

Pastoral care and pastoral care teams: a review to inform policy and practice in schools



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Introduction

Community and Public Health (CPH), the Public Health Unit for the Canterbury District Health Board, provides public health services to Canterbury, South Canterbury and the West Coast. CPH is contracted by the Ministry of Health to support schools in adopting the Health Promoting Schools^{1,2,3} approach. Using the Health Promoting Schools process schools utilise a whole-school approach⁴ to assist them in working strategically to coordinate and implement initiatives that focus on achieving positive health and wellbeing outcomes for students and the wider school community.

If we nurture the health, hopes and skills of young people, their potential to improve the world is unbounded. If they are healthy, they can take the best advantage of every opportunity to learn. If they are educated they can live fulfilled lives and contribute to building the future for everyone.

Dr Lloyd Kolbe, World Health Organization⁵

Research has established a close link between education and health (Bradley & Greene, 2013; Suhrcke & de Paz Nieves, 2011) and highlights the value for schools in promoting health and wellbeing as integral to their overall effectiveness. The evidence tells us that:

- 'Pupils with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically.
- Effective social and emotional competencies are associated with greater health and wellbeing, and better achievement.
- The culture, ethos and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of students and their readiness to learn' (Brooks, 2014).

Children's wellbeing is influenced by a range of factors and includes their subjective feelings as well as social, physical and psychological aspects of their lives (Bowling, 2011, p. 5). Consequently schools are key places for shaping general wellbeing.....Academic success has a strong positive impact on children's subjective sense of how good they feel their lives are and is linked to higher levels of wellbeing in adulthood (Chanfreau et al., 2013, p.5).

(Brooks, 2014)

Additionally, in New Zealand, research has been able to show that where educational environments reflect a Māori world view and ways of working, all students are exposed to significantly enhanced learning opportunities. Researchers, observing effective teachers of Māori students (through initiatives such as *Te Kotahitanga* and *Ka Hikitia*⁶), have been able to identify dimensions of practice that create a culturally responsive classroom or school.

The research highlights that when Māori students have good relationships with their teachers they will thrive in the school environment (Bishop & Berryman, 2010). Although these projects are predominantly concerned with educational achievement, the findings provide compelling evidence

¹The Health Promoting Schools Framework developed by the World Health Organization encourages a whole-school approach to addressing health issues. The framework consists of three areas: Curriculum, teaching and learning; School organisation, ethos and environment; and Partnerships and services.

² Health Promoting Schools in New Zealand originated in the work of the World Health Organization in the late 1980s. For information about its application in New Zealand see: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/life-stages/child-health/health-promoting-schools> and <http://hps.tki.org.nz/>

³ The South Canterbury District Health Board contracts Community and Public Health in the delivery of the WAVE programme. The WAVE programme uses the principles and processes of Health Promoting Schools; facilitators work with ECECs, Primary and Secondary Schools, and Alternative Education and Tertiary settings.

⁴ A whole-school approach involves thinking about a school as a multidimensional & interactive system, and is also a change process that involves all community members working together (i.e. staff, students and parents, key stakeholders/organisations, and other identified community partners).

⁵ Retrieved from: Mental Health Promotion in Schools (n.d)
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/print.php3?title=gynmh002&cat=54&lng=english>

⁶ Te Kotahitanga - The overall aim of this project has been to investigate how to improve the educational achievement of Māori students in mainstream secondary school classrooms. Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success 2013-2017 is the Ministry of Education's renewed strategy to improve how the education system performs to ensure Māori students are enjoying and achieving education success as Māori.

about approaches that are effective and appropriate for Māori students and it is plausible that these understandings can be usefully applied to all wellbeing-focused initiatives within the school context.

Why produce a document about pastoral care and pastoral care teams?

Teachers working with CPH's Health Promoting Schools' facilitators expressed interest in knowing more about how other schools managed the pastoral care of students. In particular, teachers were keen to know how schools formed Pastoral Care Teams and how, once formed, effective ways of working were established and maintained in order to ensure students were appropriately supported.

Achieving effective pastoral care in school settings clearly aligns well with a goal of supporting the broader health and wellbeing outcomes of students. Establishing and maintaining effective pastoral care processes also fits well with the requirement under National Administration Guideline 5 (NAG 5), for Boards of Trustees to 'provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students'. To that end, this review focuses on identifying recommended models and useful guidance for schools regarding establishing and maintaining pastoral care teams and the provision of pastoral care generally in order to inform the development of policy and practice. This has been done in three distinct ways:

- searching international peer-reviewed literature to identify published research focusing on pastoral care in school settings (ERIC, Ovid Medline, PsychInfo, CINAHL, Google and Google Scholar, and key education journals);
- searching relevant websites (ministries of education, university education departments, schools of education) to identify grey literature including strategic documentation, reports describing recommended approaches to supporting student wellbeing/support (particularly seeking references to pastoral care); and by
- conducting interviews⁷ with teachers and other key professionals associated with Canterbury-based schools, about their involvement in, and experience of, pastoral care teams in school settings (interviewees were mainly based in primary and intermediate schools).

Limitations of this review

The primary limitation of this review is that it does not offer an exhaustive search of the literature on the topic of pastoral care in school settings. The search was limited by the electronic databases available and the search strategy as implemented. Despite these limitations a small number of peer-reviewed articles and published reports were identified with a specific focus on pastoral care in schools. Broadening the search terms to include a student wellbeing focus resulted in the identification of additional reports, some of which offered evidence for approaches in primary and/or secondary school settings which aligned well with the pastoral care literature already sourced.

Although this review does not claim to provide the findings of an exhaustive search of the literature about pastoral care and pastoral care teams in school settings, it is hoped that the findings will be useful in highlighting opportunities to augment current practice and to further advance the important work of pastoral care.

⁷ Interviews were conducted by public health analysts and Health Promoting Schools' facilitators using a prepared interview schedule. No effort was made to achieve saturation (theoretical saturation of data means that researchers reach a point in their analysis of data that sampling more data will not lead to more information related to their research questions) or to canvas all schools.

Structure of the review

The findings of this review are presented in four sections. The first section provides an overview of what is meant by 'pastoral care' in the context of school settings, informed by the available literature. The second section presents the findings of the literature and wider internet search focusing on pastoral care frameworks and approaches, and the third section provides an overview of the interviews undertaken with teachers and other professionals about their involvement in pastoral care teams in Canterbury-based schools. The fourth and concluding section revisits a definition of pastoral care and summarises the findings of both the literature review and the interviews. The reader is invited to reflect on the implications of the material presented for pastoral care practice, and to consider potential next steps, for the schools they work in and/or with.

What is pastoral care?

Although there is no mandated sector-wide definition for New Zealand educators to refer to, pastoral care is mentioned in several Education Review Office (ERO) documents (Education Review Office, 2012, 2016b, 2016c). These documents offer a general sense of the nature and extent of pastoral care and its role in supporting students' academic, behavioural and broader health and wellbeing outcomes in a New Zealand context. Most closely approximating a definition of pastoral care are the following extracts:

Good pastoral care is a fundamental aspect of effective schools.....ERO suggests that pastoral care is something that is integral to all aspects of the culture in the school, including wellbeing, curriculum content, teaching and learning.

(Education Review Office, 2012, p. 15)

The way schools respond to wellbeing-related concerns, issues, crises and incidents is closely linked to the way in which their school culture and associated values and beliefs underpin their curriculum, responses and pastoral care decisions. A strong wellbeing culture provides a foundation to fall back on in time of need. It guides the caring practice in the school...

(Education Review Office, 2016c, p. 22)

Whilst not definitions per se, the integral nature of pastoral care, its complexity and importance in addressing wellbeing in school settings is illustrated by these excerpts. Recommended approaches for achieving 'good pastoral care' and a 'strong wellbeing culture', as exemplified in these ERO reports, will be explored more fully in the literature review to follow.

In 2013 the findings of phase two of a two-part evaluation focused on guidance and counselling in New Zealand secondary schools was published by ERO (Education Review Office, 2013). The report noted that the Ministry of Education did not provide definitions of guidance and counselling, nor any explanation as to how they might differ from pastoral care. The evaluation found that 'guidance and counselling' and 'pastoral care' were only sometimes differentiated within a school and that in some schools they were seen conceptually as the same. The report offers the following comment on pastoral care, a definition summarised from the work of Best et al. (R. Best, Lang, Lodge, & Watkins, 1995, pp. 3-18):

Best et al. define pastoral care as the structures, systems, relationships, quality of teaching, monitoring arrangements, extra-curricular activities, and ethos within a school. They say pastoral care includes guiding, counselling, meeting parents, disciplining, and negotiating; that it is seen in the caring quality of relationships between people.

(Education Review Office, 2013)

Other descriptions or explanations of pastoral care, like the ERO 'definitions' referred to above, also tend to summarise various features of pastoral care and describe the multiple ways in which schools

might achieve the work of pastoral care and thereby support the needs of students. For example, in 1989 Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (Department for Education and Science) in the United Kingdom stated that pastoral care is concerned with:

...promoting pupils' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes: through the quality of teaching and learning; through the nature of relationships amongst pupils, teachers and adults other than teachers; through arrangements for monitoring pupils' overall progress, academic, personal and social; through specific pastoral and support systems; and through extra-curricular activities and the school ethos. Pastoral care, accordingly, should help a school to articulate its values, involve all teachers and help pupils to achieve success. In such a context it offers support for the learning behaviour and welfare of all pupils, and addresses the particular difficulties some individual pupils may be experiencing.

(Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools 1989 as cited in Hearn, Campbell-Pope, House, & Cross, 2006, p. 10)

Highlighting quality teaching, effective relationships, supporting the whole child through specific pastoral and support systems, and the goal of student success, this 'definition' features the idea of shared values and an overall school ethos.⁸ The following excerpt from the work of Australian researchers de Jong and Kerr-Roubicek reflects on the ultimate goal of pastoral care – 'to build the capacity of the school community so that it can support each student to grow and develop and to engage with meaningful and successful learning' (de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007, p. 5). The authors highlight the need for pastoral care to be fully embedded in both the curriculum and organisational life of the school. Here the word ethos has been broadened to an 'ethos of care' with its implementation seen as key to integrated pastoral care.

...pastoral care is an integrated approach to implementing an ethos of care within a school. Its ultimate goal is to build the capacity of the school community so that it can support each student to grow and develop and to engage with meaningful and successful learning. Pastoral care is integral to the curriculum and organisational life of the school that affects culture, relationships within the school, the health and wellbeing of students and staff and the learning of students.

(de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007, p. 5)

Australian researchers Cross and Lester (2014) also highlight the importance of pastoral care being fully integrated into all aspects of a school's teaching and learning programme, and its structural organisation.

Pastoral care is not merely a complementary practice; it is policy and practices fully integrated throughout the teaching and learning and structural organisation of a school to effectively meet the personal, social (wellbeing) and academic needs of students and staff. (Cross & Lester, 2014, p. 1)

The Department of Education in Western Australia describes pastoral care, on its website, as a commitment by all staff to the wellbeing of each student, and states that, 'effective pastoral care is achieved through promoting positive school environments that support the physical, social, intellectual and emotional development of every student'.⁹ Effective pastoral care is reported to be underpinned by a positive school climate where:

- 'teacher-student relationships are based on trust and mutual respect
- each student's physical, social, intellectual and emotional development is promoted
- there are strong partnerships between the school, parents and community'.

⁸ Refers to the character, atmosphere or 'climate' of a school. Or more generally, the fundamental character or spirit or culture; the underlying sentiment that informs beliefs, customs or practices of a group or society.

⁹ [Department of Education Western Australia – Behaviour and Wellbeing](#)

Pastoral care is shared by and is the responsibility of everyone.

(Department of Education Western Australia, 2005)

In addition, pastoral care is described as being achieved through:

- 'quality and supportive relationships
- comprehensive and inclusive approaches to learning
- effective networks of care
- appropriate and effective pastoral care strategies'.⁷

These excerpts and reflections all offer some sense of what pastoral care is and of the facets that contribute to achieving pastoral care in a school, but none ultimately provides a clear definition. It seems that the complexity of pastoral care and the challenges in defining it are nothing new. As Best, an educationalist and researcher based in the United Kingdom, stated in 1989:

Pastoral Care is a complex idea and, where it has been institutionalised in schools, a complicated phenomenon.

(R. Best, 1989, p. 7)

Best reinforced the inherent complexity of pastoral care more recently when he stated, 'the fact that we can plan for, deliver, and write about the 'pastoral task' and the structures set up to accommodate it, while maintaining that *everything* in a school is somehow 'pastoral', is a paradox not easily resolved' (R. Best, 2014, p. 179).

In seeking to unpack the complexity of pastoral care, the next section will report in more detail the work of the aforementioned researchers as well as presenting additional literature and relevant reports. With a focus on exploring recommended models or frameworks, and ways of achieving pastoral care in school settings, it is anticipated that a 'fit for purpose' definition of pastoral care will emerge through the review process. In the interim however, for the purposes of this review, pastoral care will be defined as a planned, multi-faceted, whole-school approach to incorporating effective ways of caring for all students in a school setting. This approach supports the holistic development of students and is characterised by school policies and processes that clearly articulate the work of pastoral care i.e. how the welfare, wellbeing and development of children and young people will be optimally supported.

A review of the pastoral care literature

This section further explores the wider literature on pastoral care with a focus on frameworks and approaches. The literature search identified several articles describing and recommending particular models or approaches to pastoral care/student wellbeing support in schools, and one which presented the findings of initial, exploratory kaupapa Māori research¹⁰ undertaken to inform the development of a whole-school, strengths-based approach to severe behaviour. The literature search did not, however, identify any research findings exploring or comparing the effectiveness of particular pastoral care frameworks, models or approaches.

Other reports and documents ('grey literature'¹¹) retrieved through the wider search strategy were mainly concerned with describing the principles of pastoral care or offering a specific model or approach to support the delivery of pastoral care. Notable exceptions include two Australian reports

¹⁰ Huakina Mai Research Project, the research team led by Professor Angus Macfarlane and Dr Catherine Savage, has been charged with designing a comprehensive kaupapa Māori severe behaviour intervention framework. See <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/australian-journal-of-indigenous-education/article/huakina-mai-a-kaupapa-maori-approach-to-relationship-and-behaviour-support/968ED2AFDEF7A3CE57A97E81552C4988>

¹¹ Grey literature includes materials and research produced outside of the traditional commercial or academic publishing distribution channels.

which offer a broader perspective including one of an evaluative nature that explores pastoral care approaches used in Western Australian schools and also investigates the expectations of students and parents in relation to the provision of pastoral care; and an evaluation carried out in New Zealand schools which focuses on exploring what participating successful schools were doing with regard to promoting and supporting student wellbeing.

Five 'pastoral tasks' framework

In 2000, Best, an educationalist and researcher based in the United Kingdom, undertook to map the currently available pastoral care and personal-social education (this incorporates guidance, careers education, and the pastoral curriculum) literature classifying it using the five 'pastoral tasks' framework (R. Best, 2002).¹² Best's five 'pastoral tasks' framework can be summarised as follows:

- **reactive pastoral casework** – responding to the needs of children on a one-to-one basis
- **proactive, preventive pastoral care** – presentations and activities undertaken in class, form periods or assemblies which anticipate 'critical incidents' that may occur in children's lives
- **developmental pastoral curricula** – programmes and cross-curricular activities designed to promote personal wellbeing, and the social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development of children
- **the promotion and maintenance of an orderly and supportive environment** – promotion of a pervasive ethos of mutual care and concern; building the school community through extra-curricular activities, supportive systems and positive relationships
- **the management and administration of pastoral care** – through planning, motivating, resourcing, monitoring, supporting, evaluating, encouraging and facilitating all the above.

Best established that the published research did not neatly fit his five 'pastoral tasks' framework and identified seven (often inter-related) areas of research: casework, bullying, control/discipline, clients' views, pastoral curriculum, welfare network, and pastoral management. Although not necessarily accurately reflecting the work of pastoral care generally, Best's mapping process highlights the range of research undertaken with links to pastoral care and the breadth and complexity of the pastoral care arena.

Five main tasks of pastoral care adapted - an Australian context

Australian researchers Cross, Lester, and Barnes (2014) considering pastoral care in schools, have based their 'five main tasks for each year level' on the five 'pastoral tasks' first described by Best. They head up their 'tasks' list with 'proactive, preventive pastoral care' (relegating 'reactive pastoral casework' further down their list) and outline the required ingredients for each of the five tasks (see Table 1.).

Table 1. PASTORAL CARE IN SCHOOLS Five main tasks for each year level (Cross et al., 2014)

Proactive, preventive pastoral care

Activities and educational processes that anticipate 'critical incidents' in children's lives and aim to prevent and reduce the need for reactive casework

Developmental pastoral curricula

Curricula developed to promote personal, social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development and wellbeing through distinctive programs, tutorial work and extracurricular activities

The promotion and maintenance of an orderly and supportive/collaborative environment

¹² A framework developed by Best, first published in 1999.

Building a community within the school, creating supportive systems and positive relations between all members of the community, and promoting a strong ethos of mutual care and concern

Reactive pastoral casework

‘Open door’ guidance and counselling, peer support and mentoring, welfare network (link between school, home and external agencies such as social services)

The management and administration of pastoral care

The process of planning, resourcing, monitoring, evaluating, encouraging and facilitating all the above

Cross et al. (2014) advocate for schools having an agreed definition of what is and isn’t pastoral care in order to manage wider community expectations with regard to each of the five school-level pastoral care tasks outlined above. This involves everyone, including those within the school community, having a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities and expectations. Where staff are in formal pastoral care roles this is anticipated to help in the management of high workloads. The authors highlight the risk that if responsibilities are not clearly delineated some staff may avoid pastoral care actions and refer these (‘pass this up the line’ p. 48) to other staff perceived to have a position of responsibility which encompasses pastoral care.

Cross et al. (2014, p. 48) suggest that a distributed model of pastoral care where all staff (including external service providers) ‘know the actions they are required to take – both proactively and reactively – is likely to be effective’ in addressing these challenges. This includes class and year group teachers (and the various home and tutor group structures) who are often best-placed to take proactive or reactive action in response to student need.

Finding a balance between proactive and reactive pastoral care delivery is essential, but requires schools to consider their current pastoral care organisation and structures and the school community’s roles and responsibilities.
(Cross et al., 2014, p. 48)

Expectations and understandings about pastoral care - students, parents, and teachers in WA

Undertaken by the Department of Education and Training (2005) in Western Australia (WA) the following study brings together the findings from over 90 focus groups and interviews in 20 schools. Primarily concerned with exploring parents’ expectations and schools’ understanding and delivery of pastoral care, and how students experience pastoral care, the researchers also investigated school effectiveness based on the perceptions of district directors (a specific role in WA school districts).

