



Gorran Primary School

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'The Perfect Start to Lifelong Learning'



Pastoral Care Policy

Gorran Primary School

Principal: Mr J Cleland

Designated Teacher: Mrs J Doey

Chairperson of Board of Governors: Mr Ian Gregg

Child Protection Governor: Mr W Campbell

October 2019

Signed: _____

Chair of the Board of Governors

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

Gorran Primary School

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

This document is based on “Every School a Good School”, and sets out our school’s policy and practice in relation to the care of pupils and the promotion of an environment where the welfare of every child is paramount. We aim create a caring, happy, secure, supportive and stimulating environment where children can develop socially, emotionally and physically at their own rate.

Definitions

Pastoral care is a set of systems and programmes in schools which attempts to meet the totality of its children’s needs – social, spiritual, mental, emotional and physical, so that every pupil has the opportunity, in a safe environment, to reach his/her potential in every area of his/her life and is equipped with the skills to cope with the outside world.

Ethos – At Gorran we provide a child-centred environment, which is safe, secure and based on Christian values. We value each child as an individual and seek to see him/her grow, develop and mature and reach his /her full potential. Within our school family we encourage the children to develop a sense of self-respect and self-discipline and expect them to show qualities of courtesy, good manners and consideration for others. We want all children to feel they have contributed to the life of the school, whether academically or in other ways. We value open communication between staff, pupils and parents. Parents are regularly informed of school activities and encouraged to support their child’s education and the life of the school. As a staff we get to know the children well as individuals and so can show sensitivity to their needs and nurture them in a positive way. We want the children’s schooldays at Gorran to be happy and memorable and trust that the good foundations laid at Gorran will remain with them through life.

Relationships

The ethos of our school is created and sustained by positive relationships among staff and pupils in formal and informal situations. We aim to generate a positive climate within the school community where every individual feels cared for at all times. These relationships will be fostered through - good relationships between staff, children’s respect for teachers, each other, themselves and members of the outside community.

Child Centred Provision

At Gorran Primary School we aim to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school by keeping the pupils’ interests and welfare as the main focus. Classroom activities are planned so that pupils are taught to work with their peers and so that they grow to value and respect the contributions and views of others. Positive approaches to discipline are employed to maintain good standards of behaviour.

We promote equality of opportunity, high quality learning, and a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity. The school adheres to the UNCRC Principles and Articles. The admissions information of the school states that Gorran Primary School will accept all pupils regardless of religious or political persuasions or ethnic origin provided that their parents are supportive of the school’s aims, rules and management procedures. Newcomers are welcomed into the school environment with every opportunity being taken to meet their educational, social and emotional needs.

We seek to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning by promoting good attendance at all times and by adopting a positive approach to discipline to

encourage appropriate behaviour both inside and outside the classroom. Children with special educational needs have Education Plans prepared for them by class teachers and these are co-ordinated by the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

We believe in and support pupil participation and involvement in decisions about school life. We do this through promoting Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children which are as follows:

Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child):When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account. This does not mean that children can now tell their parents what to do. This Convention encourages adults to listen to the opinions of children and involve them in decision-making -- not give children authority over adults. Article 12 does not interfere with parents' right and responsibility to express their views on matters affecting their children. Moreover, the Convention recognizes that the level of a child's participation in decisions must be appropriate to the child's level of maturity. Children's ability to form and express their opinions develops with age and most adults will naturally give the views of teenagers' greater weight than those of a pre-schooler, whether in family, legal or administrative decisions.

Article 13 (Freedom of expression):Children have the right to get and share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others. In exercising the right to freedom of expression, children have the responsibility to also respect the rights, freedoms and reputations of others. The freedom of expression includes the right to share information in any way they choose, including by talking, drawing or writing.

Children are encouraged to offer their thoughts and opinions in Circle Time, class meetings, ECO Committee and through the School Council. To facilitate children's involvement in school life all adults at Gorran Primary School strive to adhere to the School Rules – Ready, Respect and Safe

We realise the big step it is for many children making the transition from primary to secondary school. There is always full co-operation with each of the secondary schools that children may choose and all relevant information is passed to the next school.

The school follows its Child Protection Policy and all relevant DE circulars. Children know about keeping safe and posters are in place around the school highlighting who children can talk to if they have a problem. Internet Safety and anti-bullying are part of teachers' curricular planning and children are made aware of how to keep themselves safe in many different situations. Staff are trained in Child Protection on a bi-annual basis and this includes all teaching and non-teaching personnel. Parents receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy when their child starts school and all parents receive a copy when it is reviewed bi-annually. Volunteers in school are Access NI checked and parent driver volunteers are also Access NI checked.

