

**St. John the Baptist Primary School**

**Bunscoil Eoin Baiste**



**Pastoral Care Policy**

## **Mission Statement**

St. John the Baptist Primary School, Bunscoil Eoin Baiste is at the heart of the community. We are a happy, welcoming, caring, respectful and inclusive learning community. We are proud to be driven by Catholic Ethos and accepting of diversity, in which every member of our school family can grow, learn and excel in a safe environment becoming valued members of society. We strive to encourage, educate and nurture our children while focusing on them, their health and well-being and the curriculum.

An effective Pastoral Care system is required as a result of the rapid changes which are taking place in society. Children require all the skills necessary to deal with the rising pressures of media, family, education and peer pressure that they encounter in their daily lives. Effective Pastoral Care should contribute to the creation of a supportive atmosphere for the whole school community.

## **Definition**

Pastoral Care is composed of different policies, programmes and procedures which encourage each individual child to develop their full potential by catering for their spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual, physical and social needs in a safe and secure environment. Each child will be encouraged to develop personal, social and academic skills to prepare them to become independent life-long learners.

## **Aims**

We at St. John the Baptist Primary School aim:

1. To ensure that each pupil feels valued, special and unique and a member of the school community.
2. To instil a sense of personal worth and dignity through intellectual, moral and spiritual development.
3. To empower pupils in building and monitoring good relationships with pupils, teachers and others.
4. To assist individuals to develop their lifestyles, appreciate life and respect the world in which they live.
5. To encourage a sense of personal accountability for their own learning and actions.

## **SPECIFIC ISSUES**

### **Ethos**

In St. John the Baptist we promote an atmosphere of mutual respect, inclusivity and cooperation which contributes to the learning process and generates a positive climate within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for.

## **Relationships**

Many people are interacting daily within our school and consequently a wide range of relationships exist. As a school we will endeavour to promote positive, open relationships in both formal and informal situations.

The school recognises that regular, effective communication is crucial in Pastoral Care and positive relationships will be promoted between:

- ④ Board of Governors – School
- ④ Principal – Staff, Pupils and Parents.
- ④ Staff – Staff
- ④ Staff – Pupils
- ④ Pupils – Pupils
- ④ School – Parents
- ④ School - External Agencies/Community

## **The experience of Pastoral Care for All our Children**

The adult school personnel will:

- ④ Encourage respect for self and others
- ④ Promote courteous behaviour to everyone
- ④ Develop positive relationships among peers and adults
- ④ Be consistent and fair so that children will feel secure and know the parameters within which they must behave
- ④ Be an instrument for advice and guidance
- ④ Be a support in times of difficulty
- ④ Accept and empathise with the unique experience of each child

## **For our Staff**

All staff will be accorded consideration and respect at all times:

- ④ Respect for their individual dignity
- ④ A supportive affirming community of fellow workers
- ④ Opportunities to develop personally and professionally
- ④ An understanding of their weaknesses
- ④ A sharing of strengths and talents

## **For our Parents/Guardians**

Our parents/guardians will:

- ④ Be involved fully in the pastoral care of the school community
- ④ Enjoy positive relationships with all school personnel
- ④ Be made aware of the arrangements whereby they may meet with staff – via an appointment made through the office
- ④ Be confident of a welcoming spirit and mutual support
- ④ Be partners with staff

## Values

At St. John the Baptist Primary School, we aim to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school through working together as a team. The emphasis at all times is on a positive approach by all in our school community, both teaching and non-teaching, reinforcing our Catholic ethos and ensuring our pupils reach their full potential. Every opportunity will be taken to praise our pupils for their contributions to the life of the school.

A special Celebration Assembly is held once a month at which 'Star of the Month' is awarded to a child in each class. Their photos are also displayed and published on our school website. The winning House Team, Accelerated Reading Awards and other achievements are also acknowledged and a range of pupil successes highlighted on noticeboards throughout the school.

