

St Mary's Primary School



Pastoral Care Policy 2015

Introduction

Pastoral Care is an all-embracing term which describes the whole atmosphere, ethos and tone of our school in its, mission to promote the moral, intellectual, personal and social development of the pupils.

The introduction to St Mary's School Mission Statement well describes the nature of pastoral care in our school.

"At St Mary's the child is at the heart of the Catholic faith community. As a school we aim to provide a high standard of child centred education in a safe supportive learning environment, where respect and Christian values are promoted. "

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

Aims

Pastoral care in St Mary's 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 gifts and talents.
- the staff work well together, as an effective team keeping the pupils' interests and welfare as their main focus.
- there are good 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 are 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.
- our parents are closely involved in and knowledgeable about the life and work of the school.

- the school has clear lines of communication and good, flexible relationships with relevant external advice and support agencies, e.g. CCMS, SELB, DENI, School Medical services, social services, police, etc.
- the school strives to promote and sustain good and high standards of behaviour and discipline which reflect an appropriate balance between rewards and sanctions. Disciplinary procedures are implemented consistently by all staff in a fair and positive manner.

Responsibility

While the Board of Governors, Principal and senior management have primary responsibility for the arrangements that promote and ensure the care and welfare of pupils and staff, it is obvious that pastoral care in the school is also a shared responsibility, involving the whole staff in co-operation with parents and pupils and others.

All members of staff have the support of the principal in matters of pastoral care and also have access to external support agencies including the Pupil Personal Development Service.

The Pastoral Team

St Mary's Pastoral Care Coordinator is Mr Mackle. The Pastoral Team is comprised of Mr Mackle, the Principal, Vice Principal, Key Stage Coordinators and SENCO. Members of the team, meet as and when is required to discuss individual cases causing concern, and to share and agree appropriate strategies. This is then reported back to the appropriate staff and when appropriate, the parents of the child.

When a child is reported to the team with regard to any Pastoral matter, and action taken will be recorded in the Relevant Incident Book and dealt with as appropriately (refer to appropriate Policies).

Main Components of Pastoral Care in the School

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

1. School Leadership.

The significance of the quality and effectiveness of the leadership of the head teacher and senior management in striving "to create a caring, happy and secure environment, where every individual is treated with dignity and respect, whilst being given the opportunity to develop their gifts and talents" is fully recognised and acknowledged by the Board of Governors of the school.

2. Staff Welfare and Development.

It is widely recognised in the world of work that care of staff is vital to ensure that stress and low morale do not jeopardise the success and prosperity of school life.

In schools, high pupil morale and expectations are difficult to establish and sustain without high teacher morale and expectations.

At school level the promotion and development of staff welfare and development is an obvious responsibility of the Board of Governors, Principal and senior management but it is also the mutual responsibility of all colleagues in school.

It is also recognised that some of the sources of stress and low morale in schools (as in other organisations) often lie outside the influence of the schools themselves.

(See "Staff Welfare Policy Statement")

3. Child Protection Procedures

This component of pastoral care refers to school's 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.

4. The Teaching and Learning Environment

Teachers strive to create and maintain a positive classroom climate: "A quiet, calm relaxed attitude combined with fairness and a sense of purpose: a demonstration interest in and knowledge of the pupils individually and mutual respect, the pupil recognising the personal qualities, knowledge and skills of the teachers and the teachers being sensitive to the needs of the pupils and respecting their contributions.

This feature of pastoral care refers to the harmonious relations which are striven for nurtured and developed in the school between teachers and pupils and among the pupils within and outside the classroom.

It 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 discipline.

5. 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 and about developments in school.

6. Extra Curricular Activities.

This feature of pastoral care refers to the opportunities the school provides for learn and social activity outside the formal classroom setting

7. School Environment

This aspect of pastoral care refers to the action of staff and management in ensuring safe, clean, comfortable and pleasant environment throughout the school for work leisure.

