



St Brigid's Catholic College

Lake Munmorah

Parent Handbook

2018

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1. St Brigid's Catholic College

a. *Principal's Welcome*

I am delighted that you have chosen to entrust your child to us for their secondary education. I am confident that St Brigid's staff, both teaching and support, are a group of dedicated professionals who are committed to ensuring your child has the best holistic educational experience possible at our beautiful college. St Brigid's has been established as a school for your child's future, as we know that the demands of living and working in contemporary society need a different way of educating.

I hope that you find the contents of this handbook informative. Open communication between home and school is vital to the best outcomes for your child. We acknowledge that parents are the first educators of their children and so we are committed to working with you so that your child leaves us with dignity, purpose and options for the future.

I look forward to getting to know your child as a new member of the St Brigid's family.

Julie Terry

b. *College Mission Statement*

St Brigid's Catholic College is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Broken Bay and exists to educate and form young people in Catholic discipleship, offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community.

The College aims to foster a spirit of inquiry and a reflective disposition to learning, so as to provide students with a strong foundation for making realistic, life giving choices in their journey as Catholics.

St Brigid was renowned as an educational leader and was often portrayed holding a reed cross (which was adopted as the College cross) and a lamp or flame of learning. Our patron saint St Brigid was one of the most remarkable women of her times. Her extraordinary spirituality, boundless charity, and compassion for those in distress were notable; she was also known to be a woman of peace and reconciliation.

At St Brigid's we strive to create a dynamic faith community in which each student will internalise Christian values and become vitally involved in the promotion and practice of justice. Our aim is for all students to be 'life giving' members within their communities, lived out through the school motto 'Inflaming hearts and minds in Christ'.

Parents are recognised as the prime religious educators of their children, and teachers, through their vocation, support parents in this role. Engagement with the religious curriculum, social justice initiatives and the liturgical life of the College provides students and staff with opportunities to develop their relationship with God and others.

c. Our Values

- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Courage
- ❖ Stewardship
- ❖ Wisdom

d. Our Students

Inspired by the life of St Brigid and her love of Christ, our students

- ❖ are moved by *compassion* for others and empathise through action
- ❖ grow in *wisdom* to know what is right and have the *courage* to act with integrity
- ❖ take responsibility for their role in the *stewardship* of all of Creation

e. College Patron - St Brigid

Brigid was probably born in AD451 in Ireland. According to legend, her father was Dubhthach, an Irish chieftain and her mother, Brocca, was a slave at his court. Even as a young girl she showed an interest for a religious life and entered the convent when she was 18 years old. About the year 470 she founded a double monastery at Cill-Dara (Kildare), the Church of the Oak, and was Abbess of the convent, the first in Ireland. The monastery was a co-educational facility, and became famous as an exemplary place of learning and spirituality, and around the abbey grew the Cathedral city of Kildare. Brigid founded a school of art at Kildare and its illuminated manuscripts became famous, notably the Book of Kildare, which was praised as one of the finest of all illuminated Irish manuscripts before its disappearance three centuries ago. She also established a school of art and metal work. Brigid was one of the most remarkable women of her times, and many miracles are attributed to her. Her extraordinary spirituality, boundless charity, and compassion for those in distress were notable. She also had a great respect for Creation and was known to be a woman of peace and reconciliation.

Brigid is often portrayed holding a reed cross. It is told that she sat at the bedside of a dying man and told him the story of Christ. She made the cross from reeds on the floor and the man was so impressed by the story of her Saviour that he asked to be baptised. Brigid is also shown carrying a lamp or flame of learning as she was renowned as an educational leader. One of the traditional Irish rituals is for families to hang the Cross of St Brigid in their home for protection from evil and fire. They do this at the beginning of spring on the 1st February, which is celebrated as Brigid's feast day.



f. College Logo and Colours



The logo is a modern interpretation of St Brigid's reed cross. The flames at the apex of the cross represent the flame or lamp of learning for which she was remembered.

The College colours of maroon, navy, white and teal were chosen to reflect the symbols for which she is noted. The maroon is for the flame of learning; white is the colour associated with Brigid, and teal green represents peace and reconciliation and blue for the love of Creation, for which she is renowned.

g. College Motto - 'Inflaming Hearts and Minds in Christ'

'Inflaming Hearts and Minds in Christ' reminds us of the centrality of Christ in Brigid's life and calls us to centre ourselves on Him. St Brigid's passion for igniting in others the love of learning is particularly relevant to holistic learning in the context of a modern educational setting such as St Brigid's Catholic College. It is hoped that our students are impassioned and that their hearts and minds are set afire with the love of life and learning through the experiences that are offered to them at our College.

h. College Prayer

St Brigid,

Woman of wisdom and compassion
Steward of God's precious gift of Creation

Peacemaker where turmoil reigned
Light of hope to those who suffered

You ignited passion for learning,
empowering those in your care

Inflame our hearts and minds in Christ

So that we may have the courage to live out our call
to love as His disciples

And ensure that our world is a better place for our having lived

Amen.

i. College History

In mid-2012 the Bishop of Broken Bay, Most Rev David Walker announced the decision to realise his vision to establish an additional Diocesan Catholic College at Lake Munmorah. Under the auspices of Bishop David, Mr Peter Hamill, Director of Schools, began negotiations with the local families of the Lake Munmorah area for the secondary College.

Potential students and their parents together with Bishop David gathered in mid-December to celebrate the first step towards the new Catholic College at Lake Munmorah. It was announced that the College will cater for students from Years 7 to 12, beginning with a Year 7 cohort in 2014.

