



LOYOLA COLLEGE

HOUSE SYSTEM POLICY

Intended audience	Loyola College Community
Author	Development of Wellbeing at Loyola - DOWAL
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PREAMBLE

Loyola College, as a Catholic co-educational College in the Ignatian tradition, seeks the education of the whole person and strives to ensure that each student achieves his or her unique potential. Fundamental to fostering the full potential of each student is the experience of developing high quality interpersonal relationships of care and support.

At Loyola College the vertical House system is used as the primary pastoral care structure to develop high quality interpersonal relationships and to foster the distinctive characteristics of the Ignatian tradition which include:

- Concern for the *whole person* – spiritually, academically, physically and emotionally
- Emphasis on actions rather than words with a commitment to a faith that does justice - an awareness of the needs of others and a readiness to place one's talents at their service
- Striving for excellence, achieving one's personal best and full potential in all things
- Producing articulate, discerning and confident graduates committed to living the values of the Gospel in the wider community "*...leaders in service, in imitation of Christ Jesus, men and women of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment*" (Jesuit Father General Kolvenbach).

For each student, membership to a House and vertical Mentor Group complements the Ignatian education that the College offers by:

- Creating an important dynamic for the spiritual life of students through the development of links with the House sponsored parish
- Providing the opportunity of forging close relationships over a period of time with both the Mentor Teacher and fellow students of all year levels.
- Allowing for every opportunity to develop his or her potential in a wide range of co-curricular and leadership activities outside the formal classroom.

DEFINITIONS

Vertical House System is defined as a pastoral care system where students from Years 7 to 12 and are overseen by the Head of House, together with Mentor teachers. A number of Mentor Groups form a House.

House is a group of Year 7 to 12 students who are placed in a House, according to the Parish they come from, for pastoral care and administrative purposes, and have a particular identity and sense of belonging that is fostered by the Head of House, the Mentor Teachers, House Support staff and the students' families. The identity and spirit of each House is also fostered by the involvement of the students, their families and staff members in a variety of co-curricular, social and religious events.

Each House is identified by a colour, crest and motto and is named after a patron who lived a life that reflects values that are espoused by the Ignatian charism.

Mentor Group is defined as a group of Year 7 to 12 students, who meet together on a daily basis at a designated time, as members of a House, to undertake pastoral and administrative tasks that enhance the wellbeing and experiences of its students and the Mentor Teacher.

Mentor Teacher is defined as a teaching member of staff who has the responsibility of meeting with his or her Mentor Group on a daily basis and, as a *significant adult*, comes to know the Mentor students under his or her care, so as to provide effective pastoral care to them. The term *Mentor* meaning *experienced and trusted adviser* also allows the Mentor Teacher to undertake a variety of administrative roles pertaining to the wellbeing of the student in the life of the College. The Mentor Teacher is also expected to develop effective relationships with the families of the students under his or her care by acting as the first port of call for pastoral and wellbeing matters for the students in his or her Mentor Group.

Academic Companion is the same person as the Mentor Teacher and refers to the role the teacher has in monitoring the academic performance of the students within the mentor group. The Academic Companion will meet with his or her students at designated times during the school year and at parent-teacher-student meetings. They assist their students in setting and achieving academic goals, as well as any other advice that is needed to provide them with support and encouragement on their academic journey at Loyola College.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At Loyola College the vertical House system provides for the spiritual, academic, emotional and social, and physical care of students, nurturing high quality interpersonal relationships by providing:

- Greater possibilities for each child's vision and experience of school life to go beyond the confines of their year level including friendships with students in year levels other than their own
- Academic advice and guidance
- Increased opportunities for students to exercise leadership and service with students at all year levels
- Opportunities for younger students to be introduced into the ways, culture and traditions of Loyola College through interactions with fellow students at all levels and their Mentor Teacher
- Opportunities for older students to become appropriate role models for the younger students
- Opportunities for Mentor Teachers to develop mentor relationships with their students and their families
- Structures for the exploration of wellbeing issues which can be discussed across all year levels through extended Mentor sessions
- Opportunities for intra-House social events and inter-House co-curricular activities that enhance House spirit.

The vertical House system plays an integral role in fostering the Ignatian tradition of Loyola College in five fundamental ways:

1. Student, House and Parish

Loyola College's commitment to the Ignatian tradition is embedded in a deeper yet simple priority: everything that can be done to foster the spiritual development of our students should be done. Consequently, the fostering of ongoing relationships between the student and the House-sponsored Parish is integral. At Loyola College the vertical House system is central to the nurturing of these ongoing relationships and to the allocation of students to their House as far as possible. Each of the six Houses is based on a constituent parish, and in most cases, students are allocated accordingly; however, there will be times when this will not be possible as other factors are considered.

Chisholm House:	St Mary's Parish, Greensborough
Flynn House:	Sacred Heart Parish, Diamond Creek
MacKillop House:	St Thomas the Apostle Parish, North Greensborough
Mannix House:	St Damian's Parish, Bundoora
McAuley House:	St Francis of Assisi Parish, Mill Park

**Xavier House: St Martin of Tours Parish, Macleod and
 Our Lady of the Way Parish, Kingsbury**

Students from the Associated Parishes - Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, Eltham and St Francis Xavier Parish, Montmorency - are allocated to one of the above Houses on a needs basis.

It is anticipated that links between the student and Parish, established during the primary school years, will be strengthened by means of the vertical House structure. The Parish Priest of each Parish is designated as the Patron of the House from which students of the Parish belong.

Masses celebrated at Loyola College are organized so that they are celebrated by one or more of the Parish Priests or his assistant. An annual House Mass is celebrated in the Parish on a designated Sunday to allow the House students, families and staff members to pray together with other members of the Parish.

2. Student and Mentor Teacher

The vertical House system enables a student to have regular contact with his or her Mentor teacher and the other members of the House Mentor Groups, who are drawn from all six year levels. In this way it is anticipated that the student will:

- Develop acceptance, resilience and understanding, as well as a broader sense of self
- Learn from others, as well as assist in the learning process of others
- Form a relationship with his or her Mentor Teacher.

3. Student, Co-Curriculum and Leadership

Apart from nurturing the needs of the whole person in a pastoral care context, the House system is also the basis for regular and ongoing co-curricular activity and leadership opportunities. There are numerous ways in which students at Loyola College are able to develop their potential in a range of House-based activities which allow for the meaningful development of the whole person, and this complements their academic and social/emotional development throughout their time at the College.

In addition, each House competes annually in various House activities for the Jace Dufty Shield.

4. Being people for others

Each House works with a Charity organization, for which money is raised. The Head of House and the student leaders of each House organize fundraising events that raise money for their particular charity.

5. Families-House Links

On allocating students to a House, siblings are always placed in the same House but never in the same Mentor Group.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools (CEM Policy 2.26) *Revised February 2009.*