The findings indicate that teachers and principals/administrators generally believed that pastoral care was about ‘caring for students and ensuring their physical safety’ (p. 6). In addition, each group emphasised other aspects of pastoral care. For example, teachers were focused on building relationships with students and creating a supportive environment ‘by getting to know students and promoting values such as respect, honesty and compassion throughout the school’ (p. 6). Principals, however, defined pastoral care as ‘any school activity that aimed to solve student problems and issues’ especially where this related to social and emotional wellbeing rather than academic needs. Of interest is the finding that parents were more likely to see student academic interventions as part of pastoral care – a school’s responsiveness to any decline in student performance was often provided by parents as an example of effective pastoral care.

The researchers identified study schools as having one of three approaches to pastoral care: integrated, segmented or reactive (see Table 2. below). These approaches were identified in terms of various features such as the level of focus, the attitude of teaching staff, and student satisfaction.

Schools taking an integrated approach were described as ‘having a school ethos and climate centred on achieving a supportive and nurturing environment’ (Department of Education and Training, 2005, p. 21). Elements of a school working in an integrated way were ‘purposefully and coherently focused upon pastoral care’ (p. 21) and staff in these schools viewed themselves as having an important role to play in the delivery of pastoral care. Importantly, the students in these schools reported being very satisfied with the pastoral care provided and confident that any issues would be resolved.

Table 2. Three different approaches to pastoral care (Dept of Education & Training, 2005) **Summarised**

<p>Integrated</p> <p>School was purposefully and coherently focused on providing effective pastoral care</p> <p>A variety of strategies from whole-school to individual casework</p> <p>Active management of school ethos and student care</p> <p>Teachers consciously modelling positive values, viewed themselves as having an important role in pastoral care and demonstrated a positive attitude towards teaching, the school and its students</p> <p>Students reported being very satisfied with the level of care provided, confident in school’s ability to resolve issues</p>
<p>Segmented</p> <p>Pastoral care was isolated from the overall management and day-to-day activity of the school; focused on having pastoral care activities and programmes</p> <p>Used a variety of strategies but generally intervened at the group or individual level only</p> <p>Viewed school ethos as separate from pastoral care and had some awareness of how to proactively manage school culture</p> <p>Teachers less conscious of modelling positive values, viewed themselves as having some role in pastoral care but demonstrated a mixed or indifferent attitude to teaching, the school and its students</p> <p>Students described mixed levels of satisfaction and were less confident in school’s ability to resolve issues</p>
<p>Reactive</p> <p>Pastoral care mainly provided reactively and usually in response to a major incident or school crisis</p> <p>Individual casework approach – trying to target problem and/or at-risk students</p> <p>Viewed school ethos as separate from pastoral care; limited awareness of how to proactively manage school culture</p> <p>Staff were less conscious of modelling positive values (sometimes modelling negative ones); viewed themselves as having a limited role in pastoral care (but believed they could do more if they had more time or resources); generally demonstrated a negative attitude to teaching, the school and some students – struggling with workload</p> <p>Students reported being very dissatisfied with the care provided and were not at all confident that pastoral care issues could be resolved by the school</p>

The authors concluded that developing standards and guidelines for pastoral care could assist schools in understanding their potential role and increase certainty about responsibilities whilst also enhancing consistency across schools. In addition, the authors recommended that a process for evaluating the effectiveness of pastoral care practices should be developed and that outcome measures for pastoral/student care be investigated.

Effective approaches – seven framing principles

Weare, a UK-based educationalist and researcher, investigated ‘what works’ in terms of promoting social and emotional wellbeing in schools. Addressing the challenge of responding to those students with more serious mental health problems, Weare’s *Advice for Schools and Framework Document* (Weare, 2015) offers a useful perspective in a discussion of pastoral care and aligns well with Cross and Lester’s recommendations, and with the Department of Education and Training evaluation findings reported above. Weare reports that there is clear evidence from systematic reviews to support schools in employing the following approaches as they seek to improve student wellbeing outcomes (see Table 3. and Figure 1. below).

Table 3. Summary of effective approaches: Seven framing principles (Weare, 2015) Summarised

ADOPT whole-school thinking: take a whole-school approach and implement it carefully; ensure all parts of the school organisation work well together; provide a solid base of positive universal work to promote wellbeing and help prevent problems; develop a supportive school and classroom climate and ethos; identify and intervene early; take a long-term approach; promote the wellbeing of staff and tackle staff stress

DEVELOP supportive policy: provide clear boundaries and robust policies; ensure that there are robust policies and practice in areas such as behaviour, anti-bullying and diversity, including tackling prejudice and stigma around mental health

PRIORITISE professional learning and staff development: understand the risk factors to wellbeing and help students develop resilience; raise staff awareness about mental health problems and the school's role in intervening early; base response on sound understanding of child and adolescent development; help all students with predictable change and transitions

IMPLEMENT targeted programmes and interventions (including curriculum): ensure high quality implementation of specific programmes and interventions; explicitly teach social and emotional skills, attitudes and values, using well-trained and enthusiastic teachers and positive, experiential and interactive methods; integrate this learning into the mainstream processes of school life

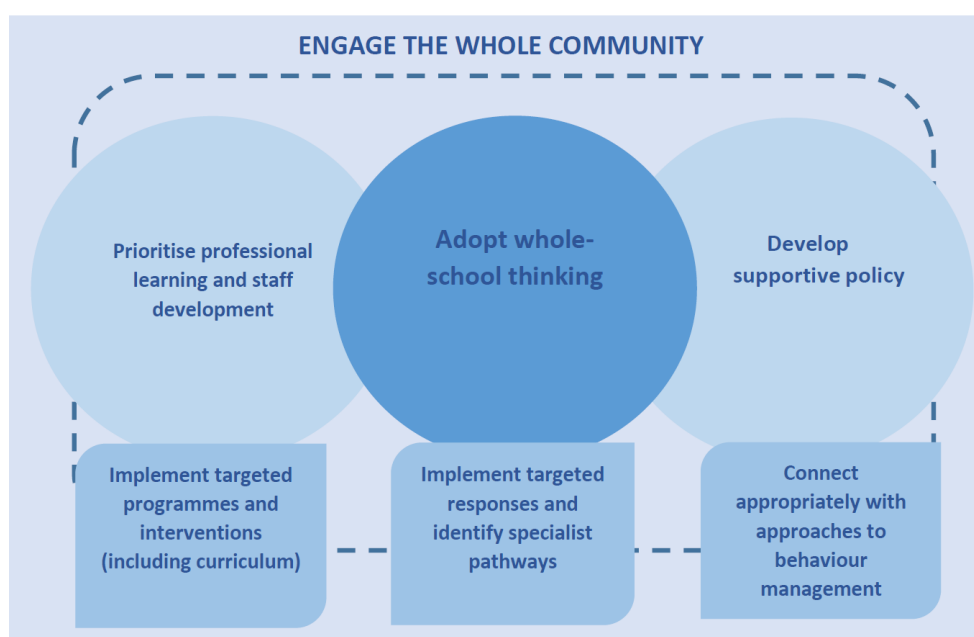
CONNECT appropriately with approaches to behaviour management: understand the causes of behavior; respond wisely to 'difficult' behavior, both responding actively with clear consequences and also understanding its deeper roots, taking opportunities to model and teach positive alternatives

IMPLEMENT targeted responses and identify specialist pathways: provide clear pathways of help and referral; provide more intense work on skills work for those with difficulties; provide more intense work on social and emotional skill development for students in difficulties, including one-to-one and group work; use specialist staff to initiate innovative and specialist programmes to ensure they are implemented authentically and then transfer responsibility to mainstream staff wherever possible to ensure sustainability and integration; where students experience difficulties, provide clear plans and pathways for help and referral, using a coherent teamwork approach, including the involvement of outside agencies

ENGAGE the whole community: engage students through encouraging student voice, authentic involvement in learning, decision-making and peer-led approaches; engage parents/carers and families in 'genuine participation' with a particular focus on those of students who may feel blamed or stigmatised

What works in promoting social and emotional well-being and responding to mental health problems in schools? Advice for Schools and Framework Document (Weare,2015) available at: <http://www.senplus.ltd.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Promoting-Social-Emotional-Well-being-etc-NCB.pdf>

Figure 1. WHAT WORKS – Framework of Effective Approaches (Weare, 2015) Summarised



Weare concludes her advice by stating,

Schools can be confident that a focus on wellbeing and mental health not only enables them to provide healthy and happy school environments for pupils and staff and prepare the citizens of tomorrow with sound character and values, but also directly supports their more immediate mission: the promotion of effective learning.

