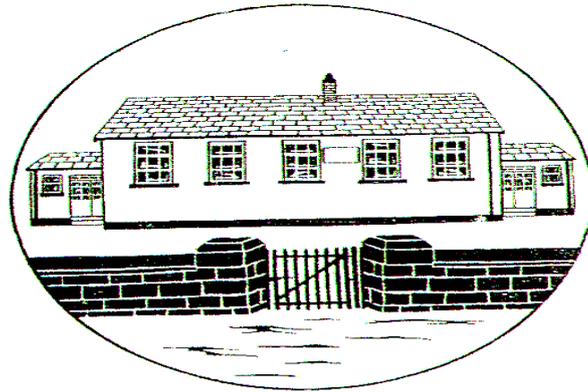




# **Creavery Primary School**



# **Pastoral Care Overview Policy**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Pastoral Care deals with guidance given in a social context and dealing with wide ranging issues such as counselling, discipline strategies, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Parental Support, Community involvement as well as teaching and learning experiences within the classroom.

### **Rationale**

In today's modern world, it is vital that we prepare the school community to cope with the increasing pressures of living in the twenty-first century. Our school is aware that possible changes in the home backgrounds of our pupils and the ever-changing attitudes and influences of society need to be addressed in order to maximise learning.

### **Definitions**

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

### **Aims:**

The over all aim of pastoral care within Creavery Primary School is "to ensure wholesome, all-round development: children who are contented, socially at ease and educationally thriving."  
*(NAPCE conference)*

The starting point has to be vigilance on the part of ALL staff to be aware of social issues which may arise within our school community.

## **SPECIFIC ISSUES**

### **Ethos, Relationships and Values:**

"The ethos and atmosphere of a school reflects the extent to which a school promotes the moral, intellectual, personal and social development of its pupils. A good ethos is achieved by the principal and staff promoting and facilitating an atmosphere of care and respect within the formal and informal life of the school community." (*Evaluating Pastoral Care, DE*)

At Creavery Primary School the whole staff approaches the care of our children in a positive way, reinforcing the Christian philosophy and the caring ethos of the school. We ensure good relationships and communication between all elements of the school community including parents, while following the school's positive behaviour policy.

We cannot underestimate the importance of good relationships within the school;

- relationships between staff and pupils,
- between staff and parents,
- between pupils,
- between members of the staff,
- self-awareness,
- between the school and the wider community,

to facilitate high morale, self-respect, self-discipline, tolerance, honesty, equality, fairness and conscientiousness because a positive environment where every individual feels valued and cared for is the desired outcome.

The promotion of positive values and beliefs will permeate all teaching and learning experiences throughout the school while encouraging the children to acquire the confidence to make moral judgements, develop self-esteem and acceptable behaviour.

### **Self-Esteem:**

We actively promote self-esteem in all our staff and pupils within an environment of tolerance and respect for all. Our school places strong emphasis on the individuality of each person. Everyone is encouraged to be positive and supportive in his or her approach towards people who may seem 'different' through ability, disability, physical appearance, creed, colour or culture.

## **Personal Safety:**

Pupils will be encouraged to be responsible for his/her own safety e.g.

- saying 'no' to people when they are afraid or unhappy,
- safety in the water,
- on the road,
- in the sun
- at the farm
- knowing that not all adults, secrets and touch are good.

They will be given the opportunity to develop the confidence to recognise and deal with difficult or dangerous situations, knowing where to find help.

All our children are encouraged to talk freely and openly to any member of staff if they have worries or problems of any kind on a work or personal level. Staff respond to children in a sympathetic and concerned way, offering advice, support, guidance and reassurance.

Minor difficulties, worries or concerns involving any child which arise within the classroom or playground are dealt with by the class teacher or the member of staff on duty. More serious incidents may be referred to the Principal.

A child's parents or guardians may be contacted if it is felt necessary to involve them in dealing with a particular situation. This is usually carried out by means of personal contact when a child is collected from school or by a telephone call or letter.

