

 St. Mary's Primary School 



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

Date ratified by Governors: _____

Our School Vision

At St. Mary's we aim to promote the ethos of a Catholic School by creating a **safe** and **happy School Community** where:

- + Everyone feels valued as a member of our inclusive **team** in an atmosphere of **fairness** and **respectfulness**.
- + High standards of learning and teaching take place in a **fun, caring** and stimulating environment which enables everyone to reach their full potential.

Purposes

St. Mary's Primary School aims to foster positive attitudes to learning, develop pupils' confidence, self-esteem and motivation by giving attention to their emotional, social and physical well-being within the teaching and learning contexts of the curriculum.

Principles

- ◆ The Board of Governors and staff believe that children learn most effectively in an atmosphere of care and trust which promotes the emotional and physical welfare of pupils.
- ◆ Planning for the taught curriculum will integrate the pastoral dimension within teaching approaches, content and contexts for learning.
- ◆ All staff have a responsibility to ensure the well-being of pupils by creating a secure and positive learning environment in which children can gain confidence and self-esteem in their learning.
- ◆ Provide a welcoming, attractive, stimulating and safe environment which supports pupils' learning.
- ◆ Approaches to teaching and learning will include a range of strategies, independent, group and whole class teaching, matched to the learning needs and abilities of the children, which promote enjoyment in learning and provide opportunities for each child to succeed.

- ◆ Learning outcomes will be clearly identified in order to ensure children's motivation by giving them a clear understanding of the purposes and goals of their learning experiences.
- ◆ Classroom organisation will ensure the safety of pupils while giving opportunities to work together in a supportive and purposeful way to promote independence and control over their own learning.
- ◆ The school will have realistically high expectations of success for all pupils.
- ◆ Pupils will be supported to understand and co-operate with necessary rules and routines and help them feel secure and free from emotional harm.
- ◆ Teachers will encourage pupils to take a pride in their work and celebrate pupils' academic and non-academic achievements through a system of positive rewards and encouragement.
- ◆ Approaches to marking will be positive; praising and rewarding success while encouraging children to build on strengths and develop specific areas for improvement.
- ◆ The school will celebrate all children's success in learning at individual, classroom and whole school level.
- ◆ The achievement of all pupils within and outside the classroom will be recognised and celebrated by the school.
- ◆ Pupils will be encouraged to develop a range of interests and achieve success in learning beyond the formal curriculum through opportunities provided for extra-curricular activities.
- ◆ Pupils will be encouraged to foster the attitudes and values by appreciating and valuing their own culture and those of others in their local, wider and global community.
- ◆ Pupils will be encouraged to value one another and express their own views through teaching and learning approaches, which promote listening to and talking with others in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

- ◆ Pupils will be encouraged to develop relevant personal & social skills and understanding to help them respond appropriately to situations affecting their welfare.
- ◆ Teachers will treat all pupils with respect and courtesy and therefore promote respect among pupils and teachers within classroom interactions through use of appropriate praise and valuing each child's contribution to the learning process.
- ◆ The process of assessment and recording experiences and achievements will enhance pupil's self-esteem through pupils' involvement in the process and an emphasis on positive achievement.
- ◆ Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop their self-esteem through participating in assemblies, school productions, a variety of competitions and after school activities.
- ◆ Our pupil voice will be developed through our school council, giving pupils roles and responsibilities within the school and effective use of circle time to encourage free expression, communication and the ability to listen attentively to one another's opinion and views and to make choices and resolve conflict.

Pastoral Care and Pupil Support

At St. Mary's Primary School we approach the care of our children in a positive way, reinforcing the philosophy and ethos of the school and following the school's positive behaviour and anti-bullying policy. Strong links are developed between home, school and parish in order to ensure the best 'community of care' for our pupils.

Our children are fully supervised and we place great emphasis on the welfare and well-being of the children in our care.

We aim for our children to feel happy and secure in whatever activity they are taking part in. Teaching/non-teaching staff and other adult helpers, are encouraged to approach the care of our children in a positive way, reinforcing the philosophy and ethos of the school and following the school positive behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and Code of Conduct. Full supervision also continues during all extra-curricular activities such as after school clubs/activities. No child may remain in the classrooms, cloakroom/toilet areas or other areas of the building during playtimes

and lunchtimes without adult supervision. Children may not enter the building at break times without the permission of the member of staff on duty.