(Weare, 2015, p. 12)

Effective approaches - Health Promoting Schools Framework

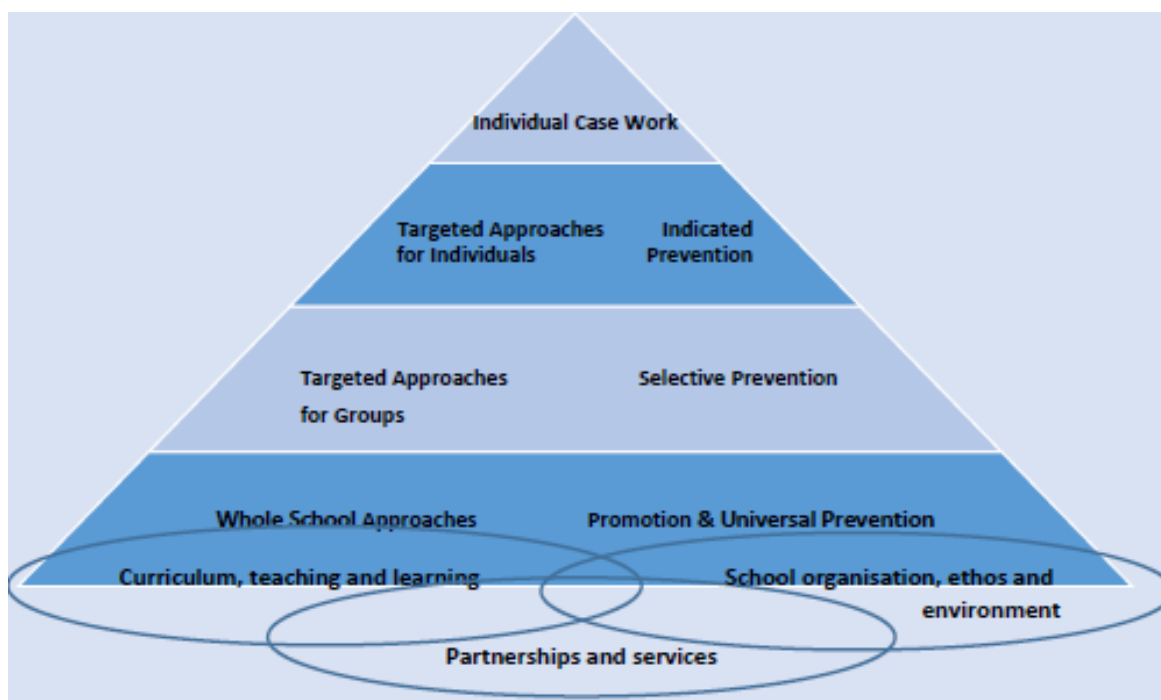
Hearn et al. (2006), summarising the available pastoral care literature at the time, highlighted the role of the Health Promoting Schools framework/approach in supporting the wellbeing of students through the three overlapping and interactive components:

- School organisation, ethos and environment,
- Curriculum teaching and learning, and
- Partnerships and services.

The authors reflect that the introduction of the Health Promoting Schools' philosophy has contributed much to the growing recognition that the school environment plays a significant role in building the social and emotional capability of children, and their wellbeing generally.

Hearn et al. also present a *Model for Effective Practice in Schools*¹³ which recommends that pastoral care should be emphasised in each of the Health Promoting Schools framework components (i.e. Curriculum, teaching and learning; School organisation, Ethos and environment; and Partnerships and services), and that in addition to taking a whole-school approach, different levels of support including targeted approaches for groups and individuals need be offered (see Figure 3.).

Figure 3. Model for Effective Approaches in Schools (Department of Education, 2001 as cited in Hearn et al., 2006) **Adapted**

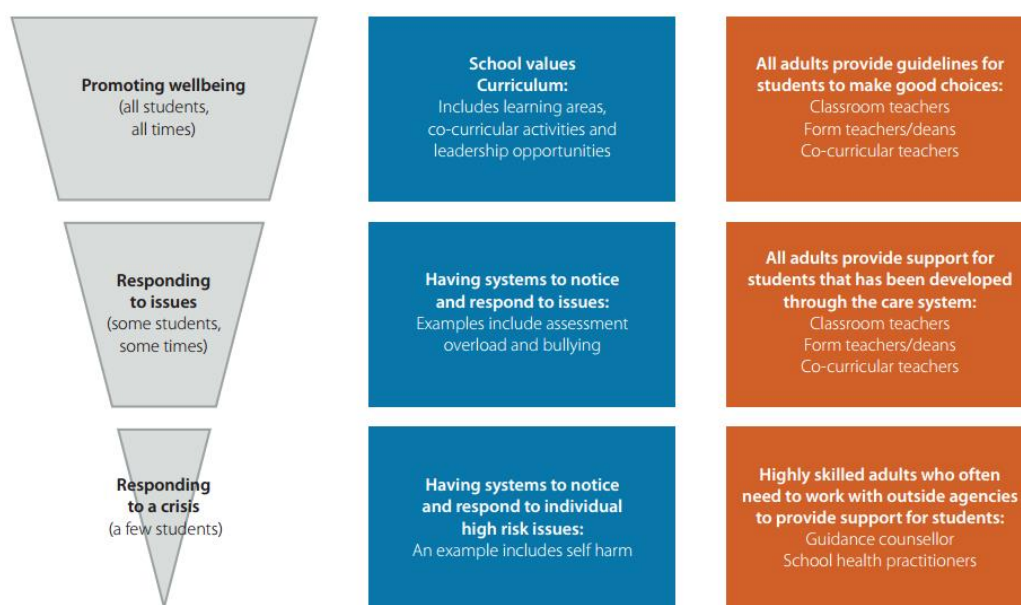


¹³ As originally outlined in a Western Australian Department of Education Focus Paper: Pathways to Health and Well-being in Schools, 2001 – no longer available online or in hard copy

Effective approaches – the intervention triangle

A modified Intervention Triangle¹⁴ developed by ERO and named the ‘promoting and responding triangle’ (see Figure 4. below), also illustrates the approaches that have been found to be effective in schools including the provision of universal support for all students (whole school approaches), targeted support for specific groups of students, and the increasingly more targeted and specialist help offered to smaller numbers of students/identified individuals (Education Review Office, 2016c). The Intervention Triangle has also been augmented to express something of the complex interplay between a school’s values, the broader curriculum, agreed systems and processes, and the actions professionals take.

Figure 4. The promoting and responding triangle (sourced from Wellbeing for success: Effective practice (Education Review Office, 2016c))



Effective approaches - principles to guide planning and practice

Also employing a universal or whole-school approach is the MindMatters program¹⁵, a mental health promotion resource developed for Australian secondary schools. De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek (2007) reflect that their involvement in MindMatters Plus¹⁶ exposed them ‘to some exemplary work in pastoral care’ (de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007, p. 4) and as a result they have proposed a ‘work-in-progress’ framework for pastoral care in schools.

The proposed framework is closely aligned to the Framework for Health Promoting Schools and also uses a modified version of the MindMatters Whole School Mental Health Promotion Model. Focused on the three elements of a school’s organisational structure (i.e. Curriculum, teaching and learning; School organisation, ethos and environment; and Partnerships and services), the framework uses pastoral care as ‘a platform of support, which underpins all school activities and is responsive to present and future needs’ (de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007, p. 4).

¹⁴ http://www.creducation.net/resources/social_and_emotional_learning_brief_CASEL.pdf

¹⁵ **MindMatters** is a mental health initiative for secondary schools that aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people. <https://www.mindmatters.edu.au/>

¹⁶ MindMatters Plus (MM+). MM+ is a project developed within the context of MindMatters (MM), an ongoing initiative which aims to promote mental health within Australian secondary schools. MM+ is an integral component of the MM suite of initiatives and is consistent with its underlying philosophy of developing student resilience through a ‘whole of school’, capacity-building approach.

The authors believe that the key to effective whole school pastoral care is a leadership team which is ‘actively committed to integrating this concept into the fabric of the school’s culture and daily operation’ (de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007, p. 4). The authors go on to recommend the need for distributed leadership (as also noted by Cross and Lester, 2014) where staff and students can play leadership roles, building a good ‘fit’ between all in the school community, and ensuring that best-evidence informs practice. Maintaining that pastoral care is the responsibility of all in the school and the wider school community, and not just that of designated staff, the authors support the view that ‘each school should recognise its responsibility for extending care into all aspects of its work’ (Clemmett and Pearce 1989 as cited in de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007).

De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek have developed 12 core principles to guide the planning and practice of pastoral care. Ten of these fit within the three Health Promoting Schools’ elements and two are overarching principles. The principles are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4. Principles to guide the planning and practice of pastoral care (de Jong and Kerr-Roubicek, 2007, p. 6, 7) **Summarised**

<p>OVERARCHING</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning and wellbeing of all students to the extent that it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ integrated into all activities of the school and is intrinsic to the life of the school ▪ facilitated by distributed leadership that is committed to care and encourages initiative in all staff and students
<p>School ethos and environment</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning and wellbeing of all students to the extent that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ adopts inclusive practices ▪ values school as a ‘people place’ in which positive, constructive relationships are nurtured ▪ upholds the rights of all students and staff ▪ is strengths-based, and seeks to build capacity
<p>Curriculum, teaching and learning</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning and wellbeing of all students to the extent that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ is embedded in a relevant, engaging, and challenging curriculum ▪ is responsive to the physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and cognitive needs of all students ▪ supports each student to engage with learning and the life of the school
<p>Partnerships and services</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning and wellbeing of all students to the extent that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ respects students and parents as partners ▪ is characterised by collaborative decision-making processes ▪ incorporates consistent and sustainable internal and external support structures and networks

A commitment to care can be seen as fundamental to this approach together with an emphasis on staff developing positive, respectful and professional relationships with all students (this emphasis links well with the work of New Zealand researchers Bishop and Berryman as referenced in the introduction). Ensuring that pastoral care principles are well articulated in all school policies, structures and processes is seen as a priority, as is the provision of dedicated resources to support staff such as the allocation of ‘time; professional development; professional support and supervision; teacher relief; space allocation; and designated funds for programs’ (p. 8).

De Jong and Kerr-Roubicek consider a student-centred philosophy vital, not only in terms of responsive teaching and learning practices, but also with regard to encouraging student voice to improve understandings of how to engage young people ‘meaningfully with school’ (p. 9). In

addition, schools are seen as needing to be responsive to the wider community and to include parents and families ‘in shared discussions about curriculum, values, behavior, safety, care and support’ (p. 10). Ultimately the planned processes for connecting students with the life of the school and with the key adults involved in their care needs to focus on the student in the context of their ‘real lives’ (p. 10).