We support children in making healthy choices and through the provision of a healthy environment. We try to ensure that staff have received appropriate First Aid training and health and safety is a main priority at all times both inside and outside school. Healthy food is encouraged and the school follows the healthy breaks initiative. The school's outdoor facilities are excellent and full use is made of the grounds and outdoor play equipment. PE is timetabled and all aspects of the physical development curriculum are covered in these lessons with good use made of outside agencies and specialists when possible. After school activities also focus on getting children actively involved in a wide range of physical activities.

High Quality Teaching and Learning

We provide a broad and relevant curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils. PDMU is timetabled in each classroom and includes Drugs Education and RSE where appropriate. RE and PE lessons also play an important part in promoting pastoral care within the curriculum. Specific programmes relating to health and well-being are also utilised e.g. Heartstart and Cycling Proficiency.

We promote positive relationships between teachers and their pupils and with other school-based staff through promoting good relationships in class. Rewards are used to celebrate and promote positive behaviour. Playground supervisors and staff work together to ensure that children play fairly and safely at all times. A Staff Code of Conduct exists to safeguard children at all times.

Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils through the use of staff planning and staff meetings. Monitoring arrangements are in place relating to teaching and learning and these focus on pupil progress and achievements taking into account all factors e.g. SEN, home circumstances etc. Classroom observation will take place to assess pupils' personal development and behaviour with class teachers taking into careful consideration pastoral issues where pupil performance is not meeting expectations e.g. falling standardised scores or below expectations in progress tracking grids.

Effective Leadership

Governors understand their responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils. They do this by monitoring and evaluating the strategies in place for promoting pastoral care, health, well-being and attendance contained in the School Development Plan, including consulting with the School Council, pupils and parents if and when necessary. They attend Child Protection training as necessary and realise the importance of this role. In addition, they monitor the reporting of behaviour, suspension and expulsion when such occasions arise.

In relation to pastoral care we support the professional development of staff and sharing and learning from best practice by planning for training in pastoral matters in school using outside agencies when available or through the sharing of staff expertise on planned development days or in staff meetings. Teachers may also attend additional training e.g. Heartstart, RISE etc. and good practice is then shared with colleagues.

We provide the resources needed to support pastoral care through:

- effective staff deployment – specialist roles (see Appendix 2);
- classroom resources;
- play resources and facilities; and using
- posters for external resources e.g. ChildLine.

We monitor and evaluate our pastoral care practices in a number of ways through:

- reviewing the school's performance regularly in preparation of the School Development Plan;
- using school data for attendance, school meals etc.;
- examples of plenary sessions and pupil feedback to teachers about teaching and learning with links to AfL and other areas of school life such as play and after school activities;

- seeking the opinion of the School Council if deemed to be necessary or appropriate and
- using questionnaires for pupils or parents.

A School Connected to its Local Community

Good relationships and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community are crucial to our pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. These are developed by parents being made welcome in the school right from the moment they enter the reception area. There are celebrations of work and achievement in weekly assemblies. Parents feel free to raise concerns regarding any problems that have been raised with teachers and staff endeavour to get back to parents as soon as possible. This may be through a phone call or by organising an individual meeting with the concerned parent. When particular problems arise e.g. with regard to behaviour and attendance parents are spoken to about the school's concerns and staff work alongside parents where possible to meet the needs of individual children. **A Complaints Procedure forms part of the Child Protection Policy if parents feel that they need to pursue a formal complaints approach.**

The PTA plays an important part in the life of the school seeking to provide much needed resources for the school to enhance the education already being provided.

A wide range of school documents is available on the school website to keep parents informed and up to date of all activities and developments. A weekly newsletter is sent to parents outlining past events and the calendar of activities for the week ahead. This is also available on the website.

Reporting to parents about their child's personal development takes place formally twice a year at parent teacher interviews and informally as and when the need arises. Written reports are provided in June each year.

There is community input into school life on matters related to health, wellbeing, identity and community issues through visits from outside agencies e.g. School Nurse, PSNI, Dairy Council, RNLI etc. and through educational visits e.g. Street-Wise. The school choir sings at local old peoples homes. The school has taken part in the big spring clean in Garvagh Forest. We are involved in the Forest schools programme.

Strong links exist between our school and St Columba's, with children involved in joint projects whenever the opportunity arises.

We have good links with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies that support pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement. These are Dental services, School Nurse, Medical staff, Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy etc. RISE also provides support and we work closely with Social Services and PSNI/Child Protection when the need arises.

The school is involved in specific programmes that meet the needs of the community and nearby schools. These include transition events for children moving from pre-school into P1 e.g. Open Night, Beep beep day, Induction morning, etc. The school also works closely with secondary schools by attending special events and taster days to make the transition from primary to secondary education as smooth as possible.