Pastoral Care at Great Southern Grammar

Pastoral Care is defined as the nurturing and guidance of students to help them realise their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. Great Southern Grammar places great emphasis on Pastoral Care.

Values

The actions and attitudes of staff and students at GSG reflect our commitment to the values of integrity, respect, tolerance and compassion. We aim to nurture each student’s unique potential. Students are encouraged to develop initiative, responsibility, ethical discernment, openness to learning and an appreciation of diversity. The relevant knowledge, skills and values are developed within a Christian context.

Promotion of Our Values and Student Well-Being

Practices to promote our values and maintain mental and emotional well-being are central to GSG’s Pastoral Care systems.

We aim to teach, protect and support members of the GSG community by:

- Providing a learning environment where individual differences and appreciated and accepted
- Modelling behaviour that shows tolerance and acceptance at all times by all members of the community

Programmes

Mental health strategies and programmes implemented by GSG include:

- Provision of a School Counsellor, with referral through Heads of Sub-School or Heads of House
- Peer support system in which Year 11 students support new Year 8 students
- Resourceful Adolescent Programme promoting resilience in Year 8 students
- FRIENDS social skills programme for Year 3 and 4 students
- Socially Speaking communication skills for Junior School students
- Explicit teaching of strategies for resilience
- Social stories
- Journaling
- Interpersonal games and team building strategies
- MindMatters mental health resources
- Anti-bullying, including cyber bullying, programmes

Staff professional development in these areas is ongoing.

Encouragement of Pro-Social Behaviour

Pro-social behaviour is behaviour that promotes respectful and cohesive relationships throughout the School community. This is encouraged within the classroom and in the wider School community.
Classroom Practices

Teachers:

- Discuss, establish, maintain and review clear guidelines on classroom behaviour
- Model and teach assertiveness strategies
- Encourage cooperative learning where possible
- Cater for individual differences by using a variety of approaches
- Observe social relationships between students in class, encourage openness in group work and new friendships
- Provide quiet times
- Praise and reward where appropriate
- Focus on strengths and improvements
- Provide incentives for those who show respect, positivity and a desire to contribute
- Aid students in setting goals, and assist in outlining steps to achieve goals
- Encourage students to take on challenges
- Provide opportunities for discussion and expressions without fear of put-down

School Practices

The School:

- Recognises and rewards pro-social behaviours in and out of the classroom
- Commends outstanding participation, effort and achievement
- Acknowledges excellent achievement and effort publicly, through certificates, assemblies and publications
- Emphasises cooperation and teamwork
- Uses alternative conflict resolution strategies
- Promotes ideas of mutual responsibility for the welfare of other community members

Structures and Processes

All staff members are pastoral carers at Great Southern Grammar. There is a whole school approach to pastoral care that encompasses a range of structures and processes.

House

The School’s House system provides the structure for the delivery of Pastoral Care at GSG. Each student is placed in one of the four Houses, providing a structured avenue for students to develop their potential, to show respect and concern for others and to enact interpersonal cooperation and social responsibility.

Each House has a Head of House with overall pastoral responsibility for Senior School students in his or her House, as well as responsibility for the culture and activities of the House in a whole school context. House groups meet often, with regular scheduled meetings for Junior School House groups and Middle and Senior School House groups, as well as whole of House events, competitions and fund raising activities.
Sporting and cultural competitions, along with a reward system in the Junior School, give students the opportunity to score points for their House. The House with the most points at the end of the year is awarded Champion House.

GSG awards Wave and Lighthouse badges for participation in and service to the School community. These are awarded by Houses and have minimum requirements for eligibility. Please see the Wave and Lighthouse Awards policy for selection criteria.

**Homeroom**

Each student is placed in a Homeroom. The Homeroom teacher monitors daily attendance, uniforms, notices and student organisation. The check students’ diaries and develop organisational and planning structures.

**Junior School**

In the Junior School, the student’s class teacher is primarily responsible for pastoral care and various practices and methods are adopted by the staff to monitor and foster each child’s development. Parents should contact their child’s class teacher directly with any concerns or queries. The Head of Junior School is available to give further support and advice when required.

**Middle School**

Pastoral Care in in the Middle School is delivered along horizontal lines with the Head Year responsible for the pastoral care of students in that specific year group, extending across all Houses. Homeroom groups in Years 7 to 9 are arranged along class rather than House lines. For day to day and administrative issues such as planned absences parents should contact their child’s Homeroom teacher. Concerns regarding academic progress or social and behavioural issues should be discussed with their child’s Head of Year. Supporting the Heads of Year is the Head of Middle School.

**Senior School**

In Senior School, the Homeroom group comprises student in the same Year and House. Heads of House are responsible for Pastoral Care in the Senior School, establishing close relationships with the students over their three years in Senior School. They develop considerable understanding and knowledge of the students in their House which makes the well equipped to advise them on the academic, social and emotional issues. The Head of House becomes the hub, the focal point in the school life of the student. Parents of students in the Senior School should consult the relevant Head of House when they want advice, clarification or to discuss their child’s progress.

**Staff with Specific Responsibilities**

- Pastoral care at GSG is overseen by a committee consisting of the Heads of Sub-Schools, Heads of House and Heads of Year.
- Classroom teacher: homework diary, communication with parents, parent interviews, lunchtime detentions, classroom management strategies, class rules, progress reports
- Homeroom teacher: counselling, parent contact, mediation
- Head of Year: counselling, parent contact, mediation, detention
- Head of Sub-School: organisation and dealing with more serious issues
- Head of House: counselling, parent contact, mediation, organisation of activities and programmes, case management
- Deputy Headmaster: organisation, liaison with external people and agencies, dealing with serious issues, implementation of consequences, critical incident management
- Headmaster: counselling of students and families, suspension, exclusion, review of student standing, interviews
- School Counsellor: counselling, referral to other agencies, education, stress management, case management
- Chaplain: counselling, referral to church leaders, Christian Studies and ethics programmes, Chapel services
- Director of Studies: interviews, academic counselling, parent contact
- Non-Government Schools Psychologist: testing, referral, observation
- Student Leaders: mentoring, organisation of activities

**Record Keeping**

Appropriate paper and/or electronic records are kept of student achievements and issues. In the Senior School, Heads of House are responsible for maintaining student files; in the Junior and Middle Schools this is the responsibility of the Homeroom teacher.

Records include:

- Student Information Slip for recording student behaviour and/or work that is deserving of praise or requires attention
- Pastoral Care Action Plan for following through complex issues
- Academic or Pastoral Notice of Concern sent to parents regarding concerns