



# Saint Mary's Primary School Killyleagh

## Pastoral Care Policy

**Policy reviewed by staff—September 2018**

**Policy presented to parents for consultation – October 2018**

**Policy reviewed and ratified by Governors- November 2018**

**Signature of Chair** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Vision Statement**

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide excellence in learning and teaching, in an inclusive, nurturing and supporting environment.

We aspire that our children will achieve personal success and develop a love of learning and life.

## **Rationale**

We at St Mary's Primary School believe that a Pastoral Care System which promotes a healthy lifestyle and positive attitudes is ever more essential, due to the rapid changes which are taking place in society. This system encompasses the development of strategies to enable the children to make reasoned and rational decisions necessary to deal with the rising pressures of media, family, education and peer pressure that they encounter in their daily lives. It also includes the provision of an environment where the children feel safe, secure and valued and where their concerns are listened to and acted upon when necessary and should contribute to the creation of a supportive atmosphere for the whole school community.

The Pastoral Care Policy at St Mary's Primary School is composed of different policies, programs and procedures which encourage each individual child to reach their full potential in every area of life 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 for the "outside world".

This policy is therefore set in the broader school context of Pastoral Care and as such should be read in conjunction with the following school policies: Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Positive Behaviour Policy, SEN Policy, e Safety Policy, Critical Incident Plan, Anti-drugs Policy.

## **Aims**

- To create a secure and caring environment where there is respect for oneself and respect for the views, opinions and differences of others.
- To encourage and promote positive and supportive relationships amongst both children and staff to enable each child to develop their self-confidence, their self-esteem and a positive self-image.
- To provide a supportive network so that the staff work well together, as an effective team keeping the pupils' interests and welfare as their main focus.
- To work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to overcome any difficulty a pupil may encounter and therefore enrich the quality of teaching and learning.
- To work as a school to help others in our community and the wider environment.
- To encourage all in St. Mary's, staff and pupils, to have responsibility for their actions and to accept the consequences of these.

- To help pupils have a greater say in the Pastoral Care of the school through the work in the classroom.
- To protect those pupils in school who are vulnerable on a social or academic level through a well publicised awareness of where and when to seek this help.
- To develop children's social and life skills – critical thinking, decision making, effective communication, learning from mistakes, which are so necessary for their health and safety in society today.
- To reassure parents that the school life is fully committed to the protection and education of their children and there are procedures in place which will encourage open lines of communication between school and home.

## **Ethos**

*“ A good ethos does not come about by chance: it is achieved by the principal, members of senior management and staff promoting and facilitating an atmosphere of care and respect within the formal and informal life of the school community”*

DENI 1999/10

Pastoral Care plays a crucial role in the development of the ethos of the school. The School's logo “Learning Today for a Better Tomorrow” emphasises the importance placed on the pastoral aspect of school life alongside learning. At St. Mary's Primary School, we promote and develop a positive caring, catholic ethos by ensuring

- ❖ Relationships among staff are good. They feel valued, work well together, are an effective team and keep the pupil's interests and welfare as their main concern.
- ❖ Relationships between all staff, all staff and pupils and among pupils within and outside the classroom are good.
- ❖ Parents know and have confidence in St. Mary's Pastoral Care arrangements.
- ❖ The pupils feel secure, their opinions are valued and their concerns are dealt with sympathetically and appropriately.
- ❖ Self- confidence and self- esteem are promoted and all have opportunity to develop independence of thought and expression.
- ❖ The Principal and staff use positive approaches to establish and maintain good standards of behaviour. The disciplinary procedures are regarded by the pupils as fair and reflect an

appropriate balance between rewards and sanctions and are implemented consistently by staff.

### **Relationships**

*“We cannot underestimate the significant contribution which relationships between pupils and teachers can make to this the whole process. It is in the formal and informal situations with their teachers, that teachers can be helped to foster self-respect, self-discipline, tolerance, equality and fairness. This generates a positive climate within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for at all times” CCMS*

Excellent relationships foster and develop in an atmosphere of respect and trust. Through our positive relationships we aim to ensure that all individuals feel valued and cared for. We promote positive relationships in school, with parents and the wider community through

- Good relationships in class – class rules, rewards and sanctions
- Teachers and other staff – working in partnership for the good of all
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Parents are welcome in the school and are encouraged to feel their role is valued
- The assistance of outside agencies to extend pupils’ experiences.