The College is named after St Brigid (451-525), a great Irish saint who was a contemporary of St Brendan (484-577). This name provides a direct connection with the broader Lake Munmorah community it serves, and with St Brendan's Catholic Primary School. Brigid was a pioneer of Irish monasticism. She was an innovator who was co-leader of a mixed male and female religious community, the great monastery of Kildare, renowned for its faith and learning. Therefore, she is a great model for a Catholic coeducational College. Stories abound of her generosity to the poor, her thirst for peace and reconciliation, and of her care of the earth.

In December 2012, Mrs Julie Terry was announced as the founding principal of St Brigid's Catholic College. The senior administration officer, Mrs Rita Buchanan began her appointment in Term 4 of 2013. The founding teaching staff of seven teachers began in 2014 and the staffing numbers have grown with the student cohorts. The College community is fortunate to have an outstanding staff to lay the foundations of exemplary education for students at St Brigid's.



The College continues to grow as a vibrant learning community. 2017 saw the addition of a new building incorporating Science, Visual Arts and a large general learning space with break-out rooms. A sacred space has been established on the top floor to facilitate House Masses and student and staff prayer. Adjacent to this building is a magnificent amphitheatre where students can gather. It provides an open air venue for community events. Staff facilities were upgraded with the construction of a kitchen facility.

2018 will see the first senior cohort commence study for the Higher School Certificate. A broad range of learning opportunities, including established Board of Studies courses, combined with School Based Apprenticeships, online and Vocational Education Training (VET) courses are on offer.

j. *Our School Day*

Our lessons are 75 minutes long, having four each day. Lesson 1 & 2 are followed by Break 1 for half an hour and Lesson 3 is followed by Break 2 for half an hour, with Lesson 4 completing the day. Our hours are from 8.15 am until 2.25 pm. Between Lessons 1 & 2 there is a 10 minute assembly or Mentor Coach time allocated.

2. Catholic Life and Mission

Catholic Life and Mission underpins life at St Brigid's Catholic College. Our mission is to 'educate and form young people in Catholic discipleship, offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community'. As such Sacrament, Word and Prayer, as the framework of our faith tradition, are essential in the day to day life of the College. Sacred symbols will be visible throughout the College facilities to signify our connection to our faith and the wider church.

We are fortunate to have strong links with our priests at the local parish, St Mary of Perpetual Succour at Toukley. St Brendan's Church in Carters Road enables our students to celebrate Mass and liturgies in this sacred space. Our opening school Mass will also be a day to celebrate the College's Feast Day of St Brigid, on or around 1st February. The celebration of Eucharist is central to the expression of 'communio' as a community of disciples. Other liturgical experiences will be offered to our students either on site or at St Brendan's Church. Prayer life in the College will be expressed whenever we gather together as community. Each day students will be led by staff in praying the Examen. Our God is revealed to us through the Sacred Scriptures and so reflection on the scriptures will be afforded at appropriate times.

The Religious Education program of study is an essential component of the faith education of students at St Brigid's. Years 7 and 8 will follow the program endorsed by the Catholic Schools Office, in Years 9 and 10 students will study the Board Endorsed Course and in Years 11 and 12, the one unit BOS Studies of Religion course or Catholic Studies course will be compulsory for senior students.

Students will also experience Reflection Days and Retreats at times throughout their six years of enrolment and these are seen to be essential for the formation of young people. Students will also have the opportunity to engage in social justice initiatives throughout their time at the College.

Student Examen

THANK

Take some time to relax

Have a think about today

Acknowledge and be grateful for the good things

Notice what I need help with

Know that God is with me

3. Teaching and Learning

St Brigid's is a school for the future. Before the school was established much planning and investigation occurred to ensure that the teaching and learning was going to meet the needs of all of our students for a changing world. Teaching and learning at St Brigid's is founded on contemporary research which ultimately informs our pedagogical framework to ensure that a graduate of St Brigid's is equipped with the capabilities to lead a successful and fulfilling life.

Teachers at St Brigid's have been carefully selected to ensure that they are dedicated to our students' having a deep understanding of concepts rather than a superficial coverage of content. It is important in the modern landscape that children know how to learn as it is likely that they will need to be adaptable for the changing nature of the workforce.

a. Directory of Staff

College Principal	Mrs Julie Terry
College Assistant Principal	Mr Adam Murdoch
Director of Mission	Mr Michael Landrigan
Director of College Management	Mr William Ardern
Director of Wellbeing for Learning	Mr Paul Nield
Director of College Administration	Mr Paul Lynch
Leaders of House	Mrs Monique Smith (Lakes), Mr Mark Peterson (Walker),

Leaders of Pedagogy	Mrs Lauren Bristow (Kildare), Mrs Tegan Bayliss (Terry) Ms Janice Peel, Mrs Kylie Robinson, Mrs Dominique Lahey, Mrs Erin Gilbert, Mr Paul McLoughlin, Mr Ashley Sadler
Leader of Learning Support	Mrs Sarah Benham
Teaching Staff	Miss Rebecca Rutherford, Mr Ryan Drew, Mr Luke Evans, Mr Luke Richardson, Mrs Kieran Lowrie, Mr Scott Williams, Mrs Iona Symons, Mrs Nadia Hagberg, Miss Sheree Hoskins, Mrs Sherrie Cooper, Mr Nick McFarlane, Mrs Rachel Foo
Senior Administration Officer	Mrs Rita Buchanan
Administration Support	Mrs Natasha McFadden Mrs Ashlee Lanzini Mrs Belinda Wright Mrs Meggen Young
Learning Support Assistant	Mrs Vanessa Larkin
School Counsellor	Mrs Natalie Ross
ICLT Technician	Mr Blake Horton
Canteen Supervisor	Mrs Katrina Shalah
Aboriginal Education Worker	Ms Brittany Pass
Science Lab Assistant	Mrs Sarah Adamson

