

Dunclug Primary School



Pastoral Care Policy

Date Created: Summer Term 2021
To be reviewed: Summer Term 2024

A. RATIONALE

The Pastoral Dimension of the school involves all pupils and all adults associated with the life of the school and should contribute to the creation of a supportive and enriching atmosphere in the school. It should have at all times the best interests of the children, the staff and the wider school community as its principle concern.

We define Pastoral Care as the created ethos through which our pupils develop and learn to their optimum potential. We provide the opportunity for every pupil to develop into responsible, self-aware, confident and capable young people equipped to cope with the challenges of the 21st century.

Our school accepts that Pastoral Care must form the basis of, and permeate, all aspects of the curriculum.

B. VISION

Our School Vision explains that we will strive:

“To provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment where pupils are nurtured and challenged to fulfil their potential and grow in to happy, confident and responsible young people.”

The Pastoral Dimension of Dunclug Primary School is central in this vision being realised. Our school subscribes to the view that every pupil has a right to feel safe and secure on all levels. We will actively promote a Pastoral Care ethos which allows for the development of the whole person, and which leads to every pupil making good choices which will form the basis for a healthy and positive lifestyle.

Through strong Pastoral Care our young people will acquire values and standards and observe these at work at every level.

C. PASTORAL CARE STRUCTURE

i) Principal

The Principal, Mr Beacom is ultimately responsible for Pastoral Care in the school.

ii) Safeguarding Team

The following are members of the School’s Safeguarding Team. This team meets at least once every month. The Governor member attends if and when required.

Mr Beacom Principal and Deputy Designated Teacher

Mrs Boyd Designated Teacher

Mrs Spence Designated Teacher

Mrs Hood Deputy Designated Teacher

Mrs Hayes Designated Governor

The safeguarding Team are responsible for formulating and evaluating the Pastoral Care Policy and Procedures in conjunction with the School Leadership Team, school staff, governors, pupils and parents.

Staff will report any Pastoral Care concern to one of the Designated Teachers.

Posters are displayed around the school stating that if children are unhappy they can talk to a member of the safeguarding team. A Pastoral Care Notice Board displays this information in the Dinner Hall.

iii) School Leadership Team

The School Leadership Team assists the Principal and the Safeguarding Team in the overall management of Pastoral Care within the school and ensures that Pastoral Care Policy and procedures are implemented.

iv) Teachers

Every teacher is a 'Pastoral Care' teacher. Class teachers have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care of pupils in their class. All classrooms have a 'Pastoral Care' poster prominently displayed stating what a child should do if they are unhappy – 'Speak to the teacher.' It is however important to state that at Dunclug Primary School there is a corporate responsibility for the Pastoral Care and well being of the pupils, which goes beyond class boundaries.

v) Non Teaching Staff

Every member of the school staff has Pastoral Care at the heart of what they do. If there are concerns they should be reported initially to the child's Class Teacher or a Designated Teacher.

D. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1) What this means for Pupils

Opportunities will be provided for pupils:

1. To set and achieve personal, social and academic goals.
2. To gain maximum benefit from their time in the school.
3. To develop independence of mind and to take responsibility for their own actions.
4. To develop self-discipline and self-respect.
5. To develop an understanding of themselves as individuals recognising their strengths and limitations, their personal qualities, their attitudes and values.
6. To develop a respect for the opinions and rights of others and to show tolerance towards them.
7. To develop an understanding of the world in which they live.
8. To foster relationships where they feel happy and secure
9. To give pupils a voice eg. Class Councils and Pupil Council.
10. To give pupils a sense of empathy towards other members of the school community.

2) What this means for Teachers

Teachers will:

1. Be genuine, empathetic and accepting, automatically providing a self-esteem enhancing ethos in the classroom.
2. Promote a caring and friendly environment where pupils' learning is developed within the context of their individual needs and abilities.
3. Have a sense of empathy towards other members of the school community.
4. Share a common vision for the school and be involved in realising this vision through, for example, the implementation of the School Development Plan.

5. Be involved in the development of whole school policies which establish principles for action throughout the school.
6. Be provided with opportunities for their own Professional Development.
7. Be aware of the children's individual backgrounds, experiences, needs and aspirations.
8. Give time and support to those in need.
9. Foster relationships where children feel happy, and enthused by the interaction and learning opportunities presented.
10. Foster relationships where children feel happy and secure and can come to the class teacher for any reason.
11. Promote the ethos of teamwork and partnerships at all levels within the school.
12. Be provided with appropriate support when necessary.
13. Provide pupils with opportunities, both formal and informal, to express their 'pupil voice.'

3) What this means for Other Adults in School

Other adults associated with the school will:

1. Have an appreciation of the school vision and ethos.
2. Be partners with the teachers in providing a caring approach.
3. Have a sense of empathy towards other members of the school community.
3. Help the pupils achieve their personal goals.
4. Develop a team approach where each member has a particular role to play.

