

HIGHVIEW COLLEGE STAFF WELFARE POLICY



Person Responsible – Principal

Rationale

Highview College recognises that the current demands of working in a school can be significant and are increasing. There is acknowledgement that some level of stress is unavoidable and not necessarily a health risk. There is also acknowledgement that everybody faces social, emotional or mental health problems at some time in their lives. Each individual is primarily responsible for their own health and wellbeing.

The Serenity Prayer or prayer of peace:

God grant me serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Aims

- To continue to place value on the Pastoral Care element of the College.
- To acknowledge that duty of care extends to mental health as well as physical health at work.
- For all staff to act as carers to one another.
- To build and maintain staff morale at a high level.
- To promote and foster staff wellbeing by continuing to create and increase programs that assist in this area.
- To help each other cope and thrive in our profession.
- To recognise that there are times when staff will struggle to meet and cope with the demands placed upon them. This includes the demands of classroom teaching, preparation, correction, administration, professional learning, accountability, health and safety issues, and relationships within the school.

Implementation

The role of the Senior Executive Team

(Refer to Appendix 1)

The role of the Pastoral Care Team

As a College we have undertaken a whole school approach to providing a positive work environment for all (through StaffMatters –led by the Pastoral Care Team) along with an attempt to maintain and improve staff morale. We have a number of programs designed to create such an environment. (Refer to Appendix 2)

The role of the individual

(Refer to Appendix 3)

Harassment and Bullying

The Student Policy on Bullying and Harassment is also applicable to staff. Common forms of harassment involve offensive conduct and behaviour directed at a person's gender, race origin, disability, sexual orientation, age, religious conviction or some personal characteristic. It can also include the inappropriate use of physical or mental power (bullying). Other less obvious, but equally serious forms of harassment and bullying can occur in 'staff room talk' about colleagues.

Expressions of opinions about colleagues, which can be viewed as harmful, malicious or showing prejudice are unacceptable.

Any bullying or harassment is potentially harmful to the wellbeing of the person it is directed at, but also to those who may be subjected to a hostile and unpleasant atmosphere.

- The staff member will be made aware of their action.
- If their unacceptable actions persist a warning may be issued.
- Counselling and mediation will be offered to work out the situation.
- Staff disciplinary action may ensue if this situation cannot be worked out quickly and effectively.

Additional information

APPENDIX 1: The Role of the Senior Executive Team in Staff Welfare:

APPENDIX 2: Programs already in operation to enhance staff moral and provide a positive environment.

APPENDIX 3: Individual:

APPENDIX 4: Self-help Phonelines and Links

Policy developed by Jenny Wardrop – 2012

Updated by Melinda Scash – 2016

APPENDIX 1

THE ROLE OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM IN STAFF WELFARE:

To make Highview College a work place that maintains and promotes the health and wellbeing of employees.

- To provide all staff with access to members of the Senior Executive Team to voice concerns.
- Provide all staff with clearly defined position descriptions and professional expectations.
- To keep staff informed of decisions, successes and achievements.
- Provide all staff with opportunities for Professional Learning.
- To endeavour to generate a supportive team culture.
- To promote staff wellbeing as a shared responsibility between the senior executive team, all staff and the individual.
- Provide extra support for Graduate Teachers and those new to the school.
- All staff have access to the Deputy Principal-Pastoral Care for advice, assistance or informal counselling when needed.
- To encourage anyone feeling overwhelmed, stressed or not coping to seek help. This could be by bringing the situation to the attention of the Deputy Principal-Pastoral Care.
- To provide the avenues for professional support (Refer to the Counselling and Support for staff and students Policy)
- To ensure that all meetings have a clear purpose, a well-planned agenda, a time limit and are effectively chaired.
- That it is the role of this Team to bring to the attention of all staff at the beginning of each year Occupational Health and Safety Guidelines for the workplace, in order to ensure physical wellbeing.