All staff undergo a Working with Children Check as part of the recruitment process.

b. Flame of Learning

The work of Kath Murdoch and Lee Watanabee Crockett have been adapted to produce the 'Flame of Learning' which is an inquiry cycle for student learning. Learning activities are firstly informed by the NESA curriculum documents and teachers then design learning experiences using the Understanding by Design framework of Wiggins and McTighe. Students are then motivated to learn by 'Spark' activities which inspire curiosity and provide a reason for gaining the particular knowledge, skills and understandings associated with the lesson, topic or unit of work. It is critical for our students that they have choice in how they demonstrate their learning and where appropriate, choice about what they will study eg it may be that a student has a particular interest which can be accommodated and still lead to the same learning.



c. Students with special learning needs

Because of student choice, differentiation of the curriculum is an integral part of what teachers do to plan learning activities. Some students will need adaptation of the material, the way in which they demonstrate their learning or the learning environment to enable them to have equitable access to learning experiences. Life Skills curriculum is also an option for students who find the regular curriculum inaccessible. We have an excellent learning support department who work closely with families who have children with recognised learning difficulties and disabilities.

d. Teaching Teams

Students at St Brigid's learn together with their peers in their year group and are taught by a team of teachers. There is much research to support this mode of organisation. According to the latest research by John Hattie, collective teacher efficacy has the highest impact on positive student learning outcomes. We have a fundamental belief in the power of team and believe that student access to different adults in the learning environment is essential. Research also shows that there can be a lack of consistency in the experience of students in different classrooms within the one school. This does not occur at St Brigid's as teachers plan, deliver and evaluate the learning experiences together for all students in that course.

Within each subject each team member will have responsibility for tracking of student progress for a group of students within the cohort. This is the teacher who speaks with parents if there is a concern and also at parent teacher interviews. However during the course of lessons students have access to all of the teachers in the team according to the lesson design.

Having a team of teachers also leads to flexibility in grouping of students. For example, if a group of students needs extending, a teacher could take those students for an appropriate length of time to provide them with ideas for extending their thinking. Students who may need extra assistance can also be taken as a group by one of the teachers. There has been no identified advantage to streaming of students, in fact it has been demonstrated that for some students it can be detrimental. However the flexibility to group students differently as the need arises does provide the ability of teachers to adapt to the needs of the students rather than students being locked into a particular class.

e. Technology and Learning Management System

Use of the computer is essential for the learning that will occur at St Brigid's. An inquiry-based approach is well documented in assisting students to gain a deep understanding of the learning outcomes and the internet is an essential resource for research, as well as the use of different applications so that the students will become responsible and effective users of technology. These devices will also be supplemented with higher specification machines for multimedia production.

Parents/carers lease the device for their child/children for three years and make payments each year. The device remains the property of the College until the end of the three years. The cost of the device includes insurance and a satchel for protection, as well as the diocesan ICT department taking responsibility for the update of software. Should an accidental breakage occur the first repair is covered under the insurance. If another breakage occurs there is a one off fee for the repair. At the end of the 3 years the device belongs to parents. If a child should leave the College prior to the three years, an option to buy the device can be negotiated otherwise the device remains the property of the College.

Students bring their own personal electronic equipment to the College at their own risk. Mobile phones are to be switched to non-vibrate silent and not used during class unless specifically directed by the teacher. We ask that parents do not ring students directly on their mobiles but call the College reception if they need to pass on a message or speak with their child.

The GAFÉ (Google Apps for Education) suite is used as our learning management system. The GAFÉ suite incorporates Google Drive, Sites and Classroom which work together to support the delivery of online activities. During 2017 staff experimented with the use of Hapara which provides augmentation to the facility of GafE. During 2018 Hapara will be established as the platform for access to the Google Suite. Parents will be provided with the opportunity to learn about both systems so that they may at all times have access to the online learning of their child.

Some students prefer to write rather than type all of their learning activities. We are mindful that handwriting is an important skill, so at times learning will be demonstrated on paper. There is no requirement for a student to type all the time- should they wish to write they are able to do so as they can photograph their work and submit it online.

f. Mobile Phone use

During 2017 staff and parents of the college worked collaboratively to establish guidelines for acceptable use of mobile phones during school time. As a place of learning, we are committed to developing the knowledge and skills for students to use mobile phone technology responsibly. Essentially, students can use mobile phones before and after school and during their morning and lunch breaks. No student is to use a mobile phone during class unless it forms part of the formal learning activity for that lesson and is approved by the teaching staff. The full Wellbeing Statement on Technology can be accessed on the college website. In the interests of establishing a positive and safe learning environment, all parents should be familiar with this document.

g. Our Learning Environment

It is critical that our physical learning environment is aesthetically pleasing, comfortable and conducive to learning in our framework. As such the design of our buildings is informed by the teaching and learning, uses colour and texture to make the space a pleasant one to be in. Copious natural light and good ventilation and temperature control ensure that our students have a pleasant physical environment in which to learn. Our first building was a demountable one; it was designed to provide a large learning space for the whole cohort to gather, as well as smaller 'break-out' spaces where students could learn in smaller groups or be able to find a space should they wish to work individually. This theme has been continued in our beautiful permanent buildings. We believe each new building improves on the last and the spaces are the envy of those who visit us.

