

Donegall Road Primary School



Pastoral Care Policy

Date Ratified By Board of Governors: *December 2024*

Date of Review: *December 2027*

Staff Member Responsible: *Mr. Stringer (Vice Principal & Head of Pastoral Care)*

1. Introduction

Pastoral Care in Donegall Road Primary School is a priority and is acknowledged as playing a crucial role in the development of the ethos of the school. The Pastoral Care policy outlines and supports the school in promoting this ethos of a caring, supportive environment in which staff and pupils can work in an atmosphere of mutual respect. In Donegall Road Primary School we recognise that central to the success of this are the involvement of parents and other outside agencies within the community. We strive to work in partnership with them to achieve our aims.

Ethos Statement: In Donegall Road Primary School, all children are valued, nurtured and celebrated in a safe environment, where they are encouraged to succeed to the best of their ability and develop as citizens of the community.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To create a disciplined yet caring environment where children feel valued and secure.
- To instil in children a sense of respect for themselves, each other and the world around them.
- To develop all aspects of a child's well-being i.e. their spiritual, moral, emotional, physical and academic development.
- To give all children access to a broad, balanced curriculum through stimulating and challenging experiences.
- To provide an environment that will enable each child to develop their self-confidence, their self-esteem and a positive self-image.
- To encourage every child to realise their own individual potential and develop a sense of self-worth.
- To develop independent thinkers who can seek solutions creatively and co-operatively which in turn will nurture their confidence to take risks in their learning.
- To work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to overcome any difficulty a pupil may encounter and therefore enrich the quality of teaching and learning.

The pastoral care of our pupils will be developed and enhanced through a wide range of activities and opportunities. These, combined with the Northern Ireland Curriculum, enhance the development of the 'Whole' child.

These include:

- Eco Schools
- School Council
- Weekly assemblies
- The involvement of all pupils in presentations and school productions
- The recognition of achievements in and out of school
- The celebration of children's work
- Class duties/responsibilities and the P7 Buddy Programme
- The involvement of pupils in charities and supporting our community
- Whole school events and class lessons
- Extra-curricular activities
- Circle time
- Communication with parents through Facebook, Seesaw, Friday News Sheet and text messaging service

- Parent/Teacher meetings
- Educational visits and residentials
- The full involvement of pupils in their classroom rules, rewards and consequences
- Additional learning support
- The on-going review of all pastoral care policies and procedures
- Events throughout the year which continue to reinforce important pastoral information e.g. Anti-Bullying Week and Internet Safety Week (these areas are also reviewed with pupils on many occasions throughout the school year)
- Weekly 'Over and Above' awards
- Class of the Week trophy
- Numeracy, Communication and ICT monthly awards
- Class Dojo points
- PATHS lessons
- 'Respect Role Model' award
- School Counsellor, provided through SPACE Counselling

3. Liaison with Parents and other Agencies

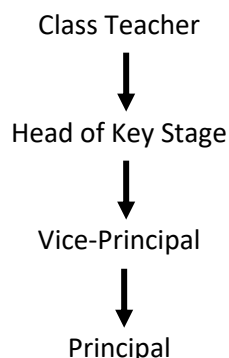
In Donegall Road Primary School we value the close collaboration with parents in all aspects of school life. We encourage parents to bring any areas of concern firstly to the class teacher's attention as soon as possible.

Should problems or misunderstandings arise, we will listen and work with parents. We would ask parents to support our pastoral care policies and procedures which have been developed after much consultation and on-going review with all members of our school community. The school will utilise the support and expertise of other agencies.

These include:

- Education Authority
- Educational Psychologists
- RISE NI
- Paediatric ASD Services
- Outreach Professionals
- Our School Nurse and Health Agencies
- NSPCC/ Barnardo's
- School Counselling Services
- Charitable Associations
- Board of Governors

To ensure a structured approach to the caring for all children we have developed the following structure.



Whilst the Class Teacher is identified as the key person in impacting on the care of children in their class, it is important that they work in co-operation with the Head of Key Stage, Vice-Principal and Principal for issues who will provide support i.e. leadership in the pastoral domain.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All individuals should recognise their responsibilities in implementing the Pastoral Care Policy.

Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behave respectfully and in a supportive manner to their peers. • Speak to a staff member about any concerns. • Report any suspected/witnessed instances of bullying. • Accept personal responsibility for their own behaviour.
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set an example of the behaviour we expect of our pupils. • Encourage children to take personal responsibility for their behaviour. • Be alert to any signs of distress and encourage their child to report these to a member of staff. • Maintain good communication links with the school by attending organised meetings and ensuring school know about any home issues which may impact the pupil. • Work in partnership with the school, respecting the sanctions imposed (in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy) to promote positive resolutions.
Non-Teaching, Support and Ancillary Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set an example of the behaviour we expect of our pupils. • Develop good relationships with pupils, in line with the Code of Conduct. • Be alert to signs of distress and encourage pupils to report these to a member of staff. • Listen to any children to come to them with a problem, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them. • Complete Accident Report Forms. • Report minor incidents to the class teacher. • Report any concerns of bullying, if suspected. • Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality.

Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set an example of the behaviour we expect of our pupils. • Develop good relationships with pupils, in line with the Code of Conduct. • Plan and deliver PDMU lessons using relevant themes and resources, as well as other appropriate material. • Help children achieve their potential by setting appropriate expectations, support and encouragement. • Encourage children to accept personal responsibility for their behaviour. • Be alert to signs of distress and encourage pupils to speak to an appropriate adult. • Listen to any children to come to them with a problem, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them. • Record minor incidents and behaviour incidents in the class behaviour log. • Follow procedures in Addressing Bullying Policy if bullying is suspected. • Maintain good communication with parents through meetings, reports and marking of children’s work. • Attend relevant training on Pastoral Care-related issues. • Be familiar with the school Pastoral Care Policy. • Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality.
SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster effective communication between school and home. • Raise awareness of and celebrate pupil achievement in school. • Promote positive behaviour. • Monitor bullying incidents and support the class teacher in dealing with incidents of bullying. • Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality. • Ensure school policies are implemented and reviewed as appropriate. • Consult with external agencies (where appropriate).
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend all relevant Pastoral Care-related training and disseminate to staff. • Ensure that the Pastoral Care policy is a living document which is communicated to the school community. • Facilitate regular monitoring and review of Pastoral Care procedures. • Foster effective communication between school and home. • Adhere to the school policy of confidentiality.

5. Key Areas of Responsibility relating to Pastoral Care

While all teachers and non-teaching staff in Donegall Road Primary School are committed to promoting and providing high levels of pastoral care, the following personnel have key roles and responsibilities throughout the school.

Mr. P. Massey: Principal, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Line Manager for Teaching & Support Staff.

Mr. D. Stringer: Vice-Principal, Head of Key Stage 2, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, (Acting ICT Co-ordinator 2024/2025), Line Manager for Classroom Assistants

Mrs. S. Wallace: Head of Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1, Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Charity Collections

Mrs. E. Clements: SENCo

Mrs. T. Ford: (Acting SENCo 2024/2025), Breakfast Club Co-ordinator

Mrs. G. Doak: RSE Co-ordinator

Mrs. J. Wilson: ICT Co-ordinator

Mrs. R. Johnston: PATHS/PDMU Co-ordinator

6. Supporting Policies

Whilst all policies and procedures within Donegall Road Primary School take cognisance of the pastoral care of children and staff, some support it in very specific areas.

Cross-referencing the following policies is essential in delivering the Pastoral Care Policy.

These policies include:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Online Safety
- Addressing Bullying
- Positive Behaviour
- Pastoral Care
- RSE
- SEN
- Safe Handling
- Intimate Care
- First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Drugs
- Attendance
- EOTAS provision
- Managing Critical Incidents
- Health and Safety
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection & GDPR
- Whistleblowing

7. Relationships

This area of Pastoral Care encompasses a very large section. It includes the nature of social relationships as well as teacher/pupil relationships, mutual respect, tolerance, approachability of the teacher and the good will and expectation of children.

In Donegall Road Primary School we aim to achieve a positive classroom climate, where teachers are seen to be fair and consistent in their approaches and are generous with praise and approval. The staff strive to cultivate an atmosphere of mutual respect. The self-confidence and self-esteem of children are promoted through their involvement in a variety of activities and outlets.

Staff provide an environment where children feel secure and are free from emotional and physical harm. There is a relaxed and respectful approach adopted by teachers in their teaching.

Please refer to the Staff Code of Conduct.

8. Confidentiality

Pastoral Care issues will be approached and dealt with sensitively and confidentially. Information will be shared on a need to know basis. We encourage parents to share concerns about home circumstances or medical matters which may affect their child's work or behaviour in school. Any information disclosed is treated as confidential.

