



**Woodlawn Primary School**

# **Pastoral Care Policy**

**Designed: March 2018**

**Ratified:**

**Due to be Reviewed: March 2021**

## Rationale

Pastoral Care is concerned with the care and promotion of all students' personal and social wellbeing, ensuring progress and fostering positive attitudes. Through its pastoral care provision, Woodlawn Primary demonstrates its continuing concern for its pupils as individuals, actively encouraging them to be secure, successful and fully participating members of the school and of the wider community. In addition, Pastoral Care is central to enabling students to reach their academic potential.

## Aim

The aim of the Pastoral Care Policy, through its role in reducing and removing barriers to learning, is to create a caring, supportive and safe environment which values individuals for their unique talents and abilities and in which all children can learn and reach their full potential.

## Inclusion & Diversity

Woodlawn Primary aims to establish an inclusive community where all pupils and staff are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of individual differences including, but not limited to, culture, race, religion, beliefs, sexuality, gender orientation, appearance and ability.

The ethos, or the distinctive character and atmosphere of Woodlawn Primary School, should reflect how the school promotes the moral, intellectual, personal and social development of its pupils. It provides the context within which children feel secure, free from emotional and physical harm, and able to discuss their interests and voice their fears and concerns, confident that they will receive a sympathetic and supportive response. It should inform and reassure the parents/carers that their children are being educated in a safe and caring atmosphere.

In its booklet "Evaluating Schools", the Inspectorate (ETI) describes a positive ethos as one in which:

- The pupils' confidence and self-esteem are promoted;
- They are encouraged to value one another; and
- They show a strong sense of belonging to the school as a community.

Where the ethos is right, the pupils take a pride in their achievements and recognise the importance of high standards in their work and in their behaviour.

For the pupils, the pastoral dimension takes place in school in two forms: -

1. 'The general focus', which requires all staff in the school to care, guide and advise pupils on personal and educational matters either formally or informally. All

the staff in the school must work together to ensure that each pupil in the school feels cared for.

2. 'The specialised focus' ensures that one particular teacher - the class teacher in our school, has a detailed knowledge of the needs, aspirations, interests and academic progress of each pupil in his/her class.

Woodlawn Primary School recognises that the academic and pastoral dimensions each have a distinctive but interdependent role. Care and development of the whole person is written into our school policy as a central aim. We believe that the pastoral care of our children is at the heart of teaching, helping the school reach its educational objectives.

School visits, outdoor education, involvement in the community, membership of school clubs and activities, playing for a school team and being involved in social and fundraising events help all to develop a sense of responsibility and worthwhile participation. Such activities outside the classroom provide pupils with valued and worthwhile experiences in education.

When pupils have a range of opportunities to contribute to, and participate in, the framework of school life, they are more likely to show self-confidence, consideration for others, interest in what they are doing and pride in themselves and their school.

## **AIMS**

This policy aims to:

- provide a safe, secure and caring learning environment in which the pupils and staff can feel supported, valued and members of the school community;
- instil in the pupils a sense of personal worth and intellectual, moral and spiritual development;
- encourage the pupils to have a sense of personal accountability for their own actions and learning;
- empower pupils in building and monitoring good relationships with pupils and staff;
- promote an appreciation of life and respect for the world in which we live;
- help pupils to realise that Woodlawn Primary School is a community in itself and also part of the larger community;
- promote the school's Positive Behaviour Policy, which respects the rights and responsibilities of staff, pupils and parents/carers;
- provide pupils with the personal, social and life skills necessary for a successful fulfilling and happy future;
- develop effective school-home liaison, in order to maintain parental support and co-operation.

## **ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

As the class teacher has the opportunity to get to know each member of his/her class very well, over the course of the academic year, he/she does have a central role in the pastoral dimension.

In some instances it may be necessary to inform the Principal/Pastoral Care co-ordinator of aspects of a pupil's welfare, academic, personal or otherwise which may be causing particular concerns. The Principal will also keep a pupil's class teacher aware of any concerns he is aware of with respect to the pupil's pastoral care.

### **Pastoral Care Co-ordinator**

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator: Mrs M Beattie

The pastoral care co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating pastoral care throughout the school. In conjunction with the Principal and staff, this includes:

- liaising with teachers, parents/carers and the external support agencies;
- attending relevant training;
- co-ordinating the provision of school-based training;
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Pastoral Care Policy.

### **Pupils**

We encourage pupils to develop:

- a responsibility for their own actions;
- self-respect and self-discipline;
- an understanding of their own strengths and limitations, their personal qualities, values and attitudes;
- a respect for other people and their way of life;
- tolerance and an understanding of differences;
- an understanding of the world in which we live.

**All Staff** should:

- value each pupil and treat every child as an individual;
- provide friendly support and reassurance to build pupils' confidence;
- make every reasonable effort to ensure the safety of pupils;
- place an emphasis on the reinforcement of positive behaviour, while carrying out consistently and fairly the school's Positive Behaviour Policy;

- build up a working knowledge of the pupils, both as individuals and collectively;
- encourage pupils to become increasingly responsible for their own behaviour;
- display a positive and caring attitude to children;
- as appropriate liaise with other staff eg. teachers, non-teaching staff, Pastoral Care co-ordinator, Senior Leadership Team, Designated Teacher for Child Protection, SENCO and/or the Principal.