We support children to make healthy choices. This is achieved through the provision of a healthy environment. In addition to regular P.E. lessons, we also provide a wide range of physical activities including gaelic, Healthy Kidz, soccer, swimming, running and cycling.

We believe in and support pupil participation and involvement in decisions about school life. We do this through the appointment of children to many roles such as School Council, Eco Council, Peer Mentors, Playground Friend Leaders, Library Monitors and House Captains/Vice Captains. Team spirit is also encouraged through the use of our House System as an integral part of our Positive Behaviour Policy.

We aim to communicate the following positive values and beliefs:

-  Respect
-  Honesty
-  Tolerance
-  Kindness
-  Friendship
-  Co-operation
-  Inclusion
-  Positive behaviour
-  Forgiveness

## Self-Esteem

St. John the Baptist Primary School recognises that the most important aspect of education is the 'wholeness' of the child. As a school we will encourage children to think positively about themselves and to accept their own individuality. We believe that when a child's self-esteem is boosted, they feel valued in all aspects of school life.

The school will aim to actively encourage positive self-esteem and confidence as these promote learning. Pupils will be involved in a range of activities so that all can experience success.

## Personal Safety

Childhood is a time of joy and discovery when children should be nurtured and loved so they can grow into caring adults. Part of this process of discovery and growth must also help children learn how to cope with potential dangers. The safe use of technology is an increasing challenge

e.g. internet and mobile phones. We at St. John the Baptist aim to equip children with the knowledge and skills to make them less vulnerable and more self-confident.

### **Home/School Partnership**

- ④ School should be seen as an extension of the family.
- ④ School and home should be committed to a common ideal, namely the holistic development of each individual.
- ④ Adults at home and in school will be a positive role model for our children by working to the same end and displaying respect for each other at all times.
- ④ Links with other schools will be fostered to ensure the easy induction of our Primary 1 children and the transition of our Primary 7 children to second level education.
- ④ We will have strong links with our Shared Education School – Edenderry P.S and both staff will work together to promote an inclusive partnership.

### **The 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. Our aim will be to foster in our children an awareness of the wider community:

- ④ We will involve children in the support of charities and care for others
- ④ We will encourage participation in community activities  
For example:
  - Drumcree Parish church activities
  - Cultural /Artistic activities such as Portadown Festival, Newry and Dungannon Feis, Portadown Rotary Events
  - Sporting activities such as Cumann na Bunscoil, the Brownlow Cup, St. John the Baptist's College Tournament, Cross Country Running events etc.

Our children will add to the life of the community by:

- ④ Reading and participating at Mass
- ④ Presenting a Christmas Carol Service in St. John The Baptist Church
- ④ Entertaining shoppers in Rushmere Shopping Centre and Tesco's at Christmas with carols
- ④ Trading products in Asda through the Young Enterprise Programme

### **Personal Development**

Personal Development will be taught through the delivery of Religious Education, P.D.M.U. and Pastoral Care provision. We have excellent relationships and communication between the school and the education agencies that support pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement, namely RISE Team, Behaviour Support Team, Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Service, Education and Welfare Services, Social Services and Counselling Services. Groups/Speakers etc. dealing with Pastoral Care issues such as

Bullying, Respecting Diversity, Mental Health will be invited in to school. We participate annually in the celebration of Anti-Bullying Week and Catholic Schools' Week.

## **Discipline**

Our Pastoral Care Policy will enhance discipline by promoting:

- ④ RESPECT FOR SELF AND OTHERS
- ④ TOLERANCE
- ④ SELF DISCIPLINE

## **Implementation**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- ④ The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for Pastoral Care in the school.
- ④ The Principal has overall responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care and fostering positive relationships. In addition, he will review and update the policy, inform and liaise with parents and initiate and ensure Pastoral Care is forefront in the School's Development Plan.
- ④ Teachers have responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care by:
  - Helping children to make informed decisions
  - Celebrating success
  - Building children's self-esteem
  - Encouraging assertiveness
  - Encouraging sensitivity
  - Developing effective communication

Teachers develop and acquire knowledge of pupils as individuals and take an interest in their all-round development. We seek to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning by providing a differentiated curriculum and when and where necessary, seeking advice and support both within school and from outside agencies. Support staff will contribute to the promotion of Pastoral Care consistent with our policy.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

To ensure the Pastoral Care Policy is working effectively in our school, the policy procedures and practice will be kept under review. We value the contribution that can be made by our teachers, parents and pupils to effect the appropriate change when necessary.

This will be achieved by:

- ④ Listening to staff and pupils' concerns and acting on them
- ④ Parents being encouraged to inform the school immediately if they have any concerns
- ④ Parent/Teacher Interview meetings

- 🏠 Staff and Board of Governors meetings
- 🏠 S.E.N. Review meetings
- 🏠 Induction Days
- 🏠 Information Evenings

## **Staff Training**

Training will be updated in relation to policies, procedures and pastoral issues and staff will be informed of Department of Education changes. Support staff will be updated on policies and procedures by the Principal/Vice-Principal. Staff will attend relevant courses provided by the Education Authority and external agencies. "Baker Days" and directed time will be used for training as required.

## **Resourcing**

Pastoral Care encompasses all areas of school life and is important in the development of the 'whole' child. To ensure the implementation of the policy:

- 🏠 Relevant resources will be purchased for use in class
- 🏠 Time is allocated for review, training and implementation of change
- 🏠 Pastoral Care is part of the School Development Plan
- 🏠 The Board of Governors and Principal ensure the maintenance of the school environment

## **Supervision**

School starts at 8.45am. In the morning children from Foundation Stage and Key Stage One assemble in the front yard while Key Stage Two pupils assemble in the back playground. Rang 1/2 pupils wait in the immediate area outside their classroom. Parents should be aware that there will be no supervision in either playground prior to 8.45am. Classroom assistants and duty teachers will supervise the pupils at break time. Supervisory assistants will supervise the pupils at lunchtime.

After school, parents/carers will collect P1 - P3/R1 - 3 pupils from the front yard at 2.00pm. If pupils are not collected they will be brought back to the school office and supervised until a "named" collector can be contacted.

If a parent requires their child to leave school during the day, the teacher or school office should be informed in writing or by telephone and the child collected from the school office at the appropriate time. The parent will be required to fill in the 'sign out' form.

## **Induction**

### **Primary One**

In St. John the Baptist Primary School we recognise that coming to school for the first time is a very important and emotional step for parents and children alike. To assist in this transition, P.1 children and their parents are invited to attend an Induction meeting in June prior to starting school in September. They are given a welcome pack which contains all relevant information.

## **New Pupils**

Parents of children transferring to St John the Baptist are given an appointment during which they will meet the Principal/Vice-Principal. As part of the induction process they will receive a tour of the school and have an opportunity to meet their child's new teacher. A welcome pack with information pertaining to the school is also provided.

## **School Trips**

The Health and Safety Provision for children participating in School Trips is of the utmost importance. Guidelines from EA will be adhered to.




## **Medication**

The Principal and Staff are committed to supporting pupils with specific Medication Needs. Department of Education Guidelines will be adhered to in regard to the administration of medicine.

## **Charities**

Statement of Raising funds for Charities

### **Aims**

-  To encourage a spirit of generosity and care for others
-  To encourage children to think of others
-  To give children a practical way of expressing Christian charity

### **Strategy**

We will have one major appeal per term. Other incidental charitable causes may also be supported.

We will try to have a balanced approach between a local charity, a third world charity and one other. The other may be the result of an outside agency approaching school or may be in response to an emergency or crisis situation e.g. a famine, or a charity suggested by a member of staff or parent.

The selection of the charity for our third appeal of the year will be made on a whole staff basis early in the third term.

### **Plan for Charitable Collections**

Term 1: Portadown Carers/SVDP/Mary's Meals

Term 2: Trocaire

Term 3: Bluebell Trust