



# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**Scope:** This policy applies to all students and staff enrolled/employed in /by Catholic Education - Diocese of Rockhampton (CEDR).

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Catholic Education – Diocese of Rockhampton (CEDR) will promote mental health and wellbeing for all. The promotion of mental health and access to wellbeing initiatives is founded on our vision for Catholic Schools, the virtues that inspire us, the key principles of Catholic Social Teaching and appropriate to the needs of the school community.

## 2. DESCRIPTION

Mental health and wellbeing should permeate all aspects of school life and learning. Sustained change is best achieved when a school makes a commitment to collectively improve the mental health and wellbeing of the whole learning community. This supports educators to share their learnings and translate knowledge into practice and enables positive changes to policies and procedures, pedagogy and physical environments (Be You, 2019).

Mental health is about wellness rather than illness. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2014), good mental health is a state of wellbeing in which an individual:

- realises their own abilities and potential
- can cope with the normal stresses of life
- can work productively and fruitfully, and
- is able to make a positive contribution to their community.

CEDR acknowledges the relationship between health and education. Healthy children are better able to learn, and higher educational achievement is strongly associated with better health. Young people with poor mental health and wellbeing are at higher risk of behavioural, emotional and academic problems. (The Queensland Centre for Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention, 2010).

When a proactive approach to the mental health and wellbeing of employees is implemented, the expected benefits are:

- improved health and safety within the workplace
- improved employee morale and engagement
- improved staff retention
- increased productivity.



Research suggests that a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing is essential.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The School/ College Community will provide:

1. a coherent whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing that includes students, families and staff. This will be embedded into school structures and practices, is reflective of the CEDR [Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework](#) and the five elements of the [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#).
2. a safe, respectful, inclusive and supportive school culture where mental health and wellbeing is a priority.
3. physical and online environments in the school that promote safety, reflection and social connections
4. opportunities for student and staff voice in relation to mental health and wellbeing initiatives and/ or concerns.

The School / College Leadership will provide:

1. opportunities for the teaching of Social Emotional Learning skills which may include: resilience, emotional literacy, emotional regulation, social skills, social problem solving, physical education, nutrition and sleep hygiene, as well as promoting positive relationships and help seeking behaviours.
2. clear guidelines, procedures and effective responses to all forms of bullying and harassment, developed in collaboration with staff, students and parents/carers.
3. information to staff on accessing the Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidelines for Staff.
4. opportunities and support to families through systematic parent awareness raising and skill building in relation to mental health and wellbeing.
5. information to all students and families regarding access to the school counselling service.
6. clear referral pathways for mental health assessment and treatment.
7. Links to local community services to build capacity for mental health promotion, illness prevention and early intervention.

CEDR will provide:

1. an Employee Assistance Program to all staff.
2. information and support to school leadership on current evidence-based programs and frameworks in the area of mental health and wellbeing.
3. professional learning opportunities to build the capacity of school leadership to support the diverse range of students within the school community.
4. guidelines for schools to respond to risks relating to mental health and wellbeing.



#### 4. REFLECTION MATERIAL

##### CATHOLIC EDUCATION POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- [Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework](#) v2 2020
- [Code of Conduct](#) v4 2022
- [Information and Communications Technologies Codes of Practice](#) v7 2022
- [Anti-Bullying](#) 2018/06
- [Information and Communication Technologies](#) 2019/07
- [Pastoral Care](#) 2020/05
- [Personal and Social Development Education](#) 2017/06
- [Prevention and Elimination of Abuse, Racism, Bullying and Harassment](#) 2021/08
- [Student Counselling in Catholic Schools and Colleges](#) 2022/02
- [Student Protection](#) 2023/01
- [Workplace Health and Safety](#) 2021/03
- [Integrity in Relationships](#) 2019 (Brochure)
- *Mental Health and Well-being in the workplace: An employee guide* v3 2022
- *Postvention Guidelines: Suicide / Attempted Suicide* v2 2018
- *Procedure for Responding to Workplace Bullying and Sexual Harassment (Code of Conduct)* v4 2023
- *Responding to Non-Suicidality Guidelines* v1 2019
- *Responding to Suicidality Guidelines* v2 2020
- *Response Process to support key/identified staff in relation to staff suicide risk* v1 2018

##### REFERENCES

- Education Services Australia 2018 [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)
- Australian Government 2019 [Be You – A whole learning community approach](#)
- The Queensland Centre for Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (2010). The Queensland Ed-LinQ initiative A framework for action. Mental Health Directorate, Queensland Health
- World Health Organisation 2014 [Mental Health: a state of well-being](#)
- [Office of the e-safety Commissioner](#)
- Principles of Catholic Social Teaching [Principles of Catholic Social Teaching](#)