Specialist spaces have been provided to meet the needs of the curriculum such as science laboratories, music studios, kitchen, timber technology workshop and art studio.

h. Assessment

The NSW Board of Studies provides teachers with guidelines for the monitoring of student progress. Assessment is of two forms: *assessment for learning* and *assessment of learning*. Teachers provide students with opportunities in the context of everyday classroom activities, as well as planned assessment events, to demonstrate their learning.

Assessment for learning is designed to give students opportunities to produce the work that leads to development of their knowledge, skills and understanding. It involves teachers in deciding how and when to assess student achievement, as they plan the work students will do, using a range of appropriate assessment strategies including self-assessment and peer assessment. It could include research or class tests. Assessment for learning provides feedback to students so that they may improve their learning throughout the learning process. It is formative rather than summative. Teachers are continually monitoring students learning. Feedback can be verbal or written. Throughout units of work students are asked to demonstrate the learning they have done up to that point in what we call Check-In Points. Parents are able to see all of the submitted tasks through accessing their child's Google Classroom or through Hapara. At this stage students need to provide the access to parents however we are working on a parent portal.

Gathered evidence can also be used for *assessment of learning* that takes place at key points in the learning cycle, such as the end of a year or stage, when schools may wish to report differentially on the levels of skill, knowledge and understanding achieved by students. Assessment of learning is usually summative. Assessment of learning is communicated to parents in reports.

For Year 7 students, acknowledging the transition to secondary schooling and the increased rigor demanded, there will be no research tasks expected to be completed outside of school during Term 1; all tasks will be given time in class to complete. Students may be asked to complete sections of the task for homework from time to time, particularly if they have not used the time in class well.

i. Reporting

Student progress is communicated to parents in both formal and informal ways. The more formal reporting system is outlined below:

i. Student Learning Profile Reports

As outlined in the section on Wellbeing and Pastoral Care each term parents will receive a Student Learning Profile Report for their child indicating their commitment and aptitude to learning.

Each term, usually due in Week 8, staff and students will be required to complete learning

reviews for the Student Learning Profile Report on each student. Students will be noted as either Effective, Guided or Supported in their learning.

Effective Learner	I am an interdependent and independent learner
Guided Learner	I sometimes need monitoring and supervision by the adults in the classroom
Supported Learner	I need consistent and ongoing monitoring and supervision by the adults in the classroom

If a student acquires 60% Effective and no Supported they will be awarded a Teal Award. During each calendar year, two Teal Awards will accumulate to a Bronze Award. Three Teal Awards acquires a Silver Award and Four Teal Awards is recognised by a Gold Award which will be presented at the Annual Awards Evening.

Academic Awards will be given to students who earn an A grade in the course and will be acknowledged at the Annual Awards Evening. The Principal's Award for Academic Excellence will be awarded to students for outstanding academic results.

Awards for Positive Contribution to the College Community will be given for ongoing service to the College or any outreach programs. This could include contributions to student leadership, ongoing commitment to a social justice group, collecting for charitable organisations organised by the school, representation of the College in sporting or performing arts, or service to the community over at least one term.

Student Learning Profile meets criteria of 60% or more 'Effective' with no 'Supported'		Teal Award
Two Teal Awards during a calendar year		Bronze Award
Three Teal Awards during a calendar year		Silver Award
Four Teal Awards during a calendar year		Gold Award (recognition at Annual Awards Evening)

ii. *Academic Reports*

Parents will receive a half yearly and a yearly report on their child's academic progress. After each reporting period there will be the opportunity for parents to attend a parent/teacher meeting to discuss their child's progress.

j. Homework

There has been much debate about homework. There has also been educational research which demonstrates that homework has little effect on learning outcomes for students.

Homework which is set to be completed by the next day is not something that we ascribe to at St Brigid's unless it will impact on the next phase in the learning. We believe that families have different pressures in this current climate; with the demands of work and possible commuting long distances there is little time for parents to manage homework; we believe that physical activity in the afternoon is important for children; we believe that if a child learns well during the school day then the afternoon should be for other purposes. This needs to be balanced with the reality that sometimes students will need to use time at home to complete tasks, and as the demands of the curriculum increase it will be essential for students to study and complete tasks out of class time.

For Year 7 during Term 1, as students transition into secondary school life, homework will be kept to a minimum. Beyond Term 1 homework could include work set by the teacher, reading over the notes of the day, reading for pleasure, assessment task work or preparation for tests or examinations.

Staff will instruct students via Hapara as to expectations for learning. Students in Year 7 will not be required to use homework time to complete assessment tasks during Term 1 as they will be completed in class.

If a student is unable to complete assigned homework, or has worked for the allocated time and not completed the work, it is important for parents to communicate this via email or note. Parents are asked to provide a suitable place at home for their child to complete homework and to inform the school should there be any issues. It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and the responsibility of teachers to monitor the completion and quality of the homework.

4. Wellbeing for Learning & Pastoral Care

"Optimal wellbeing is characterised by positive feelings and attitude, positive relationships with others, resilience and satisfaction with self and experiences and engagement in learning."