Minor difficulties, worries or upsets involving any child, which arise within the classroom or in the playground are dealt with by the class teacher or the member of staff on duty. The child or children concerned are always fully involved in any discussion about an incident or concern. More serious incidents or concerns about a child's behaviour, health or welfare may be referred to the Designated teacher/Principal.

The school has an agreed 'Intimate Care' policy, which outlines clear principles and procedures for everyone involved in the intimate care of children. Individual Care Plans may be drawn up if and when the need arises.

Parents are always welcomed and encouraged to contact their child's class teacher, or Principal if they have any concerns or worries. We encourage parents to share concerns about home circumstances or medical matters, which may affect their child's work or behaviour in school. Any discussions are held in confidence if desired or necessary.

All our children are encouraged to talk freely and openly to any member of staff if they have any worries or problems of any kind on a work or personal level. Staff will respond to children in a sympathetic and concerned way, offering advice, support, guidance and reassurance - in confidence if required. N.B. In accordance with the School's Safe Guarding/Child Protection policy, pupils are aware of the avenues of advice/help and support available to them in our school.

St. Mary's Primary School places strong emphasis on the individuality of every person and the children are encouraged to be positive and supportive in their approach to those who may seem 'different' through a disability, culture or by their physical appearance, race or cultural background.

As a school we have established/maintain close liaisons with our local parish (school chaplain) and the various outside agencies involved in the care of children. These include the Speech and Language Services, Behaviour Support Team, Social Services, Inclusion and Diversity Service, the Police and Fire Service. In particular our links with the Police include talks and discussions about road safety, personal safety and safe use of the internet and social media.

We also maintain a very close working relationship with groups and people, such as the School Nurse, the E.W.O. and the Educational Psychologist.

Regular health and hygiene checks are made throughout the school year. Children are medically examined by the school nurse when in Yr. 1 and Yr.7. The school nurse also visits regularly to liaise with staff and all children are given regular vision, hearing and health checks to monitor their physical development.

Emotional & Well-Being

The caring ethos of our school is clearly seen in its pastoral care. The staff and the pupils demonstrate a strong sense of identity with, and loyalty to the school. The health and emotional well-being of all staff and pupils are of paramount consideration.

Principles

We are committed to the following principles:

- To promote emotional well-being of staff and pupils as a whole school approach.
- To foster a sympathetic and supporting culture within the school.
- To develop positive relationships between staff and pupils.
- To recognise and appreciate staff and pupils' efforts, achievement and contributions.
- To establish staff peer groups to share experiences and provide support.
- To provide opportunities to develop decision making and problem solving skills.
- To develop effective coping strategies for stress.
- To allow time out and provide opportunities for counselling where appropriate.
- To create opportunities for all staff to socialise outside of school hours.

Needs of Staff

At St. Mary's Primary School the well-being of our staff is enhanced in the following ways by:

- Ensuring staff that their concerns will be listened to sympathetically and appropriate action taken.
- Promoting constructive working relationships.
- Generating a strong sense of team spirit and a sense of their own worth.
- Being aware and sensitive to staff stress levels.
- Exploring the effects of stress and to identify the signs and symptoms.
- Identifying effective short and long term coping strategies.
- Developing positive thinking and relaxation techniques.
- Developing effective communication procedures.

- Providing opportunities for staff development.
- Involving staff in making decisions regarding the development of the school.
- Celebrating staff achievements and affirming good practice.
- Socialising outside of school hours.

PARENTS AND PASTORAL CARE

Rationale

St. Mary's Primary School recognises that:-

- ◆ Parents/guardians are their child's first teachers - school is joining an already established learning partnership.
- ◆ Parents/guardians are teaching their children throughout their lives.
- ◆ Parents/guardians are the biggest influence in their child's life
- ◆ Parents/guardians have an entitlement to know that their children are in a safe environment in school.
- ◆ Parents/guardians are entitled to know what the school's pastoral care/child protection procedures are.
- ◆ Parents/guardians and the school, in partnership together, can ensure healthy happy children who can take full advantage of the education system.

