

Sheldon College

Our College Ethos



Love Laughter Learning

Educating For Life

Sheldon College takes its responsibility to educate students for life very seriously. Consequently these are three areas in which it aims to do this:

- > Preparing young people for real life
- > Helping them enjoy their current life experiences
- > Setting up patterns of behaviour for later life

One important, but often overlooked aspect of education that enables us to fully achieve these goals is the area of spirituality or what some people refer to as "religious education". Outlined in this brochure is an overview of how we aim to achieve our goals. In doing so three important questions will be answered for you:

- > What do we mean by the term "Non-Denominational"?
- > What do we mean by the term "Christian Ethos"?
- > What does "Spirituality" mean in the context of our school?

We Are A Non-Denominational College

Families of students enrolled in our College come from a variety of backgrounds. Some belong to specific religious organisations or practise specific belief systems. Some come from family backgrounds where this used to be the case but instead of actively following any particular organised faith, they now simply prefer to instil in their children the values, morals and ethics that were part of those systems ie to be good people.

We are a non-denominational College in the sense that our community is made up of families from a variety of religious denominations or from no specific denomination.

Out of a need to respect this wide range of varying beliefs, we are also non-denominational in the sense that no religious doctrine from any particular religion or belief system is taught at this school. We firmly believe that this is the right and the responsibility of the family unit. Out of respect for this individual choice we adopt a more inclusive approach whereby



we focus on those core beliefs that are central to all positive belief systems where the goal is to produce better citizens and to hopefully make the world a better place.

In adopting this non-denominational approach we are aiming to appeal to all families in our community whilst offending none of them. In our attempt to educate for life in a non-denominational manner we focus on specific behaviours that all parents want their children to display and specific outcomes that all parents would like to see achieved.

In essence, the behaviours we are actively teaching can be summarised by:

- > the 4C's – **Courtesy, Consideration, Co-operation and Common Sense and**
- > the 3L's – **Love, Laughter and Learning.**

The outcomes we are aiming to achieve are summarised by the 3L's of teaching. We want young people to **love** life and themselves and to display this quality in their interactions with others. We want this positive approach to life to be characterised by **laughter** ie the ability to celebrate what is good about life, the ability to not take ourselves too seriously and the ability to see the good things in others that enrich our own experiences. Finally, we ensure that our students are actively **learning** these concepts every day they are with us at the College because teaching is all about the transference of humanity.

In What Sense Is This Part Of A Christian Ethos?

From time to time our life circumstances change and unexpected things happen. Accordingly, please be aware that an additional service provided through Sheldon College Chaplaincy is support provided to families or individuals in time of crisis, grief or uncertainty. These services include on site resiliency training programs and referrals to external counselling agencies.

Sometimes individuals may identify a need to seek spiritual guidance. This is also a service that we can co-ordinate for you if necessary. As our College is a non-denominational school our Chaplain must not discuss any religious doctrine and if people belong to a specific religious denomination the process is for them to be referred to a counsellor of their own religious denomination.



What Is Taught As Part Of Our Christian Ethos

Embedded in our Pastoral Care Programs are the Nine Values for Australian Schooling. These values are based on the principle that we should treat others in the way in which we would like to be treated.

These values are:

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> Care and Compassion
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> Doing Your Best
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> Giving Others a Fair Go
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> Freedom
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> Integrity
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> Respect
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> Responsibility
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> Honesty and Trustworthiness
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> Understanding, Tolerating and Including Others
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Our Ethical Concepts

These programs reflect our Christian ethos by focussing on 30 ethical concepts.

- > The qualities of an admirable leader
- > Being forgiving
- > The benefits of serving others
- > Obedience protects us
- > Resisting temptation
- > The benefits of kindness
- > Being responsible for the wellbeing of others
- > There are more important things than material things
- > How to be happy
- > Why we should thank others
- > When anger and fighting are wrong
- > Not needing to be the first and the best all the time
- > The impact of boasting
- > Why stealing is wrong
- > Giving people a chance to prove they have changed
- > Why it is sometimes harder to do the right thing
- > Deciding whose opinion is more important
- > The value of hard work
- > What is a true friend?
- > How to treat others whose beliefs are different from ours
- > How to find comfort when we are worried
- > Children who make others happy
- > Overcoming fears
- > Not being distracted from achieving our goals
- > The benefits of good behavior
- > Telling the truth
- > Appreciating the sacrifices others make on our behalf
- > Endurance in the face of opposition
- > How can we cope when our loved ones die?
- > Listening to others with the intent to understand

How Is Spirituality Defined?

In knowing what should be taught, why it should be taught and how it should be taught, the major concern has been to show respect for individual belief. Accordingly "spirituality" in the context of our College can be defined simply as the following three-step process.

- > Having a compassionate interaction with other people or the environment
- > Reflecting on this to review what we believe
- > Using our reflection to improve our community

This process enables two outcomes to occur. Firstly, it ensures there is a consistency between the espoused values of our organisation and the actual values practised. Secondly, it enables all young people in our care to start to determine the meaning and purpose of their lives.

Mr Rick Samuels

Director of Community Engagement



Learn More

For further information on any aspect of Sheldon College, please contact:

enquiries@sheldoncollege.com

07 3206 5555



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43 - 77 Taylor Rd Sheldon Qld 4157

PO Box 1188 Capalaba Qld 4157

sheldoncollege.com