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing for Learning Framework - Diocese of Broken Bay

Pastoral care in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay is based firmly on the Catholic worldview and the Christian vision as expressed in the following statements:

Pastoral Care...

- ... has as its focus the life of Jesus Christ.
- ... is concerned with the dignity and integral growth of the person.
- ... is a responsibility entrusted to all members of the faith community.
- ... is a force for healing, reconciliation and liberation.
- ... is an expression of and commitment to justice.

As a place of learning St Brigid's Catholic College;

- affirms the right of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe. For our students, we acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for wellbeing and effective learning.
- acknowledges the age range and developmental needs of our students. The adolescent brain is typically impulsive and changing rapidly. Social and emotional learning forms a crucial cornerstone of a holistic education.
- believes respectful relationships between all members of the community are essential for providing an environment in which students can develop and learn.
- promotes positive mental health and wellbeing for all community members, through policies, practices and procedures that create a positive environment where all community members feel included, valued and supported.

Support for Students

a. House Structure

Following enrolment, students are allocated to a House group. Within the College, there are four Houses;

- Kildare - the place where St Brigid started her monastery in Ireland Green
- Lakes - after our beautiful environment surrounded by water Blue
- Terry - our founding Principal, Julie Terry Purple
- Walker - the Bishop of Broken Bay who commissioned the school Red

Each House has a Leader of House (middle leadership position) responsible for day to day wellbeing of students.

Within each House, students are allocated to a Mentor Group. A Mentor Group consists of a group of approximately 20 students comprised of students from all year groups.

Each Mentor Group has a staff member who acts as a coach or mentor to the students in their care. **The Mentor Coach is the primary point of contact for parents.** Each school year commences with an opportunity for the family to meet with the Mentor Coach.

The Director of Wellbeing for Learning, in conjunction with the Leaders of House, College Psychologist and Leader of Learning Support provide specific support for student wellbeing.

b. Counselling Support

Natalie Ross, a registered psychologist, is available to assist those students who may need expert / specialist help beyond the intervention of teachers. Currently, she works four days per week - Monday to Thursday.

Students in need of support can;

1. Speak with their Mentor Coach, classroom teacher or Leader of House
2. Complete a **Student Wellbeing Form**. The counsellor and Director of Wellbeing will triage these forms and direct the student to the most appropriate person.

c. Student Resource Hub (SRH)

A student resource hub has been established for students to access learning tools such as video equipment and desktop computers. There is provision for staff supervision, with students reporting first to their normal class teacher before accessing the SRH during class time.

The SRH is also a place where students can go during most breaks to play board games such as Monopoly, table tennis and use musical instruments. It is a quiet place for group interaction and connection, where students can sit and share conversation.

d. Ready to Learn Room (R2L)

Located in the Student Resource Hub, the R2L Room was established to provide support for students who were experiencing difficulty regulating their emotions and were not 'ready to learn'. It provided a place where students were given a short space of time to settle and self-regulate, before returning to their normal timetabled class. The intention is not to use this room consistently but as a place accessible to all students when they experience emotions or feelings that would disrupt their ability to learn.

Students report to their classroom teacher before requesting to access the R2L room. Each student must complete an **R2L Form** to facilitate monitoring and use of the room.

e. Period 5 Thursday (P5TH)

Currently, P5Th takes place after school on a Thursday afternoon from 2:30-4:00pm. Middle Leaders and volunteer staff provide additional support for students who; i) are voluntarily seeking a quiet place to study, work on assessment tasks or classwork with teacher support OR ii) fall behind in classwork or do not submit assessment tasks and are invited to attend by classroom teachers. An important aspect of this provision is to recognise that learning is by invitation not as a means of punishment or detention. It is the decision of the family to determine whether the child attends or not.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice underpins behaviour management at St Brigid's Catholic College.

The following material is adapted from the Wellbeing Australia website.

It is acknowledged that from time to time staff and students will make mistakes. At St Brigid's Catholic College, the principles of restorative justice are embedded to ensure that right relationships are at the core of our pastoral care. The tenets of Restorative Justice are grounded in the principle that when something happens, it harms and damages relationships.

A different approach is employed compared to the traditional one of blame, punishment and disconnection which can alienate students and disconnect them from the school community.

Rather, we explore together:

What happened?

Who has been affected?

What do we need to do to repair the relationships?

It is only when a person can take responsibility for what they have done and how that has affected others, that there will be enough trust between the parties to be able to explore together what needs to happen to make amends. Rather than stigmatising and excluding students, the process affirms that, even though your behaviour is inappropriate, you are a valued member of our community and we need to work out a way to reconnect you to the community. The behaviour management practices at St Brigid's Catholic College are based on these principles.

a. Behaviour Management Principles

Intrinsically, schools are social places and learning is a social process. Students do not learn alone but rather in collaboration with their teachers, in the company of their peers, and with the support of their families. Emotions can facilitate or hamper their learning and their ultimate success in school'.

Zins et al. 2004

Using the principles of Restorative Practice, mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning. Student behaviour management respects the dignity of each person, and seeks to give students the opportunity to learn to manage their own behaviour. It is an attempt to build social capital in the College.

There are three levels of intervention - continued over page.

i. Preventative/proactive.

These are the classroom practices or programs we teach which we design to build students' self-worth, resilience, self-management of emotions, ability to work with others, decision-making, morals and values.

One lesson per fortnight is devoted to Wellbeing programs. Students may work together

with their Leader of House and Mentor Coaches in their House groups, with year groups or gender based groups - where age appropriate programs or discussions take place.

