

PASTORAL CARE POLICY



Earlview Primary School

November 2019

“All young people, from whatever background, have a right to be valued and respected, to be educated in a secure and caring environment and to have their abilities and talents nurtured and developed to their full potential.”

Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (Dept of Education 2001)

ETHOS of EARLVIEW SCHOOL

The ethos, or the distinctive character and atmosphere of Earlview 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 that their children are being educated in a safe and caring atmosphere.

A climate which fosters effective learning, both within class and about the school, is at the heart of the education process. Such a climate, or ethos, is best promoted through focusing on the creation and maintenance of good relationships: among the staff themselves, teaching and non-teaching; between staff and pupils; among pupils and their peers; between parents and the school; and between the school and the community it serves.

The staff are aware that a good ethos does not come about by chance; it is achieved by the Principal, members of the senior management and staff promoting and facilitating an atmosphere of care and respect within the informal and formal life of the school community.

In its booklet “Evaluating Schools”, the Inspectorate 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.

The Staff Development Policy contains procedures for the professional development of teachers. For children the pastoral dimension takes place in the school in two forms: -

- (a) 'The general focus' which requires all teachers in the school to care, guide and advise pupils on personal and educational matters either formally or informally. All teachers in the school must work together to ensure that each pupil in the school feels cared for.

- (b) '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.

RATIONALE

Since schools are the only institutions where sectors of the community can be reached regardless of class, ability or circumstance, personal and social education can only be effective if it is founded in an exploration of attitudes, values, skills development and knowledge. It is during our school years that we begin to establish values and form attitudes which can affect our behaviour in later years. While recognising that the school plays a major role, personal and social education can only be effective if it has the support of parents and if attention is drawn to such aspects of health education within the community as 'National No Smoking Day', 'Change of Heart', etc.

Earlview 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.

We as a school recognise the central role of the pastoral dimension as it maintains a healthy balance between the child as a learner and person. Clearly the pastoral and academic aspects of school life have a distinctive but interdependent contribution to make.

NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN

We have to make ourselves aware of the needs of the pupils in our care and we realise that we have to keep them in mind while dealing with all aspects of the curriculum.

FOUNDATION STAGE / KEY STAGE 1

A) PHYSICAL NEEDS

We recognise that the children need to:

1. have regular physical exercise;
2. have the opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills;
3. have regular health checks;
4. develop good personal hygiene habits;
5. be aware of the need to be safe;
6. have a healthy lifestyle.

B) EMOTIONAL NEEDS

We recognise that the children need to:

1. develop a sense of identity;
2. receive encouragement, recognition and praise;
3. express inner feelings and anxieties;
4. feel secure, valued, protected and loved;
5. develop self-confidence and enhance self-esteem;
6. develop realistic expectations of self.

C) SOCIAL NEEDS

We recognise that the children need to:

1. enjoy satisfying peer relationships;
2. receive group approval;
3. learn to share, plan work and play together;
4. develop good manners.

KEY STAGE 2

A) PHYSICAL NEEDS

We recognise that the children need to:

1. develop and improve co-ordination;
2. enjoy activity and games which develop body control, strength and skills in a healthy competitive manner;
3. have a healthy lifestyle.

B) EMOTIONAL NEEDS

We recognise that the children need to:

1. gain a realistic image of self and appreciate a uniqueness of personality;
2. be recognised for individual worth;
3. receive encouragement, appreciation and affection;
4. exercise self control;
5. talk out problems and receive reasonable explanations and answers.

C) SOCIAL NEEDS

We recognise that the children need to:

1. be accepted by peers;
2. have relationships with adults which give feelings of security and acceptance;
3. have opportunities to make decisions and act independently;
4. understand the need for rules;
5. value and respect the beliefs and views of others;
6. interact positively with their peers.

We hope that, if we all learn to work together successfully, the children under our care will want to learn, will find learning fun, will gain in confidence and will develop the positive attitudes of sharing, co-operation and trust. Our publication "A Child's Guide to Pastoral Care" is helpful in exploring the issues raised.

AIMS

PERSONAL and SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- To create a positive attitude to life and to encourage the children to feel good about themselves.
- To create in our pupils, the ability to act and think responsibly.
- To recognise and draw on individual strengths and weaknesses.
- To create a healthy environment where safety and hygiene are concerned.
- To foster a positive attitude to work.

OBJECTIVES

PERSONAL and SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- To develop in children a positive self-image and self-confidence.
- To encourage the development of attitudes such as adaptability, commitment, co-operation, reliability, tolerance, consideration for others, curiosity, honesty and integrity.
- To enable the children to make a positive contribution to the life of the family, to manage relationships with peers in a variety of situations and to cope with relationships with others within the community.
- To enable children to cope safely with their environment and to understand what is meant by a healthy environment and their responsibility for keeping it and even improving it.

Throughout the year a variety of activities will be arranged which will enhance the daily on-going work of pastoral care and extend the pupils' personal experiences and social skills. School visits, outdoor education, involvement in the community, membership of school clubs and activities 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 for many pupils one of the most 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.

RULES

(a) SCHOOL RULES: Children should be able to understand school rules and why they exist.

(b) THE CLASSROOM: Classroom rules are discussed with the pupils and agreed upon. These rules are displayed in a prominent place within the classroom.

(c) PARENTS: We accept that the interaction of home and school is the key to the ability to be educated. As a result, we encourage communication and liaison with the home in order to see discipline used in a constructive and balanced manner.

REWARDS

Use of rewards both formal and informal is acknowledged as a powerful tool in motivating students and modifying behaviour.

Merits awarded for effort and improvement of personal best, in work and behaviour often have immediate effect.

FORMAL REWARDS

Children will be awarded stickers, stars, stamps etc., for work and/or behaviour. Once a week in assembly children will be awarded school certificates for special achievement e.g. for books read, for completing stages in reading, for working and/or behaving well over a period of time.

INFORMAL REWARDS

PRAISE

- Builds up self-esteem and is positive.

POSITIVE TEACHER ATTITUDE

- Concern, respect pupils, value opinions. Empathising is important and making positive statements to pupils.
- Try to resolve grievances honestly.
- Criticise the act not the person.
- If possible, try to suggest ways to improve rather than to criticise.

BODY LANGUAGE

- Be non-threatening, keep reactions low key.

GIVE OF YOURSELF

- Listen, make genuine effort.
- Show a willingness to give up time for them.
- Search for common ground between teacher and pupil.
- Get to know the pupils.

ENVIRONMENT

- Seek to create a supportive environment within the classroom.

GROUP DYNAMICS

- Encourage peers to give praise.
- Maturely agree rules.
- Work to improve peer group relationships within the classroom.
- Defuse situations in a low-key manner before they get out of proportion.

ORGANISATION

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.

The school's Pastoral Care co-ordinator is Mrs Daphne Kayes

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 the pupil's pastoral care.

RANGE OF PASTORAL ACTIVITIES

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

- i. All Areas of Learning in the N. I. Curriculum
- ii. Cross-curricular skills and "Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities", as they give ample opportunity to explore the complex world and nature of relationships.
- iii. Clubs and societies – e.g. Scripture Union and Sports
- iv. Educational visits (including residential trips)
- v. A modular or separate unit of work approach may also be used when appropriate.
- vi. Principal's Tea Party held on a regular basis

LIAISON WITH PARENTS

Since the school is an extension of the home, and parents are the primary educators of children, we should see parental involvement as essential. Communication with, co-operation of, parents is necessary for the successful education of children socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. We seek to communicate with the parents in a variety of ways:

- Letter home
- Weekly newsletter
- Written reports – Distributed in June
- Parental interviews – both formal and informal.
- Contact through Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
- Parent Teachers' Association (PTA)
- Verbal contact – messages / phone calls
- Verbal contact – initiated by parents
- 'Open Door Policy' parents welcome to make an appointment to speak to the Principal or class teacher. Informal discussion is encouraged if time is available.
- Curriculum involvement e.g. homework
- Project work
- Parents invited to the school to meet with the Principal or class teacher.
- Talks and discussions
- Social Evenings / events

LIAISON WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES

After appropriate consultation and communication, a range of agencies may be utilised each with a particular specialism: (Other agencies may be contacted if required).

Educational Welfare Officer

Educational Psychologist

Social Worker

PSNI

RESOURCES, STAFF DEVELOPMENT and TRAINING

i. RESOURCING:

Although most situations will be addressed within the classroom, time will be made available for visits, interviews, consultations etc. 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.

ii. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Pastoral dimension development will be provided for in the same way as other aspects of the curriculum and staff expertise and awareness have been. Communication being given the highest priority will continue. This can be facilitated during directed time and Staff Development Days as well as formal and informal communication between individual members of staff. The co-ordinator will also endeavour to keep staff informed of what training is available from outside the school, for example, consortia training being offered by the EA in Pastoral Care, and direct school involvement with individual EA officers. 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

Class teachers will monitor the progress academically and pastorally of children in their classes. Where a teacher has a concern about the pastoral well being of any child in his/her class, records will be kept of incidents and the necessary action taken. As the pupil progresses through the school records of pastoral concerns or issues will be passed onto the child's next teacher. Where the teacher considers it appropriate the Pastoral Care co-ordinator will be informed.

The Department of Education publication "Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour" (2001) and relevant department circulars were used in the revision of this document. Staff, children, Board of Governors and parents were involved in the drawing up of this document.

Who can I talk to if I am unhappy?

- Tell my teacher
- Tell any adult who works in our school

What do I do at breaktime if I have a problem?

- Tell the adults on duty
- Tell my teacher
- Tell Mr Smyth



What do I do at lunchtime if I have a problem?

- Tell the dinner supervisors
- Tell Mr Smyth
- Tell my teacher



REMEMBER

I can tell any adult in school if

I am unhappy and they will try

to help you.

Report of Alleged Bullying

Date:

Incident (including all names available)

Investigation

Outcome

Follow up needed