



# *Policy on the Requirements for Professional Supervision in Schools conducted within the Province*

*Edmund Rice Education Directorate*



**A Policy Statement for  
the Trustees of the  
Christian Brothers  
St Francis Xavier  
Province (Queensland  
and Northern Territory)**

**Revised for 2002**

The Province Leadership Team (PLT) of St Francis Xavier Province requires that all personnel involved in positions of leadership in Edmund Rice schools undertake regular supervision. This directive is in line with a general directive issued by the Congregational Leadership Team in April 1998 for all Brothers in leadership positions.

## The Directive

As part of their contract of employment, all personnel involved in positions of leadership in ministries conducted by, or under the patronage or sponsorship of the Christian Brothers in Queensland and the Northern Territory, need to undertake regular supervision of a professional nature by a suitably qualified person.

This supervision must be of an individual nature. The supervisor must have post-graduate qualifications in psychology, counselling, social work or a related field of study recognised by one of the caring professional associations in Australia. The supervisor must be experienced in offering supervision.

This directive applies to the following school personnel:

- Christian Brothers in ministry in schools;
- members of the Edmund Rice Education Directorate (ERED) in senior leadership positions;
- members of College Leadership Teams appointed by the PLT;
- School Counsellors;
- selected supervisors, co-ordinators or programme facilitators in schools in a paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time capacity.

The cost of supervision is to be included in each school's budget. Payment needs to be negotiated among each person, supervisor and Principal / Director.

There is provision only in the case of school counsellors to engage in group rather than personal supervision.

**The concept of supervision** has its origins in the training and formation as well as the ongoing professional development of members of the 'caring professions'. In the context of the schools of St Francis Xavier Province, supervision is defined as:

- a collaborative and educative relationship between two professionals; and
- a contract for regular consultation and analysis of professional performance.

**The purpose of supervision** is multidimensional. It aims to:

- Help the leader become more aware of his/her personal reactions and responses in the fulfilment of his/her tasks. This process can ensure that the needs of the leader are recognised and addressed and thus ensure his/her overall health.
- Support and challenge the leader's professional practice. The supervision process can be understood to be part of the ethical response to the increasing demands for transparency of process and accountability for actions and decisions placed on leaders and key personnel in caring/educational professions by the Church, society, funding bodies, the law and the media.
- Assist the leader grow in understanding of the work context and the dynamics being displayed within that context. A deeper understanding of the work setting can lead to more informed decision making and hence more effective leadership in schools.
- Support the leader's exploration of other practices of working and theories of operation. Supervision is an educative process that supports a leader's professional development.

**Supervision is not connected to performance appraisal.**

**The supervisor will not be required to report to the Province.**

Monitoring of conformity to this policy will be primarily the responsibility of the individual. Final responsibility, however, will lie with the Director, Edmund Rice Schools, as delegated by the PLT.

## **The Supervisor**

Each leader needs to choose his/her own supervisor and then to contract with this person, the particular parameters of his/her professional supervisory relationship. It is important that the supervisory process work for each leader. At times this will mean changing supervisors. ERED has a list of personnel that can be

approached.

Supervisors are usually professional counsellors, psychologists or social workers who have experience in the field. However, supervision is not counselling or psychotherapy and many of these professionals do not have experience in supervision.

Supervisors are bound by a professional code of ethics and conduct. This will mean that they will be bound to hold what is spoken about as confidential. In the case of breaches of the law, they may be bound to disclose. Leaders in Edmund Rice schools will need to check this issue out with the supervisor early in the relationship.

The supervisor and leader must retain strong professional boundaries. This will mean that not all counsellors, psychologists or social workers will be suitable. Those that work for the Xavier Province of the Christian Brothers have the advantage of an intimate local knowledge but may not be able to separate themselves from the issues presented. A judgment needs to be made by each leader as to suitability when selecting a supervisor.

This policy is renewed and promulgated throughout the St Francis Xavier Province to all personnel in Queensland and the Northern Territory as of October, 2001.

As a general rule, new employees covered by this policy will be required to begin supervision within six weeks of commencement of employment.



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