These lessons often incorporate guest presenters, such as our Police Liaison Officer, external agencies or theatrical productions such as Brainstorm Productions. On occasions students are involved in specific focus programs such as Mental Health Month, White Ribbon Day or RUOK? Day. Friday afternoon INFLAME also provides opportunities to pursue areas of interest that students find engaging and supportive.

II. ***Problem Solving Day to Day Problems and Difficulties***

The day to day difficulties, differences and conflicts provide a window of opportunity for us to assist children to problem solve, resolve conflict and assume responsibility. Rather than the adult attempting to determine blame, establish what rule has been broken, and hand out the appropriate punishment, the adult (or perhaps the peer) assists those involved to resolve their own difficulties.

III. ***Formal Interventions to Address Serious Incidents of Harm***

When a situation of damage to relationships has occurred then more formal intervention is required. A conference would normally involve all those involved and seeks to restoring the relationships by agreeing to a way to repair any damage that may have been done. The facilitator asks a number of key questions that are designed to assist the people involved to take responsibility for their behaviour and to understand the impact it has on others.

What happened?

What were you hoping to achieve by this behaviour?

Who has been affected? In what way?

What needs to happen to make things right?

What would you do differently next time?

Together those involved look at repairing the relationships and making things right, with the outcomes dependent on what the group needs and what they feel will make amends. It is often the starting place to repair relationships. It may expose problems that need addressing at a curriculum, classroom, school or family level. Conferencing assists in building responsibility, personal accountability, empathy and problem solving. At the core of this is the belief that you are OK, but your behaviour may not have been in this instance. It is inclusive, concerned with reintegrating those involved back into the community - maintaining and building connectedness.

b. Behaviour Management Procedures

i. Recognition of positive contributions

At St Brigid's Catholic College, students are recognised for their positive behaviour and achievements in many ways. These may include verbal praise and/or the issuing of a merit. Teachers are to record the merit in our online database, Compass. Ten merits will accumulate to the award of a Certificate of Merit. An acknowledgement assembly is held each Friday to distribute Certificates of Merit and /or recognise other student achievements.

Each semester students who have not received a Student Service Referral will be acknowledged through a reward afternoon. This may include a privilege such as a movie.

ii. Management of inappropriate behaviour in the classroom

Teachers are obligated to ensure a classroom environment which is conducive to good learning. They are also expected to monitor student commitment to the rules of the community, such as wearing the uniform with pride and respecting the environment.

Teaching staff have their own strategies for managing low level inappropriate behaviour in their classroom such as minor disruptions to classroom learning, failing to bring appropriate equipment, failure to remain on task. Strategies may include verbal reminders of expectations; a short time out or reflection and time to settle before returning to the learning space, speaking with a student after class; contact with parents via, email or phone call; asking students to return at lunch to complete work.

iii. Student Service Referral

There may be instances where the student's behaviour warrants a more formal approach. This would typically happen following an escalation of behaviour e.g. refusal to follow a reasonable instruction, repeated interruption to learning of other students, an act of defiance or a serious matter warranting immediate referral. In these instances, teachers may instruct students to report to Student Services.

The referring teacher will;

- notify Student Services about the nature of the incident.
- return to hold a conversation with the student toward the end of the lesson.
- record the incident including any actions that were taken prior to the referral

The student will;

- report to Student Services with their equipment and continue with their learning as well as complete a self-reflective exercise. They will not return to class that lesson.
NOTE: if the student continues to escalate, their parents may be called to collect them.
- engage with the teacher to discuss their behaviour and resolve the issue
- report to the Assistant Principal during INFLAME on Friday afternoon to consider their behaviour, complete any learning activities and assist with community service

Parents will;

- be notified by email of the referral and may contact the school for more information if required.

iv. Non-negotiable behaviour

To maintain standards and expectations across the College, there are certain behaviours that are not subject to a restorative conversation. These include;

- Uniform & jewellery, including hats on in the sun
- Mobile phone use - only before and after school and at morning tea and lunch breaks
- Chewing gum

Although these might seem trivial to some, they are indicators that the student does not accept the agreed standards under which they attend the College. A direct consequence will involve either Friday Community Service or handing their phone in to Student Services for collection after school. Repeated behaviour will result in formal interview and parent involvement.

v. Management of inappropriate behaviour in the playground

All teachers have a duty of care to diligently supervise students when they have a rostered playground duty. They are also expected to monitor student commitment to the rules of the community, such as wearing the uniform with pride and respecting the environment.

At times, student behaviour may be at a level requiring further intervention than verbal prompting to behave appropriately. If student behaviour is deemed as causing discomfort to peers or staff then the student is to be sent to Student Services to stay until the teacher completes the duty and has time to contact the front office as to the reason why the student has been sent. The office staff will inform the Principal or delegate that the student has been sent to the front office and appropriate action will be decided in consultation with the reporting staff member.

The teacher or staff member on duty will record the incident in the electronic system, Compass.

vi. Major disciplinary action

For serious breaches of behaviour please refer to the Diocesan Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy.

Strategies may include;

- Interview and behaviour management plan with Middle or Senior Leader
- Formal Parent / Student meetings with Middle Leaders
- Formal Student Review with Director of Wellbeing for Learning
- Risk Assessment in conjunction with the Catholic Schools Office
- Notification to the Child Protection Team at CSO
- Notification to Police Liaison Officer
- Referral to external support agencies
- Review of Student Enrolment with Principal / Assistant Principal

vii. *Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting*

Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 , professionals who work with children are considered mandatory reporters. As such, they are required to report notifiable behaviour to the recognised authority - NSW Family and Community Services. This would normally happen through the Principal or their delegate.

