

# Secondary School Student Wellbeing



## STUDENT WELLBEING

### Pastoral Care

Within our House system and School structure we aim to ensure that each student has opportunities to create close, positive relationships with a range of trusted adults and peers. The aim is to help students develop a network of friendship, guidance and support.

This network extends beyond our teaching staff and House Heads to our Chaplain, RAVE (Religious & Values Education) teachers and the School Counsellor.

Our pastoral care program aims to provide a supportive, caring and Christian environment where students can fulfil their potential and become independent and interdependent members of the community, able to contribute to a wide range of activities.

At Westminster this means setting up systems and processes to ensure that we care for each individual student as a 'whole person'. We do this by:

- developing pride and commitment by supporting students' continued and committed involvement in a wide range of School activities
- creating opportunities for open communication and encouraging an appreciation of others in order to foster positive relationships throughout the School and beyond
- encouraging independence to prepare students for their schooling and their future
- providing positive role models and opportunities to develop leadership qualities in all areas of students' lives
- encouraging students to fulfil their potential in all areas of School life and beyond
- providing a supportive, caring and nurturing environment appropriate to students' individual needs.

In essence, pastoral care works to prevent bullying, harassment, exclusion and isolation and to promote inclusion and celebrate diversity, difference and belonging. The Senior School has integrated the 'Mind Matters' program into pastoral care sessions.

## Harassment Policy

### Guidelines and School policy on harassment and bullying

Westminster School offers a quality education aiming to provide a caring and supportive environment while acknowledging the dignity and importance of individuals.

Being harassed means being subjected to behaviour that is unwanted and hurtful. Harassment is something you should not tolerate. You can do something about it.

### Being harassed

When we are angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated or uncomfortable, as a result of someone's deliberate actions or words, it affects our self-confidence. If it persists we find it hard to concentrate on our work and to keep good relationships with others. Harassment is behaviour that is unwelcome and repeated; it must not be allowed to continue. Some forms of harassment are unlawful. At Westminster School we have a statement on human relations which seeks respect for others from all members of the School community.

- the three Cs, COURTESY, CONSIDERATION and COOPERATION, all have the quality of CARING for others as their basis
- any form of harassment breaks this code and is totally against our School rules and, in some cases, against the laws of our State.

### Stopping harassment is important

- everyone has the right to feel secure and comfortable at our School
- the expectation is that you are able to travel to and from our School feeling safe
- everyone has the right to learn in an environment that is free from harassment
- people who harass others stop them from achieving their best.



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## Leadership

Students are encouraged to develop leadership qualities in all areas of their life. We encourage independence in preparation for their schooling and their future.

There are many opportunities for leadership: Sport, Performing Arts, Tours, School Leadership positions in Year 12, Outdoor Education, House System. All Year 12 students are generally considered leaders of the Senior School student group on campus. In the Year 12 cohort there are between 30 and 40 students who are formally appointed to School Leader offices, primarily by a vote from Senior School students and teachers. Part of a Year 12 student's opportunity for a well-rounded year is balancing their studies with taking responsibility for others and participation in sport and/or the arts through peer mentoring/mediation. There are leadership opportunities in sporting teams, drama, music, dance, musicals, plays, agriculture, international experiences, tours, excursions, pastoral care and community service – locally and globally.

We are a member of Round Square, a group of international schools, who include taking responsibilities for others through leadership.

Students who successfully handle leadership at school are likely to be better prepared for leadership roles in adult life. It can also help to prepare for life after school in general, not just in careers and tertiary course selection, but also in interests, hobbies, socially and travel.

## Religious & Values Education

The Sir Shirley Jeffries Chapel is the geographical and spiritual heart of the School. The Senior School Chaplain has oversight of the spiritual development of the Senior School and our School Chaplain has the same responsibility in the Preparatory School.

All students go to a Chapel service once a week with their particular class or House group. Boarding students also attend Sunday evening with families and friends from the School community. Chapel is a place where students and

staff are encouraged to engage and participate in various aspects of worship and celebrate communal life. It is not an intrusive or aggressive style of religion, more a broad values approach with emphasis on:

- no bullying
- no harassment
- including others, not excluding people
- appreciating difference in others.