Systematic Review Process for Pastoral Care

Cross and Lester (2014) also present the student as central and describe quality pastoral care as focusing on the whole student, whilst stressing the importance of engaging all members of the school community as providers of pastoral care. They suggest that quality pastoral care ‘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’ ([webpage](#)).

To achieve quality pastoral care, Cross and Lester (2014) recommend regular reviews of pastoral care policies and practices through a systematic assessment of the school’s pastoral care resources, strengths, needs, threats and opportunities. They offer a 10-step action plan to assist schools in reviewing their pastoral care programmes. The recommended process is presented in Table 5., below.

Table 5. Systematic Review Process for Pastoral Care: 10-point action plan (Cross & Lester, 2014) Adapted

Stage 1: Engage and involve the community – engaging the whole school community (staff, students and parents) is a key strategy to promote pastoral care.
Stage 2: Review staff wellbeing – if staff wellbeing is cared for then staff are able to care for student wellbeing.
Stage 3: Review student wellbeing outcomes – a variety of measures can be used by schools to conduct this assessment.
Stage 4: Use data to assess the quality of current practices – qualitative and quantitative data can be collected from all levels in the school.
Stage 5: Map policies and practices against outcomes – identify existing overlaps and gaps; assess appropriateness and effectiveness of current systems, practices, policies and services in relation to identified wellbeing outcomes.
Stage 6: Enable staff to reflect on their own pastoral care practices – clarify each person’s pastoral care role, explore how actions, and relationships with students can enhance or harm student wellbeing.
Stage 7: Decide what needs to be stopped, started and kept – this determination by staff is particularly important given the often limited resourcing for pastoral care.
Stage 8: Clearly delineate roles and responsibilities – this needs to be explicit and clearly understood by all; can reduce the burden often experienced by pastoral care leaders and encourages all to contribute to the culture of care.
Stage 9: Communicate progress regularly – to ensure ongoing engagement update the wider school community on pastoral care activities and processes.
Stage 10: Provide sufficient capacity and resources – a pastoral care ‘master plan’ can be used to guide and monitor ongoing implementation.
A full outline and rationale for each stage can be found at: https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/pastoral-care-a-10-step-action-plan

In outlining this 10-point action plan Cross and Lester offer a focused approach for the review of the broader work of pastoral care in a school setting. The review involves using data to assess the quality

of current practices - both quantitative and qualitative – as well as using identified measures to review student wellbeing outcomes. This offers a clear rationale for the development of specific pastoral care indicators or outcome measures, the enabling of student voice (student perspectives) through meaningful and respectful options, and the utilisation of other data streams and perspectives likely to inform the ongoing work of pastoral care in school settings (Cross et al., 2014; de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007; Department of Education and Training, 2005; Weare, 2015).

A New Zealand Perspective – focusing on pastoral care principles & approaches

The New Zealand Education Review Office (ERO) first introduced evaluation indicators in 2003. Revised in 2010 and again in 2016 (School Evaluation Indicators, Education Review Office, 2016a) the intention is to use evaluation in supporting and promoting school improvement, with the *Best Evidence Synthesis Programme* (Alton-Lee, 2003) having been key to the development of the indicator framework and the indicators themselves (both outcome and process indicators). Seeking to address equity and excellence, particularly in terms of outcomes for Māori and Pacific students, the indicators are designed to enable schools to undertake internal evaluations (and for ERO evaluators to use in external evaluations of schools).

Four learner-focused outcome indicators (see Table 6. below) are derived from *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and take an ‘holistic approach to learners’ wellbeing, development and success’ (p. 16 Education Review Office, 2016a). The outcome indicators also support three goals identified as essential for the educational advancement of Māori:

- enabling Māori to live as Māori
- facilitating participation as citizens of the world, and
- contributing towards good health and a high standard of living (Durie, 2001).

The evaluation indicators framework incorporates the concepts of manaakitanga (need to care for children and young people by providing a safe and nurturing environment), whanaungatanga (demands quality teaching relationships and interactions and teacher established whānau-based environment supporting learning), ako (reciprocal learning environment – child as both learner and teacher) and mahi tahi (working together collaboratively in pursuit of learner-centred education goals). Together these concepts offer a culturally responsive approach to education and a way to ensure ‘school processes, practices and activities are promoting equitable outcomes for all students’ (Education Review Office, 2016a, p. 13).

Table 6. Learner-focused Outcome Indicators Education Review Office 2016a

Every student is a confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learner... (Multiple items are incorporated within each of the following outcome indicators. Please refer to the document for this detail)

Confident in their identity, language and culture as citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand

Socially and emotionally competent, resilient and optimistic about the future

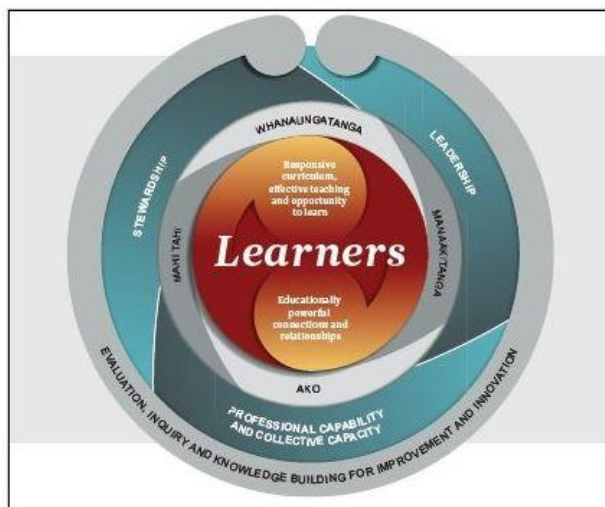
A successful lifelong learner

Participates and contributes confidently in a range of contexts – cultural, local, national and global

The process indicators are organised into six domains which have been ‘found to influence school effectiveness and student outcomes’ (Education Review Office, 2016b, p. 16). The domains are as follows (see Figure 5. below): Stewardship; Leadership of conditions for equity and excellence; Educationally powerful connections and relationships; Responsive curriculum, effective teaching

and opportunity to learn; Professional capability and collective capacity; and Evaluation, inquiry and knowledge building for improvement and innovation (supported by the concepts of manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, ako, and mahi tahi).

Figure 5. Process Indicators – Six Domains



A number of evaluation indicators are associated with each of the six domains and examples of effective practice are presented for each indicator to inform evaluative practice. ERO emphasises the importance of employing a mixed methods approach (i.e. using both quantitative and qualitative data) to inform in-school evaluations, and also describes student voice as a crucial source of information.

Specifically focused on student wellbeing, ERO published the findings of an evaluation undertaken in Term One, 2014 which explored how well 159

primary schools¹⁷ and 68 secondary schools¹⁸ were promoting and responding to student wellbeing (Education Review Office, 2015). *Wellbeing for Success: Effective Practice* (Education Review Office, 2016c) has been published subsequently and draws on the information gathered through this evaluation process. Having identified 13 primary and three secondary schools that were successfully promoting the wellbeing of all students, ERO revisited these schools and gathered more information about practices that were supporting wellbeing, including systems for responding to concerns, issues or events. These more detailed findings have been reported in the *Effective Practice* document which also highlights the need for schools to develop a positive culture in order to achieve the desired student wellbeing outcomes.

Schools promote a culture of wellbeing by making their vision, values, goals and priorities part of the curriculum and associated learning and teaching practices. The capability to respond well to a particular event is often determined by the way in which a school's culture of wellbeing enables and supports leaders and teachers to respond.

(Education Review Office 2016c, p. 5)

The authors report that eight themes were evident in the 'talk, actions and approaches to wellbeing in the schools with effective practice' (Education Review Office, 2016c, p. 6). The themes were summarised as follows:

- We can do better
- Improvement focus
- Recognising the need for a balanced focus on wellbeing and achievement
- Providing layers of support
- Systems, people and initiatives 'wrap around' students
- Making implicit school values explicit
- Schools using restorative practices

¹⁷ Wellbeing for Children's Success at Primary School (February 2015) available at: <http://www.ero.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-for-childrens-success-at-primary-school/>

¹⁸ Wellbeing for Young People's Success at Secondary School (February 2015) available at: <http://www.ero.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-for-young-peoples-success-at-secondary-school/>

- We want the best for all our students

Schools identified as having effective practice were described as exhibiting a ‘carefully developed culture of wellbeing’ (p.6). In addition, having recognised that wellbeing must be planned for, students were provided opportunities to show leadership to voice their views. Students could expect to have their opinions acted on. It was also noted that these schools had ‘the right systems, people and initiatives to fit their culture and needs’ (p. 6). Features of ‘right systems, people and initiatives’ included:

- wellbeing having been identified as a shared responsibility involving expertise across the school and wider community (including relevant support services),
- the deliberate building of expertise and working collaboratively to enable student needs to be identified,
- having a focus on early intervention and awareness of referral pathways,
- using multiple sources of evidence to inform understandings of individual wellbeing and of the wellbeing of the school overall, and
- using wellbeing information to identify vulnerable students, and areas for improvement.

Wellbeing for Success: A Resource for Schools (Education Review Office, 2016b) offers a guide for schools as they seek to evaluate and improve student wellbeing. Key to this process is using the domains and indicators, as outlined above in the *School Evaluation Indicators*, with specific reference to five aspects that ERO has described as ‘vital’ to the promotion of and responsiveness to student wellbeing (see Table 7.).

