



GOOD PRACTICES: CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Meaning of Pastoral care in General

Pastoral care is an ancient model of emotional and spiritual support that can be found in all cultures and traditions. It has been described in our modern context as individual and corporate patience in which trained **pastoral** carers support people in their pain, loss and anxiety, and their triumphs, joys and victories. (Wikipedia)

Meaning of Pastoral care in School

Pastoral care is not merely a complementary practice; it is policy and practices fully integrated throughout the teaching and learning and structural organization of a school to effectively meet the personal, social (wellbeing) and academic needs of students and staff.

The health and wellbeing of students is increasingly being attributed to school conditions, school relationships, means of fulfillment, and health status (Konu, Alanen, Lintonen & Rimpela, 2002).

Need of Pastoral Care in School

Pastoral care has taken on a more inclusive function, one that is inextricably linked with teaching and learning and the structural organization of the school - promoting students' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes. This is done through the quality of teaching and learning; through the nature of relationships amongst students, teachers and adults other than teachers; through arrangements for monitoring students' overall progress (academic, personal and social); through specific pastoral and support

systems; and through extra-curricular activities and the school's ethos. (Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, 1989).

From this perspective, pastoral care can assist students to develop positive self-esteem, healthy risk taking, goal setting and negotiation, thus enhancing their strengths and other protective factors contributing to their resiliency as well as developing a sense of social cohesion that together can improve their overall health and wellbeing (Nadge, 2005 and Doll & Lyon, 1998).

Quality pastoral care focuses on the whole student (personal, social, and academic) and it engages all members of the school community as providers of pastoral care. It actively involves the community in consistent, comprehensive, multi-level activities which incorporate whole-school approaches, class or other group approaches, individual programs (early intervention), and casework.

Regular reviews of a school's pastoral care policies and practices help the school community to systematically assess their school's pastoral care resources, strengths, needs, threats and opportunities. This information can help schools map their pastoral care resources, activities and services against their pastoral care and academic outcomes to objectively determine where pastoral care activity can be reduced, redirected and improved.

The following 10-point action plan provides a snapshot of a process that will help schools systematically review their pastoral care program

Stage 1: Engage and involve the community

Engaging the whole school community (staff, students and parents) is a key strategy to promote pastoral care in schools. Clemett and Pearce (1989) state that pastoral care is effective 'when everyone in the school community knows, and feels secure in the knowledge that as valued members of that community, they can participate in giving and receiving encouragement, guidance and support'. Policies and programmes need to provide opportunities for staff, students and parents to be involved in making decisions, being heard and making a contribution to the community (Bernard, 1996).

Stage 2: Review staff wellbeing

A review of staff wellbeing will enable the assessment of the appropriateness and effectiveness of current systems, structures and services in the school that provide support in this area. Staff wellbeing can be enhanced through professional learning, celebrating staff strengths and achievements, policies to prevent and reduce staff stress, encouragement to collaborate with other staff, and access to professional advice (Cefai & Cavioni, 2014),

(Cross & Lester, 2014), (Howieson & Semple, 2000). If staff wellbeing is cared for, then staff are more able to care for student wellbeing.

Stage 3: Review student wellbeing outcomes

According to Cross, Lester and Barnes (2014), students present a socially relevant and accurate depiction of the quality of pastoral care provided in their school, hence their involvement in the review process is essential to guide school improvement. The review could assess student wellbeing using the four critical components of pastoral care: promotion of health and wellbeing; resilience; academic care; and social capital within the school community (Nadge, 2005). A variety of standardized, reliable and valid measures can be used by schools to conduct this assessment.

Stage 4: Use data to assess the quality of current practices

Schools have access to many different sources of data: academic, behavioural and attendance as well as student, parent and staff satisfaction surveys. These data can be used to measure the predictors of or the effectiveness of current pastoral care practices. Quantitative and qualitative data can be collected from all levels in the school - the whole-school level (senior executive team), from house or year groups, as well as tutors, students and parents and carers.

Stage 5: Map policies and practices against outcomes

Pastoral care policies and practices can be mapped against the schools' strategic plan and key pastoral care outcomes in order to identify existing overlaps and gaps. This stage also assesses the appropriateness and effectiveness of current systems, practices, policies and services, and the extent to which these achieve the identified wellbeing outcomes.

Stage 6: Enable staff to reflect on their own pastoral care practices

Teachers and other school staff need to clarify their understanding of their pastoral care role, and how their own actions, and their relationships with students, can enhance or harm the wellbeing of students (Best, 2002). This 'academic care' is influenced by: personal qualities of teachers and their relationships with students; the curriculum and its ability to promote meaningful participation and positive learning experiences; the school's organizational structure and its ability to offer safety, support, trust, guidance and challenge; and links with the broader community.

