



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Policy Date: May 2025

Pastoral care is concerned with promoting pupils' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes: through the school ethos; through the nature of relationships amongst pupils, teachers, parents and others; through the quality of teaching and learning; through arrangements for monitoring pupils' overall progress, academic, personal and social; through specific pastoral structures and support systems and through extra-curricular activities.

Milltown Primary School seeks to provide a warm and caring environment in the school so that each person, both child and adult, associated with the school, can feel safe, secure, happy, supported and valued.

The school environment will ideally provide opportunities for the development of the child's academic, social, emotional and physical needs. The academic aspects of each child's development will be dealt with in each subject policy statement.

AIMS

Pastoral care in Milltown Primary School encompasses and pervades the whole life and work of the school in which:

- All the pupils and all the staff feel valued as individuals, feel safe and secure and are encouraged to develop their interests, gifts and talents.
- The staff work well together, as an effective team, keeping the pupils' interests and wellbeing as their focus.
- There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils and among pupils within and outside the classroom.
- The pupils are secure and are protected from emotional and physical harm.
- The pupils' opinions are valued and their worries and concerns are dealt with sympathetically and appropriately.
- The self-esteem of the pupils is promoted and they have opportunities to develop independence of thought and expression.

- The pupils are taught to work with their peers and to value and respect the opinions of others.
- Parents are closely involved in and knowledgeable about the life and work of the school
- The school strives to promote and sustain good and high standards of behaviour which reflect an appropriate balance between rewards and consequences. Disciplinary procedures are implemented consistently by all staff in a fair and positive manner

STRUCTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of staff have responsibility for the general welfare of pupils. Regular training and updates of this policy will be carried out involving all staff.

A formal pastoral structure exists to care for pupils in particular ways:

Class Teachers

The class teacher should have;

Detailed knowledge of the needs, aspirations, interests and academic progress of each pupil in the class. With this knowledge, the teacher can integrate the work of the school, parents and others to support the learning and development of each pupil (NICC 1990)

The ways in which pupils work with each other and with teachers can have an important bearing on their personal, social and academic development.

Class teachers should:

- Ensure that learning is carried out in a happy atmosphere within the classroom where each pupil is treated as an important individual
- Foster an ethos of assisting, listening and caring for one another
- Employ a range of teaching strategies in response to pupils' needs
- Give pupils responsibility for a large part of their own learning
- Stretch pupils through appropriate and challenging tasks
- Integrate pupils with Special Educational Needs as far as possible

- Provide reassurance and build confidence
- Encourage pupil motivation and commitment
- Promote a sense of achievement through praise, recognition and displays of children's work
- Be responsible for standards of behaviour in their own class in accordance with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy
- Be responsible for standards of attainment, punctuality, attendance and dress within their own class
- Ensure that knowledge of particular home circumstances influences their attitudes, expectations and actions and be responsible for passing on relevant information to the next teacher
- Liaise with the Principal, SENCo, Designated Teacher for Child Protection (or Deputies) as appropriate

For **teachers** this means:

- Promoting a caring environment where learning and teaching is developed within the context of their individual needs and abilities
- Seeking where appropriate, the co-operation of outside agencies
- Regularly monitoring, evaluating and reviewing all aspects of pastoral provision

Pastoral responsibilities will be carried out more effectively when appropriate and continuing staff development is provided for teachers who need to feel that they are valued and that help, support and training are available to them. In particular, they need to have:

- Opportunities for training and professional development. This may be in the form of school-based courses, courses organised by Education Authority or other establishments
- Appropriate leadership, co-ordination and motivation
- Clear job description, sensitive appraisal and feedback
- Appropriate resources and facilities
- Opportunities to be involved in consultation, planning and evaluation
- Opportunities to participate in corporate activities and to feel valued as members of the team

For **other adults** associated with the school this means:

- Having an understanding and empathy with the general ethos and aims of the school
- Being partners with the teachers in providing a caring approach

PASTORAL CARE COORDINATOR

Mrs Wright is responsible for coordinating pastoral care throughout the school. This will include:

- Liaison with teachers, parents and external support agencies
- Attending relevant training and disseminating the information appropriately
- Co-ordinating the provision of school-based training
- Consulting with Mrs Hanvey, Mrs Wilson and Mrs Johnston the Deputy Designated teachers for Child Protection

All members of staff will make every effort to achieve the aims of the Pastoral Care Policy by:

- Assisting Mrs Wright in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy
- By making every effort to ensure the policy receives support from pupils, parents and outside agencies
- Developing ways to find out attitudes and concerns of parents
- Ensuring there is provision for all areas of pastoral care in the curriculum which takes account of the individual child

MAIN COMPONENTS OF PASTORAL CARE

Some of the main features and components of pastoral care provision and practice in the school are set out under the following headings.

1. Child Protection Procedures

This component of pastoral care refers to our school policies that aim to protect the children from physical and emotional harm, from neglect and from any form of abuse. It also deals with the need for the school to ensure that the curriculum includes a programme for pupils on self-protection.

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Training for staff and designated governors in Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Children know about keeping safe through the information noticeboards with photographs of designated teachers and safeguarding team

- Information / resources given to children about internet safety, anti-bullying, Stranger Danger, Childline etc.
- All parents have access to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and summary leaflet on the school website at www.milltownprimaryschool.co.uk . Hard copies are available on request from the school office.
- Annual inspection of school site.
- All visitors sign Visitors' Book on arrival and departure.
- Access NI checks are completed on all staff, coaches, volunteers and parental supervisors as required.

2. The Teaching and Learning Environment

Teachers strive to nurture and develop harmonious relations among the pupils within and outside the classroom.

This encompasses mutual respect, tolerance, the approachability of teachers, the growth of pupils, and the expectations that each bring to the school situation.

Pupils have a sense of security and are free from emotional and physical harm. Teachers are fair, consistent and compassionate in their approaches to pupils. This is demonstrated by:

- Delivering the curriculum using a range of teaching strategies differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils
- Focusing on physical wellbeing through Healthy Eating, P.E., Outdoor Learning/resources, Road Safety, First Aid, Cycling Proficiency, Heart Start, Swimming lessons, extra-curricular provision
- Focusing on emotional wellbeing through PDMU, PATHS, Healthy Happy Minds, certificates, trophies, rewards and the hidden curriculum
- Focusing on social development in working with others in pairs, group and team situations and taking responsibility for jobs/activities within school
- Effective Special Educational Needs provision
- Sustaining high achievers
- Supportive transition arrangements - pre-school, class movement, post primary
- Inclusive environment for new pupils
- Strengthening the pupil voice - defining classroom rules, setting targets, making choices, contributing to school development, Eco Council
- The implementation of the Positive Behaviour Policy
- The implementation of the Staff Code of Conduct
- Assemblies
- A Worry Box in each classroom
- A tidy, clean, safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment

3. Partnership and Consultation with Parents

This aspect of pastoral care refers to the school's arrangements for keeping parents informed and up to date about their children's progress, about developments in school and supporting transition.

- Data capture forms
- Parental Consultations/Surveys
- Parental Interviews
- Special Educational Needs Meetings/Annual Reviews
- Annual Report
- Newsletters
- Text messaging system
- School website and Facebook Page
- Seesaw
- Emailing principal
- Regular parental communication promoted
- Implementation of Transition Policy - Pre-school to P1, from class to class within the school and from Primary 7 to post-primary education
 - Parent Teacher Association
 - School events
 - Promotion of programmes to support parents as partners in their child's education

4. Partnership and consultation with the wider community

This aspect of pastoral care refers to the opportunities the school provides for learning, social activity and support from the wider community.

- Fostering links with pre-school and post-primary providers
- Aspire Shared Education Partner Schools
- Community input to school life - e.g. PSNI, NI Fire and Rescue Service
- Education Authority/External Support Services e.g. Psychology, Speech Therapy
- Outside organisations - Bee Active, LLTCA
- Support of local charities

Supporting Policies and Curriculum

While all policies and procedures within the school take cognisance of the pastoral care of pupils and staff, the following have been developed with particular regard to the care and support of the school community. These policies include:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- E-safety Policy
- Loss and Bereavement
- Transition Policy
- SEN Policy

- Relationships and Sexuality Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force
- First Aid Policy
- Risk Assessments

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy is kept under review and updated as necessary to improve the quality of provision for the benefit of all members of the school community.