Table 7. Five vital aspects identified in schools that successfully promoted and responded to student wellbeing (Education Review Office, 2016b) <http://www.ero.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-for-success-a-resource-for-schools/>

▪ Agreed values and vision underpin the actions of the school to promote students’ wellbeing
▪ The school’s curriculum is designed and monitored for valued goals
▪ Students are a powerful force in wellbeing and other decisions
▪ All students’ wellbeing is actively monitored
▪ Systems are in place and followed to respond to wellbeing issues

A framework is presented which organises the six domains of the *School Evaluation Indicators* across each of the five vital aspects outlined above. The document presents each of the domains and associated indicators (together with examples of effective practice) by each of the five vital aspects. The evaluation framework offers New Zealand schools an option for assessing their performance with particular regard for understanding and responding to student wellbeing issues.

In an analysis of 13 ERO national evaluation reports (Education Review Office, 2012) focused on transitions¹⁹ from primary to secondary school, the authors note a number of factors that contribute to students’ successful adjustment to a new school. The factors which schools were encouraged to do ‘more of’ in support of their students included the following:

- identify early the students who are likely to need support
- include in the planning process all the people who are connected to a student

¹⁹ Transitioning between one educational setting and another e.g. between a primary/intermediate school and a secondary school.

- build a school-wide culture of pastoral and learning care for students, and
- ensure that school systems for pastoral and learning care are sustainable by aligning them to existing systems.

In addition, it was recommended that schools undertake self-review as a way to appraise and improve transition processes, as well as monitoring and tracking the progress of individual students. Seeking the 'perspectives, experiences and expectations of individual students and their families' (Education Review Office, 2012, p. 26) was also seen as important as schools sought improved outcomes. These conclusions complement the pastoral care literature findings regarding the development of school-wide approaches and a culture of care, monitoring and tracking student need, and ensuring systems and practices are effective and sustainable.

The findings of the evaluations undertaken by ERO and the indicators developed can be considered pertinent to any discussion seeking to identify specific pastoral care indicators, and in any planned school-wide review of pastoral care. In line with the international pastoral care literature presented, the five vital aspects presented above and the ERO indicators offer teachers and other professionals based in New Zealand schools an explicitly local starting point for the systematic review of pastoral care processes and practices.

A summary of interview findings (with teachers and other professionals)

This section presents a summary of findings from an analysis of interviews conducted with teachers and members of school leadership teams (including Principals and Deputy or Associate Principals), Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCO), Ministry of Education Learning Support (Special Education) staff, and staff from the Canterbury District Health Board's School Based Mental Health Team. Those interviewed were invited to reflect on their involvement in supporting the provision of pastoral care in school settings through their attendance at pastoral care meetings. Detailed written notes of interviewee responses were recorded by the interviewers. In addition, some interviewees also provided written answers to the questions, where the interview schedule had been provided to them prior to interview.

Interviewers asked questions (see Appendix 1.) designed to guide the interviews across a number of key areas related to pastoral care meetings in school settings. The questions explored interviewees' thoughts about the central purpose of pastoral care meetings, the 'single most important thing' they believed others needed to know about effective pastoral care, and what they considered was working particularly well (in terms of pastoral care meetings) in the school or schools they were involved with. In addition, interviewees answered questions about the frequency of pastoral care meetings in their school/s, who attended these meetings, how agendas were set, how student information was collated, and how the actions identified at pastoral care meetings were tracked and progress reported.

The collated notes from all interviews have been reviewed by question, and overall, to inform a simple content analysis. This involved the counting and comparison of keywords/phrases and content generally, with the grouping of responses/ideas and the coding of categories, derived directly from the text data (i.e. interview notes).

Creating a pastoral care team

Interviewees were asked to list those usually in attendance at pastoral care meetings. The responses indicate that a mix of the following were usually present at pastoral care meetings held in most of

the schools involved in this review: at least one member of the school's senior management team (who in some instances was SENCO for the school), the SENCO (where this person was not a member of the management team), a member of the School Based Mental Health Team (SBMHT), Social Worker in Schools (SWiS), Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour (RTLb), Special Education Advisor (Ministry of Education), and a Public Health Nurse.

At some schools, a member of the Health Promoting Schools Team (CDHB) was sometimes in attendance, as were the Police, staff from Oranga Tamariki (Ministry for Vulnerable Children), the Methodist Mission, Presbyterian Support and organisations (within a particular school community) such as Te Mapua Child and Youth Trust, and ACTIS (Aranui Community Trust Incorporated Society).

In addition, the following were mentioned as attending meetings by at least one interviewee: additional teaching staff, Office Administrator (interviewee noted that the individual in this role often had helpful insights due to ongoing - often daily - contact with families), Truancy Officer, School Community Liaison, and Resource Teacher of Literacy. Members of the SBMHT, who also support pastoral care in secondary schools, mentioned Nurse Maude (school-based nursing in secondary schools) and Te Ora Hou's Partnership Community Workers who, in collaboration with general practice, work to assist secondary school students (and their whānau) in accessing primary health care.

Although there was great similarity in the core team members who were reported to be in attendance at pastoral care meetings, there was considerable variation in the number of meetings that were reported in different school settings. For example, some schools reported having fortnightly meetings (ranging from one to two and half hours), whilst others reported having one to two meetings per term (one hour in length). One interviewee qualified their response by saying that there was a fortnightly meeting which focused on the 'educational side of pastoral care' with an additional twice per term pastoral care meeting that 'involved attendance, medical, health and hygiene'.

Thinking about the purpose of pastoral care meetings

Considering the central purpose of pastoral care meetings, many interviewees highlighted the attendance of representatives from external agencies and the collective role of attendees in supporting young people (and their families/whānau) through 'aligning services to get the best outcome'. Pastoral care meetings were seen as a hub – a way of connecting all key professionals together to 'find the right support' and to ensure access to and sharing of knowledge. One teacher acknowledged the agency experts as supporting planning through 'seeing things you haven't seen, filling gaps' and 'increasing our own expertise in identifying solutions' and another reflected that the purpose of pastoral care meetings was to 'provide equity for [our] students'. Some interviewees described these professionals/agencies as being in their school setting often – attendance at pastoral care meetings was just one example of their valued involvement in the life of the school.

Interviewees highlighted the coordination and provision of learning, behaviour and health support, and considering the 'physical, social and emotional welfare of children in the school' as a key role of pastoral care meetings. This included noting what was happening for individual students, ensuring essential others were aware of the situation, and discussing and formally agreeing how to support each student through reviewing the 'best options/practices/next steps', whilst also considering, 'who is best to deal with this'.

Setting the pastoral care meeting agenda

In terms of setting the agenda for pastoral care meetings, prioritising student needs, tracking information shared, and tracking agreed action points and outcomes, interviewees shared a variety of approaches. Some schools reported tracking and recording everything through the minutes whilst others described in some detail shared documents (e.g. 'Special Needs Register') which were updated both between and during meetings to capture new information and the detail of actions taken/agreed.

This was closely linked to the ways in which some schools prioritised student need – some interviewees noted that all students referred were discussed (i.e. with no system of prioritisation), whilst one interviewee described a 'watch list', and others colour-coded systems (e.g. red, orange, green; and red, blue, none) that assisted meeting attendees in knowing which students required urgent assistance... 'and then they will focus on high risk care and protection, and risk to self and others'. These documents, in most cases, acted as the agenda for pastoral care meetings and in turn became detailed minutes of each meeting, with action points for attendees clearly articulated.

One example was offered of a school with a roll of approximately 500, with 60-70 students on the Special Needs Register, triaged red (most urgent) to green. In this school pastoral care meetings took one hour and were held twice a term. The meeting would begin by considering students coded red and then move through the balance of the register (i.e. orange and then green). Each child was the focus of attention for about one minute. The Special Needs Register was updated during the meeting with any further information or updates recorded in the document (in this case a shared google document) between meetings. Importantly, there was a strong expectation that students would transition off the register.

Derived from interview notes

One interviewee reflected that a change in teaching team structure (i.e. a move to a flatter management structure or alternating team leadership) due to the introduction of 'modern learning environments' could mean that issues might not be escalated as promptly as they once had been, due to assumptions being made about who had or would follow up with the SENCO or other senior leadership/pastoral care team members.

Addressing urgency between meetings

Interviewees reported various methods by which urgent matters were dealt with between meetings or referred to the next meeting. Generally, concerns were escalated to a member of a school's senior leadership team who in consultation with other senior leaders and the SENCO would make contact with members of the pastoral care team (as necessary) to ensure that the issue was addressed. One interviewee noted a regular weekly staff meeting whereby urgent matters could be raised, and others in different settings commented that the SENCO or other senior leaders would respond to urgent concerns that arose by immediately liaising with the teacher and family concerned, and relevant professionals/agencies.

Highlighting communication

Communication between meetings was identified as important in ensuring outcomes for students, with interviewees noting that documents and notes need to be shared prior to and between meetings. It was anticipated that these shared notes would include any assessments, requested tracking or monitoring undertaken, notes about referrals made, and any reported parent/whānau concerns. One interviewee stated that focusing on achieving and reporting positive developments for students and the resolution of issues/crises was supporting 'the meeting [to] move forward'.

The perceived importance of the work carried out between meetings was clearly evident in comments made.

Interviewees described multiple ways in which decisions were communicated with those concerned (including staff, students, parents, caregivers, whānau). Within the school setting this included key points being discussed at senior team meetings, at a weekly staff admin meeting (or similar), or being communicated directly to the relevant teacher (face-to-face and/or via email). Some interviewees mentioned the importance of not relying on conversations and ensuring that documentation, for each child, was up to date and 'should have created a trail'.