### **Values**

*“ ..... the teacher teaches by communicating values and beliefs and not only knowledge of a subject” CCMS*

Every opportunity will be taken to praise our pupils for their contributions to the life of the school. Through positive daily experiences, in addition to curricular activities, we aim to communicate the following positive values and beliefs across the curriculum and throughout the school; self-respect, respect for others and their property, co-operation with others to ensure a safe, happy school environment for all, love of God and others, honesty, tolerance, forgiveness, reconciliation and valuing the contributions of everyone towards the life of the school.

### **Personal Safety**

St Mary’s aims to equip children with the knowledge and skills to make them less vulnerable and more self-confident. We aim to promote each child’s awareness of their responsibility for their own safety. e.g.

- Saying no to people when they are afraid or unhappy
- Knowing where to get help
- Recognising dangerous situations
- Knowing that not all adult secrets and touch are good
- Understanding safety in the playground, on the road, in water, in the sun

- Knowing the safe use of technology internet and mobile phones.

The school community will be aware of the role of the designated teacher (Mrs Hagan, is the designated teacher for Child Protection and the Acting Principal, Mrs Martin, is the deputy designated teacher). They will also be aware of the staff members responsible for First Aid and what the procedures are for dealing with children who need first aid. Children will be able to speak to their class teacher, designated teachers or any member of staff if they need help or are concerned about anything.

### **Pastoral Care Activities**

We place a high priority on our Pastoral Care responsibilities and acknowledge the intrinsic links between pastoral care and academic achievement. To this end every member of staff work collectively to promote a caring environment where each child is respected and valued and a positive approach to learning is adopted.

As well as specific areas of the curriculum such as Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), Relationships and Sexuality Education, Shared Education, Assemblies, World Around Us (WAU) and Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC), pastoral provision is interwoven into all areas of the curriculum and all aspects of daily life within school.

Some examples of how we strive to develop self esteem and confidence, celebrate achievements, foster respect and promote positive behaviour activities include:

- Verbal/ written praise
- Reward systems, stickers/ star charts
- School assemblies
- Pupil of the week/ month
- School /class Mass
- Prayer Services
- Preparation for the Sacraments
- Christmas concerts
- School Trips
- Circle Time
- CAPS programme
- Roots of Empathy programme
- Daily Mile programme
- Fund Raising Activities
- Displaying children's work
- Provision of playground activities
- Review of break/ lunch arrangements
- School/Class Rules
- Parent/teacher Meetings
- Grandparents Day
- Catholic Schools week
- Anti- Bullying week
- Reports
- Liaising with outside agencies
- Review of Pastoral Policies

St Mary's Primary School also offers a wide variety of Extra Curricular Activities to promote self-confidence, teamwork and positive relationships such as breakfast club, music, sport, cookery and art. The children are also given opportunities to assume leadership roles as a Buddy, Digital Leader, School Councillor or Eco Councillor.

Integral to our effective Pastoral care system is our School Discipline Policy. Where unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour arise sanctions will be applied.

### **Pastoral Care for All**

*In St. Mary's Primary School, the children are at the centre of everything we do. We care, support, develop and challenge our pupils to achieve their full potential in a caring loving and stimulating environment. Releasing the talents of our pupils will enable them to learn and develop, allowing them to be happy at school and to be able to contribute significantly to society.*

Whilst the Pastoral Care of our children is of paramount importance, teachers and ancillary staff must also be given due care and attention in terms of pastoral provision.

All of the elements pertaining to the children are also appropriate to the adults working in the school. It is expected that the staff will care for one another as they do for the children.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Pastoral care requires all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching to be fully committed to creating an environment of care and trust and ensure the effective implementation of Pastoral Care.

**Board of Governors** – has overall responsibility for Pastoral Care within the school. They monitor the school's pastoral care procedures. Appoint a Designated Governor to deal with the Pastoral Care issues.

**Principal** - has overall responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care and fostering positive relationships. In addition, she 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. Liaises with the Board of Governors. Acts as Deputy Designated teacher.

