Social and Emotional Learning

“Successful Schools start with Healthy Minds”

More and more we hear these days of the significant part that Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) plays in students achieving, not only good mental health, but also good academic results as well.

What is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?

Social and Emotional skills are key to how we understand and manage ourselves, relate to others and how to make responsible decisions. Children can learn these in informal and formal ways: through programs and lessons, their day-to-day interactions with friends and adults and simply by watching their teachers and family members.

CASEL (Collaborative for Social, Emotional and Academic Learning), an international authority in SEL defines social and emotional learning as: ‘The process of developing social and emotional skills in the context of safe, well managed and engaging learning environments’

They have identified 5 core SEL skills:

1. Self-awareness (e.g. emotions, strengths, values)
2. Self-management (e.g. impulse control, self-motivation, goal setting)
3. Social awareness (e.g. empathy, appreciating diversity, respect for others)
4. Relationship management (e.g. communication, cooperation, conflict management)
5. Responsible decision making (e.g. Problem solving, ethical/moral responsibility)

School curriculum frameworks (early childhood, primary and secondary) are increasingly incorporating social and emotional learning as an essential element of student learning.

‘It is increasingly accepted that in order for students to achieve to the best of their abilities, to behave well and to have emotional health, schools need to teach social and emotional skills to all students …………. SEL’s are essential aspects of students learning to take responsibility for their own learning, behaviour and emotional health.’

[Professor Michael Bernard Melbourne Graduate School of Education University of Melbourne]

At St Joseph’s School Clare we have adopted Program Achieve – You Can Do It (YCDI) as our designated, Social & Emotional Learning program.