It appears that, in most schools, most of the time, the child's teacher communicated outcomes/decisions to the parents/caregivers as the teacher was 'likely to be the key person' and the person who 'keeps parents in the loop'. The importance of teachers knowing 'where they are in the process' was noted as was the significance of the classroom teacher being the 'adult who takes responsibility' for the 'kids at risk'. In some settings, depending on the nature of the situation interviewees also mentioned that contact with families/whānau may be made by a senior leader (e.g. DP/AP) or possibly the PHN, RTLB or SWiS.

Identifying student strengths and addressing need

One interviewee described using the 'circle of wellbeing and achievement' in pastoral care meetings. Developed in Canterbury by the Ministry of Education, the 'circle' helps to identify an individual's strengths (and areas of need) but is primarily about ensuring the readiness of adults ('We are ready') to do what needs to be done in supporting the child, who is at the centre (see

Figure 6.). Whilst focused on achieving tailored support, the approach seeks to ensure that family/whānau and student voice are captured.

One teacher mentioned a similar approach when she described 'the team around a young person', and referenced the *IEP Guidelines- Collaboration for Success: Individual Education Plans* (Ministry of Education, 2011) which describe a student-centred approach involving a team of people working collaboratively to support the child or young person.



Figure 6. Circle of Wellbeing and Achievement (courtesy of Education Gazette article)²⁰

Focusing on what has been learned

There was considerable agreement across those interviewed when asked, 'What is the single most important thing that you have learned about effective pastoral care in school settings that you think others need to know?' Although interviewees noted multiple important things learned, the following were most commonly referenced:

²⁰ <https://gazette.education.govt.nz/articles/smoothen-transitions-through-collaboration-the-canterbury-we-are-ready-project/#jumpto-a-circle-of-wellbeing-and-achievement> (Apologies for the quality of the image as sourced)

- ensuring the young person and their family and whānau are at the centre
- focusing on the issue/s
- professionalism
- having the right individuals in the right roles
- creating a high level of trust amongst team members
- effective communication
- accountability and action.

‘It’s about the child....’

‘Positive, holistic, young person at the centre, support and get alongside them.’

‘It takes a community to work together to support a child and family.’

‘Agreed ways of being together.....respect needs to be generated.’

‘Key to success is being accountable, professional.....and insisting on follow up.’

‘Communication and action.’

‘Need to be proactive and have good systems of communication.’

Comments from interview transcripts

A number of interviewees referred to the multiple challenges and tensions faced by schools (and their staff) in relation to the provision of pastoral care. Some reflected on how the different world views and life experiences of meeting attendees, their varying degrees of prior professional experience, and differing communication styles all impacted on how pastoral care meetings unfolded, on the respect afforded the situations of students and their families (‘be careful around language and the way students are spoken about’), and ultimately on the robustness of decisions reached.

Some interviewees offered further comment about sustaining a high level of trust among meeting attendees and recommended the following as vital to achieving this:

- ensuring a healthy meeting culture
- nurturing professional relationships
- building the expertise of the team, and
- employing and maintaining excellent processes.

An overview of what’s going well

Interviewees were asked what was going well in terms of the pastoral care meetings they attended. The importance of having interagency and community involvement was again highlighted by respondents, as was having a good team in attendance - the ‘right people in the right roles’. Some also mentioned the good relationships their school had with agencies and the importance of the resources/support that could be offered to students and families by these external attendees. Efficient meetings (‘sharp and to the point’) where all the ‘parts come together’, through employing

a 'systematic organised approach', in order to get the 'whole picture' were all elements of success that were acknowledged by interviewees. Good record-keeping and effective student management systems were also noted.

In addition to addressing the needs of specific students, some interviewees reflected that the welfare of staff members was also considered within the scope of pastoral care meetings. Some interviewees commented that pastoral care meetings were the ideal place for discussions about student/cohort observations (e.g. in classrooms or the playground) or any emerging year level/cohort concerns (e.g. anxious parents).

Reviewing processes and documentation (such as internal referral forms) and ensuring the effectiveness of communication channels were also described by some interviewees as within the scope of meetings, as was the review of programmes running across the school (such as classroom behavior management programmes or PB4L).

Others reflected that the meeting offered a useful forum for planning professional development for staff and for deliberations regarding how best to build the understandings of staff about pastoral care generally and about 'how to follow through, how to engage other agencies, agencies themselves and their services'.

Despite the ongoing complexity and myriad challenges existing for children and their families/whānau, interviewees expressed their belief that they were making a positive difference for these students through the pastoral care processes employed, and the focused, collaborative and caring efforts of the pastoral care team members.

Conclusion: Opportunity to reflect and consider next steps

In considering the findings of this review it is almost certain that those working in and with schools will identify many aspects of their current approaches and practices in the material presented – both in the review of the literature and in the comments and reflections of those interviewed.

The literature offers useful frameworks for explaining and understanding the work of pastoral care in all its guises, and also provides guidance as to how a school might undertake a meaningful and strategic review of systems and processes in order to identify gaps and opportunities to improve all aspects of their pastoral care provision.

The interview findings, focused on pastoral care meetings, provide a glimpse of the real-life practicalities of seeking to support the often complex needs of students through pastoral care processes in school settings.

Both the literature review and the interview findings support the definition of pastoral care as initially proposed.

'Pastoral care is a planned, multi-faceted, whole-school approach to incorporating effective ways of caring for all students in a school setting. The approach supports the holistic development of students and is characterised by school policies and processes that clearly articulate the work of pastoral care - how the welfare, wellbeing and development of children and young people will be optimally supported.' CDHB, 2018

The literature highlighted the importance of utilising a whole-school approach (de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007; Department of Education and Training, 2005; Education Review Office, 2012, 2016c; Hearn et al., 2006; Weare, 2015), including the active management of school ethos and

student care, whilst employing a multi-faceted approach to the provision of pastoral care. Although it is acknowledged that schools would be involved in reactive casework, the importance of proactive and preventive programmes was also highlighted (R. Best, 2002; Cross et al., 2014; de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007; Department of Education and Training, 2005; Education Review Office, 2016c; Hearn et al., 2006; Weare, 2015). To this end, the need to employ a variety of strategies was promoted, ranging from the provision of whole-school or universal preventive programmes to more targeted casework in support of individual students (Education Review Office, 2016c; Weare, 2015).

Schools which took an integrated approach were seen in the literature to be most successful in providing effective pastoral care due to having a purposeful and coherent approach. The teachers in these schools viewed themselves as having an important role in pastoral care and their students were more likely than students in other settings to be very satisfied with the pastoral care provided (Department of Education and Training, 2005). It was also noted that everyone in both the school and community needs to have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities (distributed leadership) (Cross et al., 2014; de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007) together with an agreed definition of what is and is not pastoral care in order to manage the expectations of the wider community (Cross & Lester, 2014; Cross et al., 2014).

In addition, being able to track student progress and wellbeing was noted as an essential component of responsive pastoral care (Cross & Lester, 2014; Cross et al., 2014; Education Review Office, 2012, 2016b). Ensuring that the policies, processes and procedures associated with the work of pastoral care were fit for purpose, through regular and systematic review, was recommended. The 10-point action plan (Cross & Lester, 2014) offers a framework for undertaking a broad review of pastoral care in a school setting. The Education Review Office evaluations profiled also offer useful advice for schools seeking to identify and/or develop measures to track student progress and investigate the effectiveness of policies and procedures (Education Review Office, 2016a, 2016b).

Interviewees, from Canterbury-based schools, also highlighted the importance of tracking student progress, and ensuring that the young person (and their parents/caregivers, family and whānau) was central to any deliberations and decision-making. Interviewees described the ways in which this was achieved and how information was shared to ensure an effective and coordinated response to the provision of care for students. Pastoral care meetings were seen as a hub which connected attendees, including those from external agencies, as they sought to prioritise student need and respond appropriately to the complex situations arising.

Interviewees reported the importance of effective and efficient practices/processes in and between meetings and how this helped them to achieve the work of pastoral care. This was enhanced by achieving a high level of trust amongst all team members (including those from external agencies) and having excellent communication channels with others including teaching staff, parents, family and whānau.

A table summarising the key principles and frameworks identified in the literature follows (see Table 8.). Readers are invited to consider potential next steps in the settings they work in and/or with. It is almost certain that in taking the time to reflect on how things are going, and to think about next steps, that all in the school community will reap the benefit.

Reflect on 'pastoral care' in your setting. Think about your vision for the work of pastoral care in the future. Consider the strengths of your current pastoral care processes, practices and programmes. What is working really well? What are the opportunities? Who do you need to talk to? Where do you need to focus your energies right now? What else do you need to know? What is your very next step?





Table 8. **Pastoral Care in school settings – thinking about next steps**

✓ We're doing this ↑ Could do more *Follow this up ? Who? When? How?

Reflect on 'pastoral care' in your setting. Think about your vision for the work of pastoral care in the future. Consider the strengths of your current pastoral care processes, practices and programmes. What is working really well? What are the opportunities? Who do you need to talk to? Where do you need to focus your energies right now? What else do you need to know? What is your very next step?