9. Leaving School

Children must not leave the school grounds at any time during the school day. If this happens, the police will be contacted and then the parent/guardian phoned.

If a child needs to leave school early due to a medical appointment or for another urgent reason, you must inform the school office of this. You may phone the school or email on info@donegallroadps.belfast.ni.sch.uk. Children must be collected from school by a parent/guardian if they are leaving before the end of the school day. In the best interests of your child's education, medical or dental appointments should be made after school or during holidays where possible.

10. Child Welfare

When a child takes ill during school time, he/she informs the class teacher (or supervisor who informs class teacher). The teacher ascertains from the child symptoms the time when the child first felt unwell and decide the appropriate action required.

This may include:

- Child to sit in a quiet room away from noise and disturbance for a short time, in view of teacher.
- Child to take a drink of water etc. or leave classroom to use toilet etc.
- Monitoring the child for a time in classroom.
- Seeking the second opinion from other available staff members.
- Accompanying the child to the office and leave details with the Principal and/or office staff.

- The Principal or other member of staff will contact the child's parent if the child needs to go home.

In an emergency, a doctor will be contacted to attend school, or the child will be taken directly to doctor while parent is contacted as soon as possible.

11. Long-term Illness

When a child is absent from school on long-term illness, the Principal will keep in touch with the family, supported by other members of staff and the class teacher. The child's class will communicate, when appropriate, by sending cards, gifts, messages and letters. Where possible the child will be visited at home and/or in hospital with the permission of the family.

12. Personal/Home Circumstances

Where possible, parents are encouraged to liaise with the school regularly when a difficulty arises in the home which may have a direct effect on a child. Through this partnership, the child is helped to raise and discuss concerns on a one-to-one basis. The child develops a trust and confidence and becomes assured that a determined effort is being made to resolve their personal problem or concern.

Problems which may give rise to difficulties include:

- Marital difficulties
- Death within close family
- Traumatic experience e.g. car accident, burglary
- Illness in family
- Change in family circumstances e.g. move of house, new baby, care of elderly relative.

13. Reports and Record Keeping

Parents receive a written report in June and meet with the child's class teacher twice during the school year for a parent/teacher progress interview.

Records are kept by the class teacher of the progress of each child. Records relating specifically to the pastoral care of children are kept by the Safeguarding Team. Records relating to behaviour incidents are kept by the class teacher or by the Senior Leadership Team if they have dealt with the issue.

Seesaw is also used to communicate with parents on all issues regarding their child.

Records of those with Special Educational Needs, medical conditions and those who may need medication administered during the school day are kept by each individual teacher about their class.

14. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU)

A taught PDMU programme is delivered to all classes, primarily through the PATHS Programme, Circle Time and other curriculum areas. CCEA's Living, Learning Together resources are also used

where appropriate. It aims to empower children with knowledge, values, attitudes and skills required to make good choices in their life.

15. Pupil Responsibility System

The school has a well-established School Council and Eco-Council. The intention is to allow the children to be part of the decision-making process within the school.

16. Extra-Curricular Activities

The children in Donegall Road Primary School are given the opportunity at different stages to partake in extra-curricular activities. We value highly the benefits achieved in engaging in such a programme. They include:

- Sport: after school training and competitions
- Educational Trips
- Workshops and visits
- Choir
- Homework clubs

17. Parental Partnership

Donegall Road Primary School values very highly the contribution made by parents in the education of children. We see ourselves as partners in this venture. Mutual support and co-operation are essential elements in achieving our objectives.

On-going activities ensure parents are kept informed and up to date about developments in the school. Communication and parental involvement include:

- Friday News Sheet
- Letters
- Seesaw messages
- Social media posts
- Two parent/teacher meetings
- Annual progress report issued in June
- Prospectus
- Workshops
- Fundraising activities
- Sporting events
- Extra-curricular activities

18. Monitoring and Evaluation

On-going monitoring is an integral part of our policy. Checklists are drawn up and procedures are discussed at staff meetings to ensure that the policy is implemented as planned. Support is given to those teachers who require assistance in carrying out any aspect of their pastoral role.

Evaluation procedures are in place to discover ways of improving the quality of provision in the school for the benefit of all children and staff.

All aspects of the policy are evaluated on an on-going basis through the use of questionnaires, informal interviews and meetings. Whilst the Co-ordinator of Pastoral Care has overall responsibility for evaluation, self-evaluation is a feature of every teacher's role. This feedback forms the basis of our staff development programme each year.