APPENDIX 2

PROGRAMS ALREADY IN OPERATION TO ENHANCE STAFF MORALE AND PROVIDE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

- Recognition of every staff member's birthday with a cake provided and 'Happy Birthday' sung at morning tea.
- Special birthdays being recognized with a special morning tea.
- Other special occasions recognized with a morning tea or lunch, including engagements, weddings, and the birth of babies, retirements and farewells.
- Special staff lunches for Charity events.
- The support group, which provides meals for those who need assistance at a particular point in time.
- Flowers sent to those on the death of a close family member.
- Some staff always try to attend funerals of the loved ones of our colleague. (close family)
- Cards sent for other occasions.
- Staff Christmas Dinner.
- Kris Kringle (or similar)
- Staff snacks on Parent / Teacher nights.
- Social events run after school – the aim being for one per term.
- Recognition of new academic achievements/degrees. Staff are urged to inform the Staff Association / Deputy Principal-Pastoral Care.
- Recognition of long service
- Lunchtime quiz time for those in the community room
- The cultivation of a "safe atmosphere to share"
- 'Pass it on' / Random acts of kindness
- Recognise the value of individual work.
- Provide chilled water dispenser

APPENDIX 3

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR WELLBEING

- Positive Self Talk
- Acceptance – that we are all different and have different approaches, not necessarily wrong.
- Exercise helps deal with stress – do what suits you.
- Relaxation and Meditation may help.
- Eat healthily.
- Listening to music / watch a movie / read a book.
- Take a break – head down the street a lunch time or walk around the block.
- Deliberate acts of kindness – do something nice for someone else.
- Treat yourself
- Seek Help.

APPENDIX 4

SELF-HELP PHONELINES AND LINKS

Emergency – ambulance, fire, police Tel. Call triple zero (000)

Call 112 as a secondary emergency number when calling from your mobile phone in Australia. When you are overseas you can also use 112 to be connected to local emergency services.

There are many organisations that provide telephone advice and counselling. As well as helping you in a crisis, telephone counsellors can provide you with information and a list of other organisations that may be able to help you.

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| Gamblers Help | Tel. 1800 858 858 gamblinghelponline.org.au |
| beyondblue info line | 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au |
| Victorian Poisons Information Centre | Tel. 131 126 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.austin.org.au/poisons |
| Victorian State Emergency Service | Tel. 132 500 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.ses.vic.gov.au |
| NURSE-ON-CALL | Tel. 1300 60 60 24 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nurseoncall/ |
| Maternal and Child Health Line, Victoria | Tel. 132 229 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/maternal-child-health/telephone |
| St Kilda Crisis Contact Centre | Tel. (03) 9536 7777, or toll free for country Victoria 1800 627 727 Hours 10am to 12 midnight, 7 days a week |

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| Lifeline | Tel. 13 11 14 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.lifeline.org.au |
| Suicide Line | Tel. 1300 651 251 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website SuicideLine |
| Women's Information Referral Exchange (WIRE) | Tel. 1300 134 130 Hours 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday Website http://www.wire.org.au |
| Men's Referral Service | Tel. (03) 9428 2899, 1800 065 973 Hours 12noon to 9pm, Monday to Friday Website http://www.mrs.org.au/ |
| Parentline | Tel. 132 289 Hours 8am to midnight, Monday to Friday 10am to 10pm, Saturday and Sunday Website http://www.parentline.vic.gov.au |
| Kids Help Line | Tel. 1800 551 800 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.kidshelp.com.au |
| Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) Counseling and Support | Tel. (03) 9635 3610 Hours 24 hours Website http://www.thewomens.org.au/SexualAssault |
| Gamblers Help | Tel. 1800 858 858, TTY 1800 777 706 Hours 24 hours, 7 days a week Website http://www.problemgambling.vic.gov.au/immediate-help |
| Bereavement Information and Referral Service | Tel. 1300 664 786 Hours Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm Website http://www.grief.org.au |
| Gay and Lesbian Switchboard Victoria | Tel. (03) 9663 2939, 1800 184 527 Hours 6–10pm every day except Wednesday 2–10pm Wednesday Website http://www.switchboard.org.au/ |
| Alcohol and Drug Information | VIC - 1800 888 236 |
| The Cancer Council Helpline | Tel: 13 11 20 Hours Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm |