



Policy Review

Date Agreed:

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Next Review Date:

Introduction

We the staff of St. Patrick's PS Aughadarragh have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we strive to create a school environment which is safe, secure and stimulating where all pupils are empowered to learn, to achieve and to try their best. We firmly believe that as well as educating our pupils we share a deep concern for each child's personal, spiritual, physical, emotional and social development. Our nurturing approach will include the essential elements of the children's care, safety, security and personal welfare.

School, home and community will work in partnership to help each child develop as an individual and as a contributor in society.

Following consultation our Pastoral Care Policy will be implemented through the main areas of:

-  School Ethos
-  Provision
-  Management

School Ethos

We place strong emphasis on our school's physical environment. We strive to create a warm, inviting, friendly and fully inclusive atmosphere with evidence of the children's successes and achievements displayed throughout the school. Classrooms will offer a safe base, which are bright and cheerful and conducive to positive wellbeing and effective learning. This nurturing environment will allow pupils to be:

- Happy
- Safe
- Valued for themselves as individuals and valued for their contribution to the efficient and effective running of the school
- Supported
- Encouraged to voice any concerns they may have
- Develop their many individual talents safely, with praise and encouragement.

To create this atmosphere, we are further aware of the vital part played by 'relationships' between pupils, teachers, teachers and pupils, teachers and

parents, teachers and the Principal and between all personnel who work in the school. If we are all working together as a team, then the children will benefit most from their time in St.Patrick's Primary School.

The Principal - Mrs Quinn - will continue to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the teaching staff. She will endeavour to make working conditions as comfortable and pleasant as possible and will welcome, encourage and value the staff's contributions and opinions on all aspects of daily life in the school. Together as a team we will produce policy documents and guidelines to make the school the best that it can be.

All pupils will be encouraged to plan, work and play together harmoniously both inside and outside the classroom. They should be motivated, by good example, to have respect for each other, the staff and the school at all times. They will be encouraged to have a sense of 'fair play' in their games, to include everyone and have concern for each other's welfare and safety. It is most important that they have a caring approach to younger children in the school. For this reason, pupils of different age groups have been assigned certain playgrounds to help promote 'peer' relationships and minimise the potential for accidents.

The staff of the school, strive to administer fairly, our Behaviour Management & Discipline Policy. Staff are asked to be consistently fair and to strongly emphasise positive behaviour among our pupils. A balanced approach in applying sanctions has been agreed and is regularly discussed with the staff and children. On an ongoing basis, various aspects relating to discipline, good manners and good behaviour are emphasised, for example, safety in moving around the school, using good manners when talking to other children and adults, good behaviour in the canteen, on the buses and when representing our school.

Provision of Pastoral Care

In a small school like St. Patrick's, the Principal, Teaching and Non -teaching Staff know each child personally and will act as a team taking responsibility for the implementation of our Pastoral Care Policy. We are very aware that the children in our care have emotional and physical needs as well as academic needs. We also recognise each child's uniqueness and this is central to our school ethos.

In reality our Pastoral Care is made up from numerous other policies, all of which deal with the welfare of our children...

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Special Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Handling Complaints Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Personal Care Policy
- Behaviour Management & Discipline Policy
- Policy for the Promotion of Good Behaviour

All the above policies are essential parts of our 'Safeguarding' and Pastoral Care for the children and staff in the school.

Our children know that they should express any concerns to their class teacher, assistant or any adult in the school, and that these concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive, caring manner.

In the event of a physical injury at school, the pupil will be comforted, attended to medically (as permissible), the accident recorded in our Accident Book, and the parents informed. We have agreed personal plans for some of our pupils, details of their specific medical problems and their individual medicines are kept in the main office. Staff members have been trained in first aid.

Curriculum provision for Pastoral Care and the Preventative Curriculum

In planning curricular provision for pastoral care the staff will use the following range of opportunities and teaching materials:

✚ Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

This area of the N.I. Curriculum is designed to develop children's personal, emotional, social and health needs. They are encouraged to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives and to become confident, independent and responsible citizens, making informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives. Each month in St. Patrick's we focus on one of the nine NI

Curriculum PDMU themes, in order to raise awareness and promote that aspect of health and safety, eg September is Friendship, February is Healthy Heart and April is Our Talents.

Classes will engage in "Circle Time" which is a structured, regular occasion when a class group meets in a circle and takes part in games and activities designed to increase self-awareness, awareness of others, self-esteem, co-operation, trust and listening skills. It helps everyone to understand their feelings and what is important to them and it aims to encourage greater tolerance of each other's opinions. The ethos of Circle Time is positive, encouraging and non-judgmental.

Classes will also engage in Mindfulness Activities with the aim of strengthening the mind and helping both children and staff to focus, manage emotions, make better decisions and empathise with others.

E Safety and Online safety

Pupils will take part in a progressive online safety education including the safe and effective use of the Internet through a number of selected programmes/websites and talks/workshops given by outside agencies; The Acceptable Use of the Internet Agreement will be signed each school year by pupils and parents. Children will be encouraged to report incidents of cyber-bullying to parents and the school to ensure appropriate action is taken. Children will be encouraged to use websites such as www.thinkuknow.co.uk to learn how to deal with cyberbullying incidents which may take place in or outside of school.

The Grow in Love series:

The aim of the RE curriculum is to help children mature in relation to their spiritual, moral and religious lives, through their encounter with, exploration and celebration of the Catholic faith.

The Grow in Love Programme complements the NI Curriculum in a reliable, creative and child-friendly way as well as linking with parents and families. This is important for the children's personal and moral development. Through the programme we help them to know themselves, accept themselves, to have confidence in themselves, to communicate their experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant, so that they can relate to the world, to others and to God.

Daily Prayer and Assemblies:

During prayer and assemblies aspects of pastoral care e.g. bullying, sharing, telling the truth, etc. alongside topical themes are dealt with and shared with all classes.

The Principal also addresses at assembly any aspects of pastoral care if the need arises, e.g. If there has been an incident the day before and the children need to be made aware of an issue, e.g. stranger danger.

Each day the teaching staff and pupils of each class pray together incorporating prayers that address issues in the local community or in the world e.g. sickness, deaths or world disasters.

Health Promotion

The children will become familiar with the importance of healthy eating and living a healthy lifestyle through PE, WAU, Circle Time lessons and on Healthy Eating Theme Days and during our Health promotion Week in term three. We also promote fresh fruit and water at break time as part of our 'Healthy Breaks' and water is available in all classrooms to maintain our children's hydration levels and hence maximise academic achievement.

Children will be reminded of the importance of personal hygiene and road and farm safety during lessons throughout the year. The P.7 class takes part in the 'Love for Life' Programme and is made aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.

At all times, there is on-going consultation with parents, both formally and informally, regarding any matters of concern for the pupil's welfare. An 'Open Door' policy is in place and parents are constantly asked to express any concerns that may arise to a member of staff as soon as possible. This can be done through an appointment, however urgent matters will be dealt with sooner. The awareness of promoting self esteem in our pupils is an automatic feature of classroom practice for each teacher.

All teaching staff strive to motivate the children through stimulating teaching and learning strategies with written and verbal compliments and using two stars and a wish reward system. Teachers use similar methods of acknowledging good behaviour, good progress and achievement with each classroom having their own points chart. Pupils are awarded points for academic achievements and improvements, for high standards of behaviour, involvement in school life, general progress, caring and helping others or being a positive role model for other children.

The school has strong links with the parents. We have a formal Parent/Teacher meeting each year (November/December), a comprehensive end of year written report, feedback on class tests, PLP's and meetings for

some children, annual reviews for children with a statement of Special Needs, and countless other informal meetings when feedback is given regarding their child's progress, behaviour and attitude. These meetings help teachers fully understand how they can best provide for their pupils' pastoral as well as academic needs. Both teachers and parents are asked to contact each other should either become concerned with a child.

The school policies on 'Safeguarding & Child Protection' and 'Special Needs' reflect the guidance and recommendations of relevant DE circulars. All Parents and staff are issued with our guidelines for Child Protection. All staff are reminded of our procedure at the beginning of each year and both the Designated and Deputy Designated teachers attend refresher training as required. All staff are vetted and outside guests, speakers and coaches are supervised while working with the children.

Managing the Provision of Pastoral Care

We realise that to successfully provide Pastoral Care for our pupils, we need the fullest co-operation and consultation between all the personnel involved directly or indirectly in the life of St. Patrick's Primary School. We appreciate...

- The views of members of the teaching and non teaching staff
- The support from the Board of Governors
- Help with diagnosing learning difficulties from the Educational Psychologist and other outside agencies e.g. ACE Team etc.
- Support in matters of welfare from the EWO
- Advice and guidance from the Child Protection Service and Social Services
- The school staff, who are observant and concerned about the needs of every child in a caring, supportive and sympathetic way.
- Ongoing training both externally and internally of the staff on matters of Child Protection.

Parents / Community / Other Agencies

The involvement and participation of our parents has been discussed previously. The school enjoys very supportive relations from our parents and their co-operation is excellent. Parents appreciate that we are partners in the

provision of their children's education and welfare. Parents are supportive of our policies and procedures. They respond well to our requests for parental consent for outside trips, after school activities and by informing the school of absences due to illness or other reasons.

We have established very good links with our feeder Playgroups and with other schools. For example...

- Links with Woodland Adventure Playgroup when staff and pupils share resources and transition information
- Links with St. Ciaran's College Ballygawley for Sentinus (STEM), ICT and transition days etc. Annual in-depth meetings with staff from St. Ciaran's College regarding the transition of P.7 children.
- Annual Open Days/Taster Days to; St. Ciarans Ballygawley, CBS and Loreto Omagh.
- Sharing of Sacraments and Do this in Memory Programme with St. Macartan's Clogher and St. Patrick's Eskra.
- Shared Education links with St. Patrick's Eskra & Monaghan Model School
- Love for Life Programme with other local primary schools
- Numerous sporting tournaments throughout the year and links with the local GAA clubs.
- Links with the community eg Visits to the Fire station, Knockmany Running Club, Grandparents Day and coffee mornings.

Conclusion

Our policy tries to reflect our concern for the welfare of the children and staff in the school. We fully understand that we not only attend to the children's educational progress but we are also aware of their emotional, physical and spiritual development. We try to prepare for life after primary school and embed early, vital life skills, which will help protect them as they grow. Our aim is that our children enjoy a happy, safe and caring passage through St. Patrick's Primary School, and that they reach their full potential.

This policy was written and agreed reflecting the beliefs of the staff while also adhering to the recommendations of DENI.