Stage 7: Decide what needs to be stopped, started and kept

Determination by staff of what is currently working well, what's not working well, what's missing and what's promising in the school is essential, especially given the limited resources

for pastoral care. This decision making may consider policies and practices related to the five key pastoral care school-level tasks: proactive, preventative pastoral care; developmental pastoral teaching and learning; the supportive/collaborative environment; reactive casework; and the management and administration of pastoral care (Department of Education, 2001).

Stage 8: Clearly delineate roles and responsibilities

Careful delineation of the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community to promote a safe and supportive environment needs to be explicit, clearly understood by all and disseminated widely and often. This understanding reduces the pastoral care burden often experienced by pastoral leaders within the school, and encourages students, staff and families to recognize how much they can contribute to a positive, safe and supportive school culture.

Stage 9: Communicate progress regularly

Present the purpose, process, major findings and recommendations from a review to the staff and other members of the school community. To ensure ongoing engagement, support for and sustainability of pastoral care within the whole-school community, community members need to be updated regularly on the pastoral care activities and processes being implemented.

Stage 10: Provide sufficient capacity and resources

Sufficient staff capacity and resources are needed to successfully align and integrate the outcomes of a pastoral care review into the school's vision and strategic plan. A pastoral care 'master plan' can be used to guide and monitor the ongoing implementation of recommendations to the school community.

Importance of Pastoral Care in School

In education we hear a lot about pastoral care, and broadly, most parents would be able to articulate what pastoral care is and recognize why it matters. But what you may not know is that the success of a school's pastoral care program is linked to students' academic outcomes.

Pastoral care is defined as the commitment to, and active demonstration of concern for, the growth and wellbeing of each student, as well as the broader school community. It focuses on cultivating an environment and culture that supports the: physical, social, intellectual, emotional; and spiritual development of every student.

There is recognition, too, that pastoral care and academic progress are linked. The physical, emotional, cognitive and social elements of a person's life cannot realistically be treated in isolation. What happens in one domain will effect what happens in one or more of the others.

Leadership speaker and author, Sheila Bethel (in her book Making a Difference, Berkley Publishing Group) has suggested that students “don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care”. Effective academic learning within a school context cannot be separated from the exercise of effective pastoral care. Therefore, a commitment to excellence in academic performance must be accompanied by a commitment to excellence in physical health, social competence and emotional resilience.

Pastoral care should include proactive elements – such as developing skills that build resilience, promoting a school culture that emphasizes respect, teamwork and participation – and reactive elements like providing comfort in response to hurt, or encouragement in the face of disappointment.

Pastoral Care Program may include:

- Creating a sense of belonging through team building activities, such as working together on service projects.
- Facilitating Peer Support Programs.
- Developing skills and knowledge in order to prevent or address specific problems, such as bullying.
- Tracking individual student progress.
- Enabling early intervention in identifying and dealing with specific needs.
- Celebrating the boys’ achievements and contributions.
- Providing guidance regarding study patterns, peer relations, post-school pathways and opportunities.
- Providing counselling and comfort for boys dealing with anxiety, loss or disappointment.
- The provision of good role models both at school and at home.

Pastoral care is most effective when there is a strong partnership between home and school. Clear two-way communication, reminders and reinforcement (at home and at school) of strategies to support progress, and early intervention in identifying and addressing problems are vital to the effective exercise of pastoral care

Case Study of One International School:

Pastoral Care has become an integrated part of International Schools following IB or IGCSE curriculum. Now we will study the work done by Pastoral care Unit at Symbiosis International School, Pune for Inclusive Education.

Symbiosis International School (SIS), Pune.

Introduction

The term “learning differences” is used to describe the seemingly unexplained difficulty in acquiring basic academic skills. These skills are essential for success at school and for coping with life in general. Using individual need-based educational techniques, strategies, tools and accommodations we help children with special needs to overcome learning challenges as a detour rather than a road-block.

The School provides, a plethora of opportunities for students with special needs as we believe “EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO LEARN”.

SIS attempts to have a holistic approach to meet the personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs of every pupil, in order that each might participate fully and gain maximum benefit from everything the school has to offer.

Aim

To educate and empower students with Special Needs, incorporating different learning styles and multiple intelligences to tap the hidden potentials.