- Pastoral care is an integrated approach to implementing an ethos of care within a school ■ A strong wellbeing culture provides a foundation to fall back on in time of need ■ It is the responsibility of all ■
- Employ universal programmes and approaches school-wide, but also think about how best to support groups of students and individual students through using targeted programmes and approaches ■

FRAMEWORKS & APPROACHES

<p>Health Promoting Schools Framework/Approach</p>  <p>Hearn et al., 2006 (p.10)</p>	<p>Curriculum, teaching and learning</p> <p>The framework empowers school communities to develop and apply their own solutions in partnership with health, education and social services. This process is monitored and reviewed to inform ongoing and future actions.</p> <p>The inquiry-based approach is outcomes-focused and sustainable as it builds on what schools already do and integrates the actions and outcomes into schools' planning and reporting processes.</p>		<p>School organisation, ethos and environment</p> <p>https://www.cph.co.nz/your-health/health-promoting-schools/</p>	<p>Partnerships and services</p>			
<p>Model for Effective Approaches in Schools</p>  <p>Dept of Education (WA), 2001 cited in Hearn et al., 2006 (p. 10)</p>	<p>Whole school approach; promotion and universal prevention</p>	<p>Curriculum, teaching and learning</p>	<p>School organisation, ethos and environment</p>	<p>Partnerships and services</p> <p>Targeted approaches for groups; selective prevention</p> <p>Targeted approaches for individuals; indicated prevention; individual casework</p>			
<p>Seven framing principles</p>  <p>Weare, 2015 (p. 8,9)</p>	<p>ADOPT whole school thinking and implement it carefully; develop a supportive school and classroom climate and ethos; provide a solid base of universal work; identify and intervene early</p>	<p>DEVELOP supportive policy; provide clear boundaries and robust policies and practices</p>	<p>PRIORITISE professional learning and staff development; base response on sound understanding of child and adolescent development</p>	<p>IMPLEMENT targeted programmes and interventions; ensure high quality implementation of specific programmes and interventions</p>	<p>CONNECT appropriately with approaches to behaviour management; understand the causes of behaviour; respond wisely</p>	<p>IMPLEMENT targeted responses and identify specialist pathways; provide clear pathways of help and referral; use a coherent teamwork approach</p>	<p>ENGAGE the whole community; encourage student voice; engage parents, carers, family and whānau in genuine participation</p>
<p>Principles to guide the planning & practice of pastoral care</p>  <p>de Jong & Kerr-Roubicek, 2007 (p. 12)</p>	<p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning & wellbeing of all students to the extent that it is: integrated into all activities of the school and is intrinsic in the life of the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ facilitated by distributed leadership that is committed to care and encourages initiative in all staff and students ■ <p>School ethos and environment</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning & wellbeing of all students to the extent that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ adopts inclusive practices; values school as a 'people place'; nurtures positive, constructive relationships; upholds the rights of all students and staff; is strengths-based; and seeks to build capacity <p>Curriculum, teaching and learning</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning & wellbeing of all students to the extent that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ is embedded in a relevant, engaging, & challenging curriculum; is responsive to the physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual, cognitive needs of all students; supports each student to engage with learning & the life of the school <p>Partnerships and services</p> <p>Pastoral care will positively impact on the learning & wellbeing of all students to the extent that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ respects students & parents as partners; is characterised by collaborative decision-making processes; incorporates consistent and sustainable internal and external support structures & networks 						

<p>Three approaches to pastoral care – qualitative research findings</p> <p>Table 1: Three different approaches to pastoral care and their effectiveness (p.8)</p> <p>Integrated</p> <p>Segmented</p> <p>Reactive</p> <p>Dept of Educ & Training 2005 (p.8)</p>	<p>Integrated</p> <p>School is purposefully and coherently focused on providing effective pastoral care</p> <p>A variety of strategies from whole-school to individual casework</p> <p>Active management of school ethos and student care</p> <p>Teachers consciously modelling positive values, view themselves as having an important role in pastoral care and demonstrate a positive attitude towards teaching, the school and its students</p> <p>Students report being very satisfied with the level of care provided, confident in the school’s ability to resolve issues</p>	<p>Segmented</p> <p>Pastoral care is isolated from the overall management and day-to-day activity of the school; focused on having pastoral care activities and programmes</p> <p>Use a variety of strategies but generally intervene at the group or individual level only</p> <p>View school ethos as separate from pastoral care and only some awareness of how to proactively manage school culture</p> <p>Teachers less conscious of modelling positive values, view themselves as having some role in pastoral care but demonstrate a mixed or indifferent attitude to teaching, the school and its students</p> <p>Students describe mixed levels of satisfaction and are less confident in the school’s ability to resolve issues</p>	<p>Reactive</p> <p>Pastoral care mainly provided reactively and usually in response to a major incident or school crisis</p> <p>Individual casework approach – trying to target problem and/or at-risk students</p> <p>View school ethos as separate from pastoral care; limited awareness of how to proactively manage school culture</p> <p>Staff less conscious of modelling positive values (sometimes modelling negative ones); view themselves as having a limited role in pastoral care (but believe they could do more if they had more time or resources); generally demonstrate a negative attitude to teaching, the school and some students – struggling with workload</p> <p>Students report being very dissatisfied with the care provided and are not at all confident that pastoral care issues would be resolved by the school</p>		
<p>Promoting & Responding Triangle</p> <p>Education Review Office, 2016c (p. 11)</p>	<div><div><div>Promoting wellbeing (all students, all times)</div><div>Responding to issues (some students, some times)</div><div>Responding to a crisis (a few students)</div></div><div><div>School values Curriculum: Includes learning areas, co-curricular activities and leadership opportunities</div><div>Having systems to notice and respond to issues: Examples include assessment overload and bullying</div><div>Having systems to notice and respond to individual high risk issues: An example includes self harm</div></div><div><div>All adults provide guidelines for students to make good choices: Classroom teachers Form teachers/deans Co-curricular teachers</div><div>All adults provide support for students that has been developed through the care system: Classroom teachers Form teachers/deans Co-curricular teachers</div><div>Highly skilled adults who often need to work with outside agencies to provide support for students: Guidance counsellor School health practitioners</div></div></div>				
<p>Five main tasks for each year level</p> <p>Table 1: Five main tasks for each year level (p.6)</p> <p>Cross et al., 2014 (p.6)</p>	<p>Proactive, preventive pastoral care</p> <p>Activities and educational processes that anticipate ‘critical incidents’ in children’s lives and aim to prevent and reduce the need for reactive casework.</p>	<p>Developmental pastoral curricula</p> <p>Curricula developed to promote personal, social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development and wellbeing through distinctive programs, tutorial work and extracurricular activities.</p>	<p>Promotion and maintenance of an orderly and supportive/collaborative environment</p> <p>Building a community within the school, creating supportive systems and positive relations between all members of the community, and promoting a strong ethos of mutual care and concern.</p>	<p>Reactive casework</p> <p>‘Open door’ guidance and counselling, peer support and mentoring, welfare network (link between school, home and external agencies such as social services).</p>	<p>Management and administration of pastoral care</p> <p>The process of planning, resourcing, monitoring, evaluating, encouraging and facilitating all of the above.</p>

UNDERTAKING A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF PASTORAL CARE

<p>10-point action plan</p> <p><small>Table 1: 10-point action plan for pastoral care. Adapted from Cross & Lester (2014) and Education Review Office (2016b). The table outlines the key actions for each stage of the systematic review process, from engagement to implementation. It is designed to be a practical guide for schools undertaking a review.</small></p> <p>Cross & Lester, 2014 (p. 13)</p>	<p>Stage 1. Engage and involve the community</p> <p>Engaging the whole school community (staff, students and parents) is a key strategy to promote pastoral care.</p>	<p>Stage 2. Review staff wellbeing</p> <p>If staff wellbeing is cared for then staff are able to care for student wellbeing.</p>	<p>Stage 3. Review student wellbeing outcomes</p> <p>A variety of measures can be used by schools to conduct this assessment.</p>	<p>Stage 4. Use data to assess the quality of current practices</p> <p>Qualitative and quantitative data can be collected from all levels in the school.</p>	<p>Stage 5. Map policies and practices against outcomes</p> <p>Identify existing overlaps and gaps; assess appropriateness and effectiveness of current systems, practices, policies and services in relation to identified wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Stage 6. Enable staff to reflect on their own pastoral care practices</p> <p>Clarify each person's pastoral care role, explore how actions, and relationships with students can enhance or harm student wellbeing.</p>	<p>Stage 7. Decide what needs to be stopped, started and kept</p> <p>This determination by staff is particularly important given the often limited resourcing for pastoral care.</p>	<p>Stage 8. Clearly delineate roles and responsibilities</p> <p>This needs to be explicit and clearly understood by all; can reduce the burden often experienced by pastoral care leaders and encourages all to contribute to the culture of care.</p>	<p>Stage 9. Communicate progress regularly</p> <p>To ensure ongoing engagement update the wider school community on pastoral care activities and processes.</p>	<p>Stage 10. Provide sufficient capacity and resources</p> <p>A pastoral care 'master plan' can be used to guide and monitor ongoing implementation.</p>
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<p>Five Vital Aspects</p> <p><small>Table 2: The five vital aspects of a school that successfully promote and respond to student wellbeing. Adapted from Education Review Office (2016b). The table outlines the key aspects of a school that successfully promote and respond to student wellbeing, from agreed values to systems in place.</small></p> <p>Education Review Office, 2016b (p. 16)</p>	<p>Agreed values and vision underpin the actions of the school to promote student wellbeing</p>	<p>The school's curriculum is designed and monitored for valued goals</p>	<p>Students are a powerful force in wellbeing and other decisions</p>	<p>All students' wellbeing is actively monitored</p>	<p>Systems are in place and followed to respond to wellbeing issues</p>
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Reflect on 'pastoral care' in your setting. Think about your vision for the work of pastoral care in the future. Consider the strengths of your current pastoral care processes, practices and programmes. What is working really well? What are the opportunities? Who do you need to talk to? Where do you need to focus your energies right now? What else do you need to know? What is your very next step?

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