**Teachers** - Teachers have responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care by: Helping children to make informed decisions, celebrating success, building up children's self-esteem, encouraging assertiveness, encouraging sensitivity, developing effective communication. Teachers build up a knowledge of pupils as individuals and take an interest in their special needs and all round development.

**Designated Teacher**- Liaise with outside agencies re Child Protection and Safeguarding. Maintains records of concerns. Reports at least termly to the Board of Governors.

**SENCO** - Liaise with staff and Principal to ensure pupils with barriers to learning are early identified and Individual Educational/Behaviour plans are developed.

**Parents** - Report any concerns or issues they have regarding their child's welfare including long term need for medication.

Support staff will contribute to the promotion of Pastoral Care consistent with our policy.

*Please note that separate guidelines are issued for Child Protection and Anti-Bullying (resources from Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum)*

### **Pastoral Care Team**

Chair of Governors- Mrs C. Clark

Acting Principal –Mrs F Martin (DDT)

DT- Mrs O Hagan

SENCO- Miss Hanna

### **School links with parents, the community and outside agencies**

In St Mary's we see school as the extension of the family, working together for the holistic development of child. We encourage parents to become involved in many aspects of school life. Parents can arrange to visit the school to discuss the progress and needs of their children at any time. We endeavour to keep them fully informed about the life of the school through our use of social media. Parents are consulted on school policies and are informed of school's responsibilities in terms of key policies.

We encourage parents to inform the class teacher if they have any concerns regarding their child's care and welfare. We listen carefully and work closely with parents to resolve the difficulties as soon as possible. Minutes of meetings and agreed actions will be recorded.

We work collaboratively with our local pre school settings and feeder schools to ensure the easy induction to Primary 1 and a smooth transition for our Primary 7 children to second level education. Pupils engage in shared educational and social activities with young people from other schools and cultures.

We ask that someone over the age of sixteen must collect children in Primary 1 – Primary 3. If there are any changes to pupil collection the school must be notified before the child will be released. Any child/children collected during the school day must be collected by someone over the age of 16 who is recorded on the child's data capture form (which is updated annually).

Our children add to the life of the community by providing displays and partaking in religious ceremonies in the Church, singing at the local supermarket and taking part in local competitions in the library and at sporting venues.

We aim to foster in our children an awareness of the wider community and thus encourage their involvement in the support of charities and care for others, e.g Trocaire, SVP and other local charities.

Throughout each year, external support agencies visit the school regularly and on occasions meet with parents. These include the school's Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare Officers (EWO), Literacy Teaching Support Service (LTSS), RISE, School Nurse, External support agencies provide expertise and up-to-date information for staff, and pupils. They work with the school in attempting to resolve behavioural, emotional, social and medical problems related to individual pupils.

Local Clergy, PSNI, Fire Safety Officer, NSPCC and local charities work directly with the children, sharing their expertise, information and guidance to promote their safety and protection.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

To ensure the Pastoral Care is working effectively in our school we intend to continually monitor and evaluate and review the procedures and practice. We value the contribution that can be made by our teachers, parents and pupils to affect appropriate change when necessary. This will be achieved through;

- teacher / parent interviews
- SEN reviews
- open nights / curriculum evenings
- induction days
- staff meetings, Board of Governors, PTA meetings
- periodical questionnaires / audits/correspondence with parents
- School Council minutes

### **Staff Training**

Training will be updated in relation to policies, procedures and pastoral issues and staff will be informed of Department of Education changes. Staff will attend relevant courses provided by EA 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 full implementation of this policy relevant resources will be purchased for use in class in line with budget restraints. Time will be allocated for review, training and implementation change and Pastoral Care will be included in the School Development Plan.

Deficiencies in the school building (cloakroom facilities, broken tiles etc.) should be brought to the attention of the principal/governors.



## **Review**

Initial Review: January 2015

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
September 2018	<p>Rationale amended to be more reflective of changing needs within society.</p> <p>Aims amended to reflect more widely the needs of our school community.</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities updated to reflect procedures relating to collection of children.</p> <p>Pastoral Activities updated to reflect the continued developments within the school.</p> <p>Pastoral team amended to reflect staff changes.</p> <p>Links with community updated.</p>



