



Pastoral Care Policy

All employees of Korowal School have a pastoral care role. Pastoral care relates to the emotional and psychological welfare of children. All class teachers/year co-ordinators have a special responsibility in this area. It is their responsibility to respond to pastoral care needs of students. They are expected to provide guidance to students in their classes and to communicate with families as appropriate.

A student's sense of being is central to the philosophy of Korowal School. Consideration of a student's pastoral care needs are explicit in the actions of all employees but also implicit in the preparation of teaching programmes and classroom learning experiences.

As a human centred School Korowal makes the wellbeing of a student a priority, as such:

- Students are made aware of, and have access to, appropriate pastoral care arrangements and access to, and use of, counselling within the School.
- The School takes reasonable measures to identify students with additional needs and provide them with an appropriate level of support to assist such students with their Schooling with minimal disruption, taking into account the resources available.
- The School communicates expectations of homework clearly to students and parents
- Students requiring health and/or medical services and support or medication will be assisted to access these in an appropriate manner.
- Korowal has procedural guidelines to respond to critical incidents and emergencies, as well as, but separate to, suicide, attempted suicide, prevention and postvention procedural guidelines. It is acknowledged that the death of a student by car accident requires different management to death by suicide, where other deaths or attempts to end life may occur.

Policy reviewed	July 2016
Next review	July 2017
Principal's signature: 	

Procedural Guidelines

School Counsellor

Students have access to a School counsellor. Access will occur after consultation between the teacher and the appropriate co-ordinator. Triaging will occur at Executive meetings. Parents will be contacted when deemed appropriate.

Counselling at Korowal School

Korowal provides counselling services for its students as part of its pastoral care program. These are provided by a qualified School counsellor, who is employed by the School.

Parents and students need to know that:

- Records will be made of counselling sessions and because the counsellor is an employee, those records belong to the School, not the counsellor.
- The School is very conscious of the need for confidentiality between counsellor and student. However at times it may be necessary for the counsellor to divulge the contents of discussions or records to the Principal.
- It is also possible that the Principal may need to disclose aspects of discussions with counsellor to others in order to assist the student.
- Students are informed at the beginning of consultations with the counsellor that confidentiality will be maintained as outlined above, with the exception of disclosures that we are mandated to report i.e. involving risk of harm to self or others.
- Where such a disclosure is made it will be reported via the Keep Them Safe online reporting website.
- If a student is not prepared to see the School counsellor, counseling services from outside of the School will need to be obtained.

There is a comprehensive folder (Mental Health) containing fact sheets from Headspace in the Principal's Office and one in the DP office as well as one with the HS and PS Co-ordinators. On Drive, on the School network, there are templates regarding risk assessment, risk management and safe return to School. These fact sheets support the following guidelines.

Self-harm, Suicide Attempts and Suicide

- Educational programs regarding wellbeing are an integral part of Korowal's Personal Development program from Kindergarten to Year 12. These programs address such issues as recognising emotional states, where to seek help and from whom, cyber safety and cyber bullying as well as the difference between mean, rude, harassing and bullying behaviours.
- Mental health issues are treated with the same level of openness and care as physical health issues, with no stigma attached.

- Parents and students are informed of contact numbers regarding mental health issues.
- Members of the School executive team have access to advice from the AIS and from services provided by Headspace. They also are offered up to 3 sessions with an external counsellor of his or her choice.
- Teachers are supported by the School executive and counsellor when dealing with reported suicide attempts or suicides and when necessary/requested offered up to 3 sessions with an external counsellor of his or her choice.
- Discussions regarding self-harm or suicide are held in small groups only and staff are encouraged to leave if they wish to do so.
- Signs that a student is not managing well includes talk of feeling helpless, hopeless and/or worthless.
- When a suicide is reported, the School must seek permission from parents to refer to it as suicide. If they do not agree to this, the term “sudden death” is used.

Procedure for teacher receiving information about cyber bullying, self harm, suicide attempt or suicide

- Offer appropriate reassurance
- Bring student to Office area if deemed unsafe for student to be left alone
- Inform member of Executive immediately
- Exec members will proceed and keep you informed of process

Procedure for member of Exec receiving information about cyber bullying, self harm, suicide attempt or suicide

- Refer to Wellbeing Policy for cyber bullying
- If student is self-harming, share your concern for them.
- Refer to fact sheet from Headspace re Self-Harm
- If the student has attempted suicide, inform parent/carers. Student not to return to School until

Student has seen a health practitioner

Counselling has been arranged

A risk assessment based on information known is made

A risk management plan has been designed

A safe return to School plan has been completed

A meeting with the student and parent/carers has been held at which all parties agree to the safe return to School plan

All staff members have been informed of the safe return to School plan

- In addition to the above measures, and whilst the at-risk student is away from School, it is important to contain any risk of contagion (postvention plan). This includes:

normalising the situation as quickly as possible,

giving clear and accurate information with a minimum of detail, according to age and cultural appropriateness,

clamping down on gossip – giving students appropriate responses to make,

hyper-vigilance regarding use of mobile phones, emails, social media etc.,

being on alert for signs of anxiety, distress, hopelessness, worthlessness or helplessness in close friends or other vulnerable students,

re-issue contact details for Headspace, Beyond Blue etc.,

refer to Postvention Planning Checklist in Mental Health folder.

- When a suicide occurs:

contact parents and staff,

inform students, as appropriate, being as calm and straightforward as possible,

avoid blame,

do not focus on method of suicide,

keep focus on how to manage the emotions brought up by the person's death,

address feelings such as anger and responsibility,

encourage help seeking by re-issuing contact details.

If worried about an individual's response, ask about thoughts of suicide. It is advised that asking directly "Are you thinking of taking your life?" is best as it is unambiguous.

Keep a special look out for any marginalised students.