### **The Class Teacher**

The class teacher should become aware of situations early and, where appropriate, intervene positively.

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, parent/carer and others to support the learning and development of each pupil.

Relationships with their teachers and other pupils influence pupils' personal, social and academic development.

Teachers should:

- ensure that learning takes place in a happy atmosphere within the classroom;
- encourage pupil motivation and commitment;
- employ a range of teaching strategies in response to pupils' needs;
- give pupils responsibility for some of their own learning;
- provide pupils with appropriate tasks, which challenge and stretch them;
- through praise, recognition and displays of pupils' work, promote a sense of achievement;
- accept responsibility for standards of behaviour in their own classroom through the effective implementation of the school's Positive Behaviour Policy;
- ensure that knowledge of particular home circumstances and other relevant information is passed on to the Pastoral Care co-ordinator and other relevant teachers including the teacher who inherits the class;
- as appropriate liaise with parents/carers, Principal, Vice-Principal, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, and/or the Designated Teacher for Child Protection;
- ensure that attitudes, expectations and actions are influenced by knowledge of particular family situations and/or home circumstances;
- be responsible for standards of attainment, dress, punctuality and attendance within own class.

## **Senior Leadership Team**

- Members of the Senior Leadership Team will support all staff in their efforts to achieve the aims of this Pastoral Care Policy.
- They will assist the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator in the monitoring, evaluation and review of the effectiveness of this policy.

## **Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers should:

- be involved in their child's education by support and encouragement of the child's learning at school and at home;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually;
- ensure that their child is prepared for school both physically and emotionally;
- inform the school of any factors, which may affect their child's progress and well being;
- support school policies in relation to pastoral care;
- play their part in implementing agreements made with the school in respect of their child.

## **Governors**

Governors will:

- be kept informed about proposed changes to the pastoral care policy;
- be invited to participate in relevant training as appropriate;
- monitor the implementation of the school's Pastoral Care Policy.

## **RANGE OF PASTORAL ACTIVITIES**

Opportunities to be provided at the appropriate stages of development are included in the following:

- All curricular areas - particular reference is given to Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU);
- Use of Golden Time and Golden Rules;
- Circle Time;
- Use of outside agencies;
- Extra-curricular activities
- Educational visits (including residential trips);
- A modular or separate unit of work approach (including workshops) may also be used when appropriate;
- Informal and formal rewards; and
- School assemblies.

## **LIAISON WITH PARENTS/CARERS**

Communication with, and co-operation of, parents/carers is necessary for the successful education of children socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. We seek to communicate with the parents/carers in a variety of ways:

- Letters home (paper and/or email format);
- Website, Seesaw and weekly bulletin on school app;
- Written reports – distributed in June;
- Parental/carer interviews – both formal and informal;
- Contact through Education Welfare Officer (EWO);
- Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) and parent volunteers;
- Verbal contact – messages / phone calls;
- Verbal contact – initiated by parents/carers;
- 'Open Door Policy' parents/carers welcome to make an appointment to speak to the Principal or class teacher. Informal discussion is encouraged if time is available;
- Curriculum involvement Eg. Project work/homework;
- Parent/carer presentations;
- Social evenings/events.

## **FAMILY WORKER**

Through extended school money we are able to have a family worker in place a few hours each week. After a referral from a teacher the family worker meets with the parent to discuss the specific needs of their child. The child then receives 6 weeks of counselling in order to help the child to work through any issues they may have.

## **LIAISON WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

After appropriate consultation and communication, a range of agencies may be utilised each with a particular specialism:

For example:

- EA NE Region Officers;
- Educational Welfare Service;
- School Educational Psychology Service;
- PSNI;
- Clinical Medical Officer & School Nurse;
- Department of Health and Social Services.
- NSPCC,
- Women's Aid and
- EISS

## **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

This policy is linked with the following school policies which include:

- Child Protection/Safeguarding Children;
- Positive Behaviour;
- Intimate Care;
- Special Educational Needs
- Use of Reasonable Force;
- Anti-Bullying;
- Relationships and Sexuality Education;
- Drugs
- Attendance;
- E-Safety;
- Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Related Technologies;

## **RESOURCING:**

It is also our intention to build up and maintain a store of materials useful in the context of the pastoral dimension. Textbooks, reference books, case studies, circulars, support and guidance materials, correspondence, children's work etc., can be gathered. Much of this material will be linked to PDMU.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

Staff are provided with opportunities to attend in-service training in the area of pastoral care. This can be facilitated during directed time and staff development days as well as formal and informal communication between individual members of staff. The pastoral care co-ordinator will also endeavour to keep staff informed of what training is available from outside the school. As needs are recognised and communicated they will be addressed in the appropriate manner. Outside agencies may be used for development and training if it is deemed necessary.

## **MONITORING and EVALUATION**

The teaching staff will monitor the progress academically and pastorally of children in their classes. Where a pastoral concern is identified about the well-being of any child, records will be kept of incidents or concerns and appropriate action taken if necessary. As a pupil progresses through the school, records of pastoral concerns or issues will be passed onto the child's next teacher in the pink information file/pupil passport. If appropriate the Pastoral Care co-ordinator will be informed.

## **REVIEW OF POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or in light of new information/recommendations. The next review will take place in 2021.