Mandatory Reporting. All staff are mandatory reporters required by law to ensure that a report is made to Family and Community Services when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is at risk of 'significant harm' from abuse or neglect. Staff are to respond seriously and sensitively to any disclosures by students. Staff must inform the Principal of any concerns, who will make a report to NSW Family and Community Services on their behalf using the Keeping Them Safe tool - Mandatory Reporter Guidelines.

The CSO Child Protection Resource Manual is available through CuriaNet / DSS Resources / Human Resource Services / Child Protection and articulates expectations and procedures to be followed by employees and volunteers of St Brigid's Catholic College.

viii. *Police Liaison Officer*

The College is fortunate to have an excellent relationship with our Police Liaison Officer, Senior Constable Kim Smith. Kim is involved in prevention, intervention and postvention as the need arises. Kim also avails herself to present to students and works with parents, should the need arise. Snr Constable Smith can be contacted through Wyong Police Station on 4356 6099.

ix. *Data for Wellbeing*

There are a variety of indicators that are monitored to determine interventions, programs or support structures for students. These include patterns of attendance, Student Wellbeing Forms, Counsellor Referrals, R2L feedback, electronic tracking of student behaviour patterns.

The provision of excellent education in a caring and supportive environment is exemplary pastoral care of students.

5. General Administration and Policies

a. Communication with Home

Effective communication between home and school is essential for the best outcomes for students. The College website, College Newsletter, email, Facebook and reports are the main forms of contact with parents on a whole school level. Teaching staff are encouraged to keep regular contact with parents via email or phone call. Parents are also encouraged to use email or phone call to contact the College.

Parents are encouraged to attend scheduled parent/teacher interviews to discuss their child's progress. At other times, a face to face meeting may be necessary. Parents are welcome to initiate such a meeting if there are areas of concern.

Relational trust is a vital component to ensure that we collaborate in the best interests of each student. The staff are committed to provide feedback to parents; likewise, we encourage parents to maintain contact with the school.

At times, there is a tendency to want to know the outcome of a situation. Each student and family is entitled to their privacy and dignity. The management of student behaviour is complex, often with mitigating factors that must remain confidential. For example, a student may have an identified learning need which impacts on their judgement or decision making ability.

Please respect this tenet and allow the school to fully investigate and manage behavioural matters in a timely manner. Staff will not reply or react to immediate demands for information where this is not possible.

b. Uniform Policy

Wearing the College uniform correctly is a sign of the pride that students have for the school community as well as an indication of their own self-worth. The word 'uniform' means 'same' and the reason why a College uniform and code of dress is established is to break down any barriers between students. There is still the ability to express oneself as an individual but this is not appropriate insofar as the wearing of the uniform is concerned.

Summer Uniform - Students are expected to wear

- College shirt
- navy skirt (Girls), navy shorts (Boys)

- plain white ankle socks which can be seen **to the ankle**

If the weather becomes unseasonably cold, the blazer or College jumper may be worn, **not sports jacket**

Winter Uniform - Students are expected to wear

- College shirt
- navy skirt with navy tights (Girls), navy long pants (Boys)
- the school blazer **must be worn to and from school**

Note - The school jumper is added for extra warmth but should not be worn as the outer garment. Students are permitted to wear garments under their shirts for extra warmth **as long as no part is visible.**

Shoes - Shoes should be

- sturdy
- black
- leather - polishable
- lace up shoes
- a heel for both boys and girls

PDHPE Uniform - Students are expected to wear

- College PE shorts and polo shirt
- the tracksuit top is to be worn for extra warmth
- the tracksuit pants are optional
- white ankle socks are to be worn
- the school PDHPE sports cap is to be worn during practical classes and on the playground in the sun

Note - The school jumper \ blazer is not to be worn with the PE uniform.

TAS Shoes - Leather Enclosed shoes must be worn in Workshop\Kitchen

Jewellery

- Boys may have **one** gold or silver stud or small (less than one centimetre in diameter) hoop earring in one earlobe.
- Boys are not to have any other facial piercings or any body piercings which are visible including clear plugs.
- Girls may wear one gold or silver stud or small (less than one centimetre in diameter) hoop earring in each ear lobe, with no other facial or visible body piercings permissible including clear plug.
- No Bracelets \ Bangles are to be worn at any time.
- Should students have piercings which are against the regulations, they will be removed from the playground until such time as the piercing is removed. Failure to do so in a timely

fashion will require a parent meeting to discuss the student's commitment to being at the college. **Covering of piercings which are not allowed with Band-aids, make-up, clear plugs or similar is not acceptable.**

- Any necklaces worn should not be seen above the shirt.
- Coloured nail polish is not permitted to be worn to school. Students will be sent to the office to remove the nail polish.
- Nail Extensions are not allowed.
- Make-up is to be such that it is not obvious that it is worn. Heavy eyeliner, mascara and lipstick are not permitted. Students wearing heavy make-up will be asked to remove it.

Hair

- Students are expected to have their hair tidy and clean.
- Boys hair should be above the collar of their school shirt and out of their eyes. Hair longer than collar length must be tied back at all times.
- Girls with hair below their collar must have it tied back.
- Hair **colour must be in natural** hues.
- Facial hair must be clean shaven at all times.