Principles

- ◆ Pastoral care of the children in our school is about caring for their families as well as the children.
- ◆ Parents will know about and have confidence in our school's pastoral arrangements.
- ◆ As partners with the school in their children's education, parents will be consulted, and asked to give feedback on our school's pastoral care/child protection arrangements.
- ◆ Liaison with parents will be effective and as frequent as is necessary to ensure proper dissemination of information of procedures to ensure their children's physical and emotional welfare as well as academic achievement.
- ◆ Parents will be aware that the school welcomes those who wish to discuss the needs of their own children.

- ◆ Parents will be made aware that they can talk to any member of staff, school management or individual teacher at any point throughout the school year. (see Pastoral Care and Pupil Support)

Our school's pastoral dimension will begin as soon as a child is enrolled for school, with an effective induction programme for both parents and children.

Open lines of communication are established between parents, home and school by involving parents as much as possible in the life of our school:

- Appointment of Parent Governor
- School Assemblies
- Prize giving and celebration of other special events
- Whole class/parent teacher meetings/parents/information evenings e.g. DELTA, PIN, Paired Reading
- Reporting to Parents/communication through homework diaries
- Parent' Questionnaires
- Monthly Newsletter
- Parent/Teacher Association
- School Website

School involvement in the wider community:

- Competitions
- Sporting events
- Concerts
- Student placements from other schools & colleges
- Cross community relations
- P.S.N.I.
- Links with wider/global community - links at Parish level, Dissolving Boundaries, Beam, SELB Music Projects etc

PASTORAL CARE: PARENTS

<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-school/and at all stages thereafter ▪ Parent Representative on BOG ▪ Welcome Booklet/Prospectus ▪ Governors' Report
<p>Specific Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pastoral Care/Safe Guarding /Child protection/Intimate Care ▪ Positive Behaviour Policy & Anti-Bullying Policy ▪ ICT/E Safety ▪ Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones ▪ Homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent/teacher meetings (regular) ▪ Information re events/requirements ▪ Invite views e.g. parent questionnaires, Parent/ Teacher meetings ▪ Complaints Procedure: consultation and communication of outcomes
<p>Safety E.g. parking of cars, security, Consent forms,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safe, secure environment ▪ All needs; social, emotional, physical and academic
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial meetings/Induction Day ▪ Information re specific curriculum areas & procedures ▪ Monthly Newsletter ▪ Information meetings - e.g. curriculum and school procedures
<p>Parental/Family Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parental Support evenings ▪ After School Clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parenting Programmes ▪ Children with specific needs ... support/advice ▪ Links with other professionals to provide further learning opportunities for parents/family members <p><u>Structured/Controlled</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open door: invitation to use facilities ▪ Involvement of parents in life of school ▪ Curriculum workshops ▪ Involve in school visits/after-school clubs/Paired Reading etc.

PASTORAL CARE - BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Purposes:

St. Mary's Primary School aims:-

- ◆ To ensure that the Board of Governors is well informed about all aspects of school life in order to effectively meet its statutory obligations
- ◆ To ensure that the safety and well-being of pupils and staff are safeguarded and promoted (Staff Health & Emotional Well-Being Policy)
- ◆ To ensure that roles, responsibilities, procedures and practices are clear to all and are implemented systematically and consistently (Safe Guarding/Child Protection/Intimate Care/Code of Conduct Policies)
- ◆ To ensure through effective monitoring and evaluation that further development and training issues are addressed (Annual Safe Guarding Child Protection Training/First Aid to ensure all staff are familiar with procedures.

Principles:

St. Mary's Primary School aims to ensure that:-

- ◆ The effective Pastoral Care of pupils and staff is fundamental to their well-being and development
- ◆ Pastoral Care arrangements will be integrated with and reflected in all aspects of school life.
- ◆ The ethos, provision and management arrangements for pastoral care will reflect care and respect for each individual (pupil and adult) within the formal and informal life of the school community.

The Board of Governors of St. Mary's Primary School will monitor and review the effectiveness of the Pastoral Care Policy and will update it regularly in line with new initiatives and developments.

Signed: _____ (Chairperson, Board of Governors)

_____ (Principal)

Date: _____