Objectives

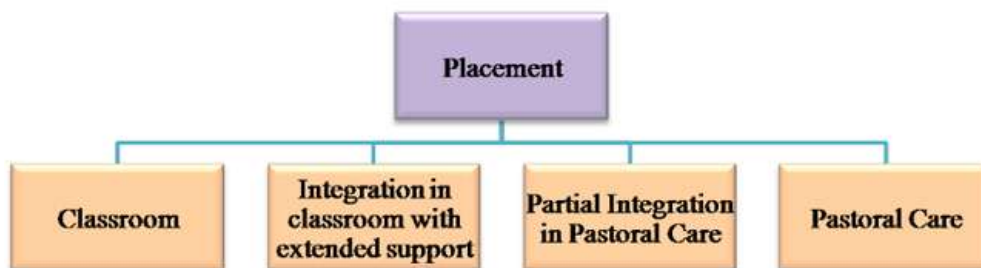
- To help children Academically, Socially, and Emotionally.
- To improve learning opportunities and raise the achievements of the students with special education needs.
- To provide facilitators and students with strategies and activities with instructional support tools that foster academic competence.
- To identify, intervene and provide appropriate provisions to students.
- To formulate the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and initiate the remediation process to bridge the learning gap.
- To support the students and promote inclusion, reduce the underachievement gap and enable all students to reach their full potential.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual needs and ability and wherever possible to meet those needs in the mainstream classroom.
- To continually update the training needs of staff with regard to special education needs.
- To provide resources to classrooms as and when needed.
- To regularly update Professional skills to meet the learning needs of students.

- To work co-operatively with parents in order to help understand the child's need and the learning process.

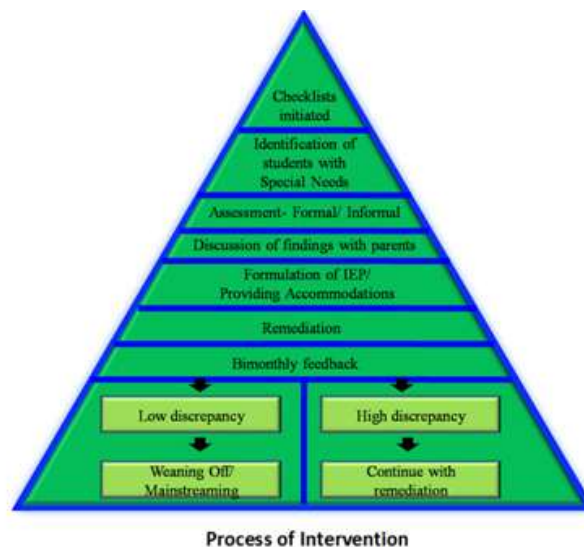
Admission

The criteria for placement in school are done by assessing the minimum level of Learning, previous academic experiences with his/her engagement with special needs, the ability of the school to provide appropriate resources and a conducive learning environment. In consultation, with Director, Dean Administrator, the Pastoral Care in partnership with Coordinators determines whether the school will be able to provide for potential students' specific needs.

Placement of Special Needs Students in School



Identification/Assessment/Provision/Review



Identification

Students having specific difficulty in learning academic skills and other skills are referred to the department by parents, facilitators or Program coordinators.

The student's intellectual functioning level is identified along with the student's strength and weakness. The assessment of behavior, social and emotional levels are also done using standardized psychometric tools. Thereafter, a consultation with the parent is done to discuss the outcome of the assessment.

IEP

The Pastoral Team along with the Teacher and the Parent formulate an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) keeping the primary and the Secondary goal in mind. The Team provides support in the areas of concern by providing strategies and activities to support academic development. Reviews of the students needs are done at the end of the academic year to determine the level of progress. A student will remain in the program as long as it is beneficial.

Remediation

Remedial program is initiated keeping the (IEP) in focus. Sessions are held as per the requirement of the student on a one to one individual assistance. Monthly activities are designed keeping the yearly target in mind. The focus is on adopting a child-centered approach, which provides individualized learning and teaching programs based on the assessed needs and strengths of each child. Apart from catering to the academic skills the remedial program also fosters the development of appropriate social skills, communication skills, motor skills etc. Once the student attains the required level of learning, the support is gradually withdrawn.

Provision

SIS, through its Pastoral Care offers a one-to one support to students. Literacy, numeracy, academic and skill development areas are provided for those students who have been identified with a specific need. The Department also has an in built Play Therapy unit for its students. It is also equipped with a range of computer devices and application which help enhance learning.

Follow up

SIS value the support of parents and work in partnership with them at all stages of intervention. A quarterly feedback of student's progress or changes in intervention is intimated to the parents placed in the Pastoral Care Department. Parental counseling is also

an integral ongoing component, which looks at consultation, sensitization and providing updates

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