching practice within the clearly defined policies of this document. Words of encouragement, praise and affirmation should be frequently heard.

2. Commendation Certificate

To encourage positive feedback for student’s excellent achievement and meritorious work students are awarded certificates of commendation as below:

To achieve the Principal’s award, the following criteria are to be met (per calendar year):

Year 7 _____ 5 achievement certificates (grey printed certificate A6 size)

Year 8 _____ 5

Year 9 _____ 4

Year 10 _____ 4

The tally of the above items will be kept by the Merit Certificate Administrator on file and will notify the Principal. Teachers are to place a short note explaining the certificate and date of presentation in the Merit Certificate Administrator’s pigeonhole.

The award of achievement certificates may involve presentation on assembly or in a class based ceremony depending on the peer group and personality of the students involved.

3. Senior “Acknowledgement of Effort” Award

This Award will be given to a senior student (Years 11 and 12) who has responded in an area of Senior School studies with responsibility and maturity.

This acknowledgement will contribute to a Principal’s Award.

4. The Principal’s Award

In addition to accrued commendation certificates, this award will be given from time to time at the Principal’s discretion. It will be given for outstanding or meritorious service and achievement. The Principal’s Award will involve a special meeting with the Principal for certificate presentation and may involve public recognition at an assembly.