Families are welcomed to the School from all religious backgrounds. Many students at the School come from families who are members of the Uniting Church or other Christian denominations. Some of our families have faith in other religions, while others have no preferred faith.

We consider it important to help students make their own decision in their own time, in this important area of faith, spirituality and religion, but from an informed position. The vast majority of students actually enjoy the Chapel services.

Religious Education is a lesson once a fortnight in the Senior School.

Community is an integral value at Westminster School and Chapel services are another dimension of communal expression in the life of the School. Community is a place where values, identity, belonging, care, compassion are evident and encouraged. Chapel is also a place where students connect.

## House System

Our House system works across the whole School to deliver our pastoral care program. Students are assigned to one of ten in the Senior School. Houses comprise students from all age groups and form the basis for friendly, intra-School competition for sports days and other activities.

In the Senior School, Year 8 students are assigned a class group with a class teacher, who is responsible for their care and welfare. The Head of Year 8 oversees and



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supports the class teachers and all Year 8 students. From Year 9 onwards, pastoral care is overseen by the relevant Head of House, with assistance from tutors. Within our House system and School structure we aim, to ensure that each student has opportunities to create close, positive relationships with a range of trusted adults and peers. The aim is to help students develop a network of friendship, guidance and support.

This network extends beyond our teaching staff and House Heads to our Chaplain, RAVE (Religious & Values Education) teachers and the School Counsellor. A particular feature is the Year 9 wellbeing program where students are separated into their genders so they may feel more comfortable to engage in a discussion in some of the teenage issues they are dealing with.

The teacher in charge of a House knows about many aspects of every student in their House – enough to have an overview of their welfare. The House tutors work with smaller tutor groups within the House and have daily contact with students.

Each House holds regular meetings where students of all age levels interact. Each House elects leaders, who take on positions of responsibility within both the House and the wider School. Houses also organise community service activities and fundraising projects and involve parents in many of their activities.

## **Behaviour Management**

All members of the School community are expected to become familiar with the contents of this Behaviour Management Policy and aim to adhere to it to the best of their ability. This Behaviour Management Policy is designed to provide a supportive, caring and Christian environment where students can fulfil their potential and become independent and interdependent members of the wider community, able to contribute in a wide range of activities.

## **Rights**

All members of the School community are ultimately responsible for their own behaviour.

Everyone has the right to:

- respect and dignity
- work and learn to the best of their ability
- be safe both physically and emotionally

## **Responsibilities**

Responsibility is when you take control of your own thoughts and actions. Among the responsibilities, which are entailed by membership of the Westminster community are the essentials of:

- caring
- co operating
- sharing
- doing your best
- being prepared and organised
- acting safely

## **Rules**

- All School rules are stated in the diary or as notified from time to time.
- Good, fair rules give formal protection to one's rights.
- Leaders of specific areas may develop a set of rules appropriate to required needs.

## **Specific Areas**

### *The Classroom – A Safe and Supportive Learning Environment*

The management of classroom behaviour is essentially the responsibility of all members of that class. If required, additional staff will be available to assist in maintaining a suitable working environment.

Teachers and students have the right to work and learn in a secure and friendly environment without distraction. This involves full cooperation from all members of the class through listening and assisting other students when needed. It does mean that everyone should be aware that students have different learning styles, needs and abilities.



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## *Expectations*

- Staff and students are expected to arrive at lessons on time.
- Students must bring appropriate equipment and materials to each lesson.
- Students must bring their diaries to each lesson.
- Students are expected to achieve to the best of their ability

## *Outside the Classroom*

### On-Campus:

- the campus is a comfortable and secure environment:
- Staff and students take pride in the whole School environment.
- Staff and students respect and care for each other and those visitors who are welcome.

### Off-Campus:

- Staff and students will uphold the same high standards of behaviour as expected on campus.
- Staff and students will show the necessary respect and care towards all members of the wider community.

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## **Fully Engaged teenagers**

This all helps students be fully engaged during their teenage years in positive activities with positive social groups. An important issue is that students are constructively influenced by their peers and achieve their potential in many ways including academic, mental health, confidence, self esteem, resilience, hobbies, interests and travel.