SENDO

To ensure the appropriate response to all of our children's needs and to comply with SENDO it is important that all members of staff are informed of a child's specific learning or possible medical conditions e.g. ASD, ADHD etc.

All members of staff have received training on Risk Assessment (Awareness Raising) and De-escalation and Diffusion of Challenging Behaviours. Please refer to the school's AS Class Policy Confidentially Policy.

Bullying - Guidance to staff (Refer to Anti-bullying Policy)

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else through physical, verbal, emotional or psychological aggression. Children must realise that any form of bullying is unacceptable and that such behaviour will be dealt with appropriately by the staff of the school.

Individual members of staff need to be alert both inside and outside the classroom. Children must be aware that it is the responsibility of everyone to report acts of bullying as soon as they arise. They need to be aware that this is not 'telling tales'. To be seen to act is as important as taking action. Silence and secrecy nurture bullying.

The above aspects of pastoral care are developed in a wide range of curricular policies. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti Bullying
- AS Class
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection /Safeguarding Policy
- Special Education Needs
- Religion

- Health and Safety Policy
- Healthy School
- Confidentially Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- RSE Policy
- Attendance

Strategies/Resources used to promote the moral, intellectual, personal, social and spiritual development of our children include:

Circle Time	<p>Circle time allows children to participate as partners in the process of developing responsibility for their own behaviour and learning.</p> <p>With its co-operative activities and discussion, Circle time ensure that each child experiences success. When this approach is followed on a regular basis a feeling of equal value is promoted and group identity is reinforced. The basic rule of sitting together in a circle is that eye contact is possible at all times. Other ground rules include taking turns, allowing participants to pass in discussion and showing respect by listening to all contributions. Circle time is a vital element in resolving conflicts and is an opportunity for teachers, children and staff to 'walk the talk.'</p> <p>The teacher, by participating in the circle becomes part of the group and in this way a trusting climate is treated in which no participants feel threatened.</p> <p>There should be no 'put-downs' allowed.</p> <p>Circle time aims to boost interpersonal skills, strengthen relationships and enhance confidence whilst at the same time, allows all involved to have fun together.</p> <p>A regular time should be set-aside for Circle Time in class. It may also take place between set times as the need arises or as a cross-curricular teaching and learning tool. This forms an integral part of our discipline policy and pastoral support for the children.</p>
Can You Keep a Secret (Video & accompanying resources	<p>The material encourages awareness of the dangers of keeping some secrets and the importance of finding safe adults to tell.</p>
Award Assemblies	<p>Special Achievement Certificates, end of year awards. Positive reinforcement</p> <p>Special award stickers, hand-written notes</p>

Class Assemblies	Each year group prepares an assembly each year of their work or topic. This is performed/presented to the school and parents.
School Council	Pupils from P3 are voted onto the School Council. They meet on a regular basis and organise activities throughout the school and feedback to the SMT.
ECO Council	Pupils from P3 are voted onto the ECO council. They meet on a regular basis and organise ECO friendly activities throughout the school.
Playground Buddies	P7 pupils apply for this position. The children help organise equipment in the playgrounds and organise games and interact with younger children etc.
Heartstart	The Heartstart program takes place throughout P7.
Reading Buddies	P7 pupils read with P1 and P2 children throughout the year.
Liaison with Parents	Formal & informal meetings, school diary, newsletters, school communication book, Annual reports.
Extra Curricular Activities & Friday Clubs	Football, netball, dance, drama, Fun Fit, Gymnastics, guitar, soccer, music, Bowls, Fabulous Food, Art, Gardening Club etc.
Parent Teachers Group	Fund raising activities: Fund Days, X Factor, Discos, Quiz, Family Bingo etc.
Religious Celebrations	Sacraments, assemblies.
Monthly News letter	Keeping parents up to date with school news and the celebration of recent successes.

This policy will be updated annually.