Permission to be Out of Uniform

- From time to time it may be that a student is unable to wear the appropriate uniform for the day.
- A note from the parents / carers should be provided outlining the reason for the student to being out of uniform.
- It is not acceptable for a student to be excused from wearing the College uniform in the long term.

Should students have piercings which are against the regulations, they will be removed from the playground until such time as the piercing is removed. Failure to do so in a timely fashion will require a parent meeting to discuss the student's commitment to being at the College.

We ask that parents support us in this matter and do not allow their children to have facial piercings which require a stud to keep the hole open during school time. Placing a bandaid, or clear plastic studs are not satisfactory.

From time to time students may be allowed to wear wrist bands for charitable organisations however one band only is allowed.

c. Student Attendance and Absence from School

The College adopts the Diocese of Broken Guidelines for the Management of Student Attendance. Please refer to the College website for policies relating to student attendance.

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as a part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences. The Education Act of 1990 states that child is of compulsory school age if they are at or above the age of 6 years and below 17 years of age, unless there are justifiable reasons for exemption from attendance.

Procedures for parents in relation to student absence

Parents/guardians should notify the College, where possible, prior to their child's absence using Form B1 - Application for Exemption of Attendance at School (available on the College website). In the circumstances of absence from school which is not pre-approved, such as for illness or other pressing domestic situations, parents/carers should notify the College of the absence of their child by phoning the Administration Office. This must be followed by a note on the first day of the child's return to school. Notification of reason for absence must be received by the College within 7 days. This is a requirement of the 1990 Education Reform Act. Failure to notify the College within 7 days will result in the absence being recorded as unjustified.

Lateness to school

Punctuality is an important behaviour that is to be practiced at St Brigid's. Any student arriving late to school, i.e. after the start of the first lesson, is asked to sign in at the front office.

Monitoring of student attendance by the College

Teachers electronically mark the roll every lesson. Rolls are legal records of a student's attendance and must be completed with appropriate regard for the importance of these records. Attendance is monitored by the administration staff who inform the Mentor Coach should there be a pattern of absenteeism, or unexplained absence from school. Classroom teachers also have a role in ensuring that any continued absence from their class is noted with the Mentor Coach. Should a student not attend for three consecutive days without notification from the parent/carer, then the administration staff will notify the Mentor Coach. Parents/carers will be contacted by the Mentor Coach via phone or email to inquire as to the reason for absence. Parents/carers should also be reminded at this time of their obligations to submit in writing the reason for the student's absence on the first day of return to school. Absences of more than 20 days (not necessarily consecutive) will be considered habitual non-attendance and be managed as outlined in the Diocesan Management of Habitual Non-attendance Guidelines.

d. Illness at school

Students who feel unwell at school should report to the front office where they will be assessed. Students are able to stay in sick bay for one lesson and if feeling better, can return to class. If they are not well enough to return to class then parents will be contacted in the first instance to collect their child, or if they are unavailable, the nominated emergency contact will be called.

We ask that students do not contact parents directly. Students will be assessed and if necessary parents will be contacted. If parents are called by their child we ask that they make contact with the front office before coming to the College.

e. Parent and Volunteer Participation

It is vital that parents are partners with staff in the education of their children. The most important contribution parents can make is to be informed about what is going on at the College. Attendance at parent information and social evenings is an important way in which you can be informed and support the learning of children. Reading the communications from the college and having your child's email connected to your phone are ways of keeping in touch with what is happening at school for your child.

The provision of a study area and a study routine at home is also another way in which parents can provide meaningful support for their child.

A Parent Advisory Group has been established. All parents are welcome to attend these meetings.

Invitations for support will be offered through the newsletter. Volunteers for the canteen will be required and this is a wonderful way for parents, grandparents and friends of the College to support in a practical way.

It is important that all volunteers are aware that they are subject to child protection legislation.

This means all volunteers must:

- sign on at the front office, be inducted and get a visitors badge from the office as per school procedure
- check with the school what the current requirements are for the working with children
- not engage in any inappropriate behaviour towards any child

In particular although volunteers are technically not employed by the school, they are considered to be 'staff' for legal purposes and need to be aware that complaints about inappropriate behaviour towards any child or young person must be investigated.

f. Complaints Handling

All members of the community of St Brigid's Catholic College deserve a safe and supportive school environment. The Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures is available on the Catholic Schools Office Website at www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au. There are also brochures available to parents on Handling of Complaints and Addressing Concerns about a School, which are also available in at www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au.

Diocesan Policy states that if a parent or student has a complaint about another student the issue should be raised with the school and at St Brigid's the staff member to contact would be the Mentor Coach. If there is a parent or student with a complaint about a member of staff the issue should first be discussed with the relevant teacher. If this is not possible then the issue should be raised with the Principal.

g. Who to Contact

Student absence - front office (see Student Attendance and Absence section 16)

Complaint about another community member (see Complaints Handling section 21)

Concern about academic progress or wellbeing - Mentor Coach

6. A Glossary of Terms for Secondary School

- *Assessment Task* - this refers to tasks, usually assignments, which students must complete to meet the requirements of the course. The results of these tasks accumulate towards the final report grade.
- *KLA - Key Learning Area*. This term refers to the areas of the curriculum within which subjects are offered.

The KLA areas are:

- Religious Education (RE)
- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)
- Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA)
- Technological and Applied Studies (TAS)
- Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE)