

# Pastoral Care Policy



## Thornfield House School

8-12 Jordanstown Road

Newtownabbey

Co Antrim

Bt37 0QF

Tel: 028 9085 1089

Fax: 0289086 5543

Website: [www.thornfieldhousesch.co.uk](http://www.thornfieldhousesch.co.uk)

Ratified by the Board of Governors signed: \_\_\_\_\_

date: \_\_\_\_\_

To be reviewed: October 2023

This document is based on Every School a Good School (DE 2009) and sets out our school's policy and practice in relation to the care of pupils and the promotion of an environment where pupils and staff work in caring, safe, friendly and secure yet challenging environment.

### **Child centred provision**

At Thornfield House School we aim to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school by focusing on the development of the whole child.

We promote equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity. We feel that the most effective way of addressing the difficulties our pupils experience is by working together as a team with parents and professionals all striving for the same goals.

We seek to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning by striving to ensure that every pupil experiences success and realises their full potential.

We promote equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity. The school provides a confidential counselling service available to all pupils.

We seek to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning by

- Promoting good attendance as documented in the attendance policy.
- Promoting positive behaviour as documented in the positive behaviour policy.
- Welcoming all children from all backgrounds and cultures and respecting differences while encouraging all children to feel as if they are valued members of the group.
- Providing for each child's SEN where we can and seeking multi-disciplinary advice and intervention when needed. All of our children have an individual education plan (IEP) and all of the children either have a statement of

special educational need in place or are awaiting assessment for Educational Psychology. Current advice from Educational Psychology is taken into consideration when writing up the IEP.

- Working closely with the Speech and Language Therapy team in school.

We believe in and support pupil participation and involvement in decisions about school life. We do this through

- PDMU lessons in the Primary Department of the school and through Learning for Life and Work in the Post Primary Department as part of the curriculum.
- A School Council with representatives from p5 -yr 12 that meets regularly to discuss issues that have been suggested by their peers.
- Feedback from pupils about Pastoral Promises (Appendix 3) via the school council.
- Plenary sessions in class which reflect on the learning and the process of learning.
- Opinion surveys such as opinions about how the school formal will be conducted.

We

- Prepare the children who will transition from the primary department into the post primary department to allow a smooth transition.
- Prepare the children transitioning from and to another school (both mainstream and special) in order to support this move and to allow a smooth transition.

The school follows child protection guidelines fully.

We support children in making healthy choices and through the provision of a healthy environment. We

- Inform all pupils about keeping safe through visible poster throughout the school that show the designated and deputy designated teacher for child protection and how to contact them.
- Ensure that access to the school is via the main door on a buzzer system that is linked to a camera. All visitors to the school sign in and out at the main office and identification is checked for all visitors that are providing a service to the school.
- Ensure staff training is kept up-to-date and that new policies and Education Department circulars are circulated promptly

- Parents are kept informed through newsletters, telephone calls, the school prospectus and the school welcome brochure which are updated regularly
- Check parents and other volunteers
- Regularly deliver internet safety lessons to pupils
- Regularly deliver internet safety talks to the parents
- Address child protection and keeping safe in all year groups following approved courses that use age appropriate language that is adapted to the needs of the children
- Have trained First Aiders in school and remind staff and pupils to adhere to the Health and Safety arrangements
- Healthy food: The school follows the healthy break policy as recommended in the school prospectus; school dinners are provided which adhere to the education authority guidance; children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day and top up their water bottles when required from the water dispenser outside the staff room.
- Play facilities are provided both indoors and outdoors and there is a dedicated soft play area which is timetabled for the use of the primary department.
- PE is provided weekly by a PE specialist to all classes

### **High quality teaching and learning**

We provide a broad and relevant curriculum as is evidenced by

- Scheme of work for PDMU or LLW that meets the needs of your pupils
- Timetabling and other arrangements to deliver an effective PDMU curriculum\* (including Drugs Education\* and RSE\*), and other related areas of learning e.g. RE\* and Physical Development\*
- Specific programmes relating to health and wellbeing e.g. road safety

We promote positive relationships between teachers and their pupils and with other school-based staff through

- Good relationships in class - class charters, rewards and sanctions
- Open communication between all members of staff who fulfil different roles in the school but with a common focus of working to the benefit of all pupils.
- Staff Code of Conduct.

Teachers use a range of teaching strategies that respond to the diversity within the classroom such as

- Circle Time and PDMU paired, group and class work in LLW.
- Collaborative learning.
- Developing personal capabilities - self management and working with others.
- The use of Paget Gorman Signed Speech and Cued Articulation; the use of short sentences with limited information carrying words; slowing down the speed of instructions; the use of visual prompts.

Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils through

- Use of staff planning and the thorough evaluation of learning intentions; regular staff meetings to address whole school issues; monitoring arrangements relating to teaching and learning and pupil progress and achievement in relevant areas of the curriculum such as PRSD and trusted colleague observations.
- Classroom observation and assessment of pupils' personal development and behaviour is available from senior members of staff on request.
- Class teacher's consideration of pastoral issues where pupil performance is not meeting expectations e.g. falling standardised scores as identified by the class teacher and the assessment co-ordinator. Concerns are shared with the co-ordinator for child-protection and further advice is sought when necessary.

### **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.
- Attending Child Protection training. There is a named governor for child protection - see appendix 2.
- Monitoring the reporting of behaviour, suspension and exclusion.

In relation to pastoral care we support the professional development of staff and sharing and learning from best practice by

- INSETs, exceptional closure days for training relating to pastoral matters.

- Supporting teachers who are engaged with additional training and/or qualifications through flexible arrangements to attend further training when feasible.
- Sharing good practice - visits to other schools as well as the on-going input from outreach staff, hosting visits by other professionals during professional open days and training days.

We provide the resources needed to support pastoral care through

- Effective staff deployment - specialist roles (see Appendix 2).
- Classroom resources.
- Play resources and facilities which are audited and updated whenever feasible.
- Specialist rooms such as the meeting room and the 'nurture' room as well as rooms that facilitate small group and individual speech and language support.
- Access/signposting to external resources e.g. pupil counselling, the NOW group, disability rights, Dyslexia parents advice group.

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

- Through reviewing the school's performance regularly in the preparation of the School Development Plan.
- Specific monitoring/evaluative duties of individual staff with responsibilities e.g. the Pastoral Care Coordinator, the child protection co-ordinator and deputy co-ordinator, curriculum leader for attendance, curriculum leader for PDMU (Appendix 2 for details).
- We use school data to monitor attendance, medical needs additional SENs, behaviour management, incidents, number of children taking school meals.
- There is an open system of communication between staff who supervise children during playtime and who may observe changes in behaviour not evident in the classroom setting and teachers and senior leaders.
- The need to seek parental opinion is recognised and encouraged as an action for co-ordinator action plans.

## **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 school and welcoming diary communication and phone communication e.g. there is adequate seating in the bright and well lit reception area with a variety of books to keep siblings entertained, celebrations of work and achievement through weekly certificates for each class that are handed out at assembly.
- Programmes to support parents as learners and partners in their children's education take place regularly throughout the year with a specific focus on the needs of children with specific language impairment.
- The work of Friends of Thornfield parent group who regularly support the work of the school through a variety of fund-raising events which is celebrated at the whole school BBQ at the end of the year.
- A wide range of school documents is available from the school e.g. policies, class curriculum information/guides.
- School and class newsletters are a regular feature of the school as well as the school text service.
- Reporting to parents about their children's personal development through formal and informal means such as the annual review, the parent-teacher interview, the home-school diary and regular phone calls.
- A Complaints Procedure (appendix 4) that is available to all and clearly lays out how a complaint can be made, the correct channels to follow and the expected response times.

We have good relationships and communication between the school and the education agencies that support pupils' health and wellbeing, learning and achievement, namely

- EA Services e.g.
- Autism,
- Behaviour Support,
- Educational Psychology
- EWO

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, Speech Therapy,
- Social Services and PSNI/Child Protection
- NSPCC
- The University of Ulster
- Links with other organisations interested in SaL difficulties overseas such as The University of Pittsburg.

The school is involved in specific programmes that meet the needs of the community and nearby schools. These are

- Extended Schools
- The Newtownabbey Learning Community
- Transition programme for children joining and leaving Thornfield House School which often involves our outreach team and our speech and language therapists.

A Kirk October 2022



## Appendix 1: Related policies

\*Denotes a separate policy (or other document) which sets out the detail of this area.

- **Anti-bullying Policy**
- Assessment Policy
- Child Protection and safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct for staff
- Code of Practice for Safe use of ICT
- **Critical incident Policy**
- Data Protection Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Health and Safety policy
- ICT Policy
- iPad acceptable and Responsible Use Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Learning for Life and Work Policy
- PE Policy
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Policy
- LLW
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- **Special Educational Needs Policy**
- Safe-handling and the use of reasonable force Policy
- Volunteer Policy and Procedures

## Appendix 2: Related pastoral roles and responsibilities (2018-19)

Name	Role/Responsible for
D Logan  A Russell  D Logan, A Russell, A Kirk BOG J Marley  J Logue  R McAllister	Designated Teacher for Child Protection  Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection  Child Protection Team/Safeguarding  Curriculum leader for PDMU  Curriculum Lead LLW
A Kirk  L Creighton	Pastoral Care coordinator  SENCO
J Morgan  S Hutchinson  A Russell	Extended Schools Coordinator  School Council Link Teacher  Curriculum leader for Attendance/Assessment
J Marley	Governor with responsibility for child protection



**All the adults at school make these promises – the Governors, teachers and other adults who work in school.**

- ☺ We will ask you what you want and need and try to provide things that are best for you.
- ☺ We will help you with any problems you have with your learning.
- ☺ We will tell you how you are getting on with your work and how to make it better.
- ☺ We will let your parents know how you are getting on at school and invite them to learn how to help you with your work.
- ☺ We will get other people to help you, if you need special help.
- ☺ We will have good resources to help you learn, relax and play.
- ☺ We will be fair to you all and treat you all with respect.
- ☺ We will involve you in decisions and pay attention to what you say.
- ☺ We will keep you safe and make school a healthy place.
- ☺ We will tell you how to be safe, happy and healthy.
- ☺ We will make sure that adults and pupils try to get on well with each other.