The teachers' well being is also to be considered. Staff are made aware of developments through in-service training, staff meetings and the Monday memo. They support each other through strong, working relationships and can approach the Principal and designated teacher where necessary. Also through Liaison meetings.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

The Board of Governors, teachers, non-teaching staff and other adult helpers are encouraged to approach the care of our children in a positive and supportive manner including the use of positive language, praise and reward to reinforce acceptable behaviour according to the philosophy and ethos of the school.

- The Board of Governors must ensure that a pastoral care policy is available and adhered to by all staff.
  
- The Principal will bring pastoral care issues to the attention of the staff through staff development meetings, in-service training and by giving this area greater priority in school development plans.
  
- The Principal will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and will provide access to teaching resources dealing with personal safety and pastoral care issues.
  
- Teachers can contribute to pastoral care by ensuring the welfare of pupils;
  - by encouraging them to make informed decisions in terms of 'right' and 'wrong',
  - to be assertive (but not aggressive) against peer pressure,
  - to be sensitive to the beliefs of others,
  - to celebrate success through positive reinforcement such as praise and reward,
  - avoiding the use of negative language, sarcasm, humiliation etc.
  
- Parents have a role to play in keeping the school updated of any worries, difficulties or upsets which may affect their child's behaviour, health or general welfare.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Parents are welcome to contact any member of staff if they have any concerns or worries, which need to be raised and addressed. We encourage parents to share concerns in home circumstances and medical matters which may affect their child's work or behaviour in school. Any discussions are held in confidence if desired or necessary and will usually occur at a pre-arranged time which is mutually convenient to teachers and parents.

Parents are also, given the opportunity to raise such issues at annual interviews with their child's teacher. Written feedback concerning behavioural matters will be included in our annual school reports.

Similarly, pupils are encouraged to identify any problems at an early stage and all staff should provide a "listening ear" as appropriate.

The policy will be kept under review and changes will be implemented following discussions of issues raised within staff meetings and further guidance from Education Authority.

### **Staff Training:**

Staff will be kept updated and informed about developments in pastoral care through internal and external training. Pastoral care issues will have a raised profile in our school development plans.

### **Resources:**

Resources required to help in the implementation of all areas of pastoral care will be acquired in line with future school development plans and will be updated on a regular basis.

### **Induction:**

Their class teacher will initiate new pupils into school life gradually and sensitively.

*P.1 pupils will have the opportunity to attend an induction afternoon and picnic prior to their first official day at Creavery Primary School. Information will be provided to parents to answer any queries they might have. They also have the opportunity to join in P1/P2 activities such as Autumn Walk, Scavenger Hunt.*

### **Supervision:**

Our children are supervised between the hours of 09:00 and 15:00. Since staff do not commence their morning playground duty until this time, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is cared for prior to this.

No child will remain in the classroom, resource areas, cloakrooms, toilets or other areas of the school building during break times or lunch times without adult supervision.

On wet days, children will be supervised by teachers and classroom assistants during break and by auxiliary staff at lunchtimes.

Supervision continues throughout the school day and during periods of extra-curricular activity such as football club, cycling proficiency, Christmas crafts, etc.. All pupils should have left the school building by 16:05 and are the responsibility of parents once they have left the school grounds.

Security measures are in place to ensure that access to the main school building is restricted during class time.

Parents are encouraged to collect their children from school at the end of each school day in order to minimise the potential for incidents or accidents on their way home.

### **Range of Pastoral Activities:**

- Positive behaviour strategies e.g. class/ individual reward systems, Circle Time and special assemblies, praise, sanctions where appropriate,
- Appreciation of children's written work in line with our marking policy,
- Celebration of achievement on display throughout the school, assemblies, concerts and also publicity in local newspapers etc. as and when appropriate,
- Thoughtful induction of P.1 pupils,
- Attendance at community events,
- Outside speakers visiting school,
- External visits e.g. educational day visits
- Circle Time and other opportunities for communication and group work within class,
- Social opportunities through PTA events.
- After / during-school activities e.g. Cycling Proficiency, Football Teams, public speaking, etc
- Distribution of parents' Newsletters and Staff Bulletins