4) What this means for the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors will:

- 1 Provide a duty of care, safeguarding the welfare of pupils and staff as laid out in Article 18 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003.

- 2 Provide a safe learning and working environment.
- 3 Be fair employers.
- 4 Be aware of all relevant legislation.
- 5 Have a sense of empathy towards other members of the school community.
- 6 Encourage the Professional Development of all staff through appropriate delegation and responsibility.
- 7 Deal efficiently, and in a fair manner, with all cases of grievances and/or discipline in good faith.
- 8 Involve themselves in the life of the school as far as their time permits

E. RELATIONSHIPS

Excellent relationships foster and develop in an atmosphere of Respect.

Our school will work towards creating opportunities where trust, honesty and mutual respect can grow and develop. We aim to create a caring, empathetic and secure environment where our young people can develop good relationships based on those they experience.

The development of good inter-personal relationships is vital to ensure mutual respect, positive attitudes, happiness and security for both pupils and staff.

a As a school we see the importance of valuing the full potential of the staff.

b Pupils will be encouraged in the classroom situation to assist one another, care for one another and develop the skill of listening at all times, thereby promoting in them tolerance and respect for others.

F. GENERAL & SPECIALISED FOCUS

Since Pastoral Care permeates all activities, the General Focus requires a caring commitment by all adults to every aspect of school life.

The implication of this is that Pastoral Care should be evident in:

- The School Ethos
- All classroom interaction and management
- Teaching Methodology
- Positive Behaviour Management Procedures
- The Hidden Curriculum
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- All Inter Personal Relationships

Aside from the General Focus there is the Specialised Focus an example of which would be the use of PDMU within the curriculum.

G. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

Ethos is an intangible concept with a tangible effect. It is our intention to establish an ethos which may be detected in the feelings of security at every level within our school.

This will be achieved through:

- creating a sense of belonging amongst all strands of our school community.
- developing an atmosphere of mutual respect and caring.
- creating an explicit Pastoral Care Programme which allows for a fair and equitable exchange of views/ideas/attitudes, etc. in an atmosphere of trust.
- implementation of a Positive Behaviour Management Policy which creates a full sense of justice and fair play amongst our school community.
- providing opportunities for every person to succeed and to be affirmed. -
- promoting positive relationships at every level.
- working with parents for the mutual benefit of all.
- establishing and maintaining links with the wider community.
- affirming and actively promoting staff to develop positive attitudes towards themselves and to the pupils in our care.
- creating a sense of self-worth at every level.

The pastoral dimension is central to the ethos of the school; the atmosphere which the school creates is ordered yet sympathetic.

H. STAFF WELFARE

Pastoral Care does not solely relate to pupils, it relates to the adults who work in school also, these are the most valuable resource in any school. All staff have full access to Health & Welfare Services in the EA and have been provided with the 'Staff Care' and Aspire NI counselling leaflet as well as the EA's Attendance Policy. Mrs Deborah Bennett is the Governor Responsible for Staff Welfare and Attendance.

I. CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION

A Policy on Pastoral Care will only be successful if it is communicated effectively and positively to staff, pupils, parents and all others involved in the life of the school. The entire school community will be informed of the various policies which form part of the School's Pastoral dimension.

J. USE OF EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Teachers will endeavour to build effective, empathetic relationships with pupils in order to provide advice and support whenever necessary. However we retain an awareness of the need for other avenues of support.

The school has links with many external agencies which it will use to promote Pastoral Care in the school eg. Social Services, PSNI, School Health Service etc. We acknowledge the importance of ensuring that any external agencies used to support our work with young people must adhere to the values and ethos particular to our school. We are aware of the importance of a contract being agreed upon by all contributory parties. All External Agency staff working in the school are appropriately vetted.

The value of professional counseling should never be underestimated and a counsellor can offer immense support to a young person who needs help and guidance beyond the limitations of what the school can provide in house. Since 2020, Dunclug Primary School has used Extended Schools funding to enlist the support of a Professional Counsellor who assists our pupils and families on a weekly basis.

K. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Pastoral Care is always on the School Development Plan and Staff Development and training on Pastoral Care issues is provided when necessary.

L. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This Policy cannot exist in isolation. In addition to this Pastoral Care Policy, detailed policies exist for:

- Child Protection
- Addressing-Bullying
- Positive Behaviour Management
- Misuse of Drugs/Drugs Education
- Relationships & Sexuality Education
- E Safety
- Personal Development & Mutual Understanding
- Intimate Care
- First Aid
- Health & Safety
- Attendance
- Healthy Eating
- Reasonable Force & Safe Handling
- Social Media

M. POLICY REVIEW

This school recognises and accepts the importance of monitoring and evaluating all aspects of Pastoral Care at every level.

The Safeguarding Team, in consultation with the entire school community, will review Pastoral Care Policy and Procedures in the school to determine ways of improving the quality of provision for the benefit of the entire school community.