

The Student Wellbeing Structure in the Senior School at Penrith Anglican College

In the Senior School, student wellbeing is structured in House Groups with all students belonging to a House Based Mentor Group. Besides their classroom teachers, students have a team of teachers assisting build and strengthen their wellbeing. Students have a Mentor who they see every day, as well as their Head of House who can assist and guide them with any concerns. The College Counsellor and the Director of Student Wellbeing provide further support for students and the staff caring for the students.

Helpful Answers to commonly asked questions

What is a Mentor Group?

A Mentor Group is a House based Group of students with a teacher who acts as their Mentor. There are between 17 – 22 students from either Years 7 – 9 (Junior) or Years 10 – 12 (Senior) all from the same House. Mentor Groups meet daily for 20 minutes just before Morning Tea break, except for Tuesdays.

Do siblings stay in the same House?

Siblings are placed in the same House so that families are always cheering for the same House. Depending on the ages of siblings, they can also be in the same Mentor Group.

What happens in a Mentor Group?

Mentor Groups follow a program that aims to equip and guide students in their progress through College. The format of the Program is:

- Mixed Up Mondays; conversation based activities looking at issues in the media, concerns facing students and ways to care for their Compassion Child.
- Mid-Week Mindfulness; opportunities for students to practice mindfulness strategies to manage potential stress-sourced emotions and heighten concentration abilities.
- Tournament Thursdays; team building events and challenges that are competitive between other Mentor Groups as well as being a lot of fun.
- Flexible Fridays; a chance for groups to do something together that is valued by their particular group.

On Tuesdays students meet for a Senior School Assembly or House Meeting.

Each Mentor Group does over time create its own culture so that things like the celebration of birthdays, preparation for House events such as Carnivals or academic demands such as subject choice discussions will also occur when appropriate.

What are the advantages of having a Mentor Group / House Based system?

Every student has daily contact with their own mentor, enabling individualised care as their Mentor can closely monitor any changes in behaviour etc. Regularly meeting in Mentor groups allows for authentic relationships to build between students and also with their Mentor.

The Mentor Group Program aims to equip our students with skills needed for helping students to thrive at the College and beyond that in their future. Through the activities, students have opportunities to develop new skills as well as improve their abilities to contribute to the College and wider community. Penrith Anglican College aims to educate the whole child through age appropriate, evidence based activities that have been proven to strengthen student wellbeing.

Mentor Groups allow for potential barriers between different year groups to be broken down. Regular interaction with students from different years allow new friendships to grow and in some cases can aide in reducing peer pressure. In a way, Mentor Groups also mirrors the workplace and further education groups due to the wider range of ages, experiences, skills, opinions and expertise that combine to make each group.



The combination of different year groups within each Mentor Group allows for reciprocal opportunities of leadership, caring, mentoring, support and for friendships to grow. Younger students benefit from insights into the future from the older students, learning tips on how to best organise their time and prepare well for busy academic periods. Older students can assist younger students in broadening their perspectives on specific concerns. Older students are able to gain confidence in helping to guide younger students. Older students also benefit from leadership opportunities during the Mentor Group sessions. All students benefit from reflection on their personal growth whilst progressing through the Mentor Group Program.

Who do I contact if there is a problem for my child?

If you have a concern regarding your child that is subject related, then the classroom teacher is the first point of contact. For more general concerns please contact your child's Mentor who will either assist you or pass on your concern to the appropriate staff member.

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338-356 Wentworth Road Orchard Hills NSW 2748 | PO Box 636 Kingswood NSW 2747
P: (02) 4736 8100 | E: enquiries@penrith.nsw.edu.au | www.penrith.nsw.edu.au

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