

# **St. Francis of Assisi Primary school**

## **PASTORAL CARE POLICY**



Approved	January 18
Review Date	January 20

## **PASTORAL CARE POLICY**

We believe that Pastoral Care reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith. The pastoral dimension of St. Francis of Assisi Primary School therefore fosters a high level of care for our children, parents, staff and others involved in the life of the school.

Our school values each member of the school community as a unique person made in the image of God. We endeavour to create an atmosphere in which the children feel secure and happy and all staff work together as a team, supportive of one another and sensitive to each others' needs.

### **Aims of Pastoral Care Policy:**

- To recognise and respect that every child is unique with different gifts and talents and to value each child.
- To approach the care of our children in a positive way, reinforcing the philosophy and ethos of the school, following the various associated school policies relating to Pastoral Care..
- To strive to ensure that the children feel happy and secure in whatever activity /situation they are engaged.
- To encourage in our children the development of self discipline and self respect.
- To encourage the values of honesty, forgiveness, loyalty and concern for others.
- To develop in our children independence of mind, taking responsibility for their own actions and learning from past experiences.
- To promote the children's understanding of themselves as individuals - their strengths and limitations, their personal qualities and their attitudes.
- To promote a caring environment where pupils' learning is developed within the context of their individual needs and abilities.
- To promote the development of positive relationships where children and staff have respect for each other and the opinions of others.
- To welcome, cherish and respect those in our school family from diverse backgrounds, nationalities and cultures – seeking always to integrate newly arrived children into the life of St. Francis of Assisi Primary school.

- To be aware of the specific needs and circumstances of individual children, families and members of staff and to take account of these e.g. physical, medical, emotional, social, economic etc.
- To value the work of the staff, giving due recognition for their efforts and achievements.
- To support staff and children when necessary e.g. new staff members, new children to school.
- To adopt a team approach in caring and providing for our children.

## **CHILDREN**

We believe that every child has the right to feel happy, safe and free from harm in school.

We value and cherish the contribution which every child can make to school life.

We believe that school should be a positive experience for every child.

We believe that every child has the right to be helped to develop to their full potential, within the limits of the school's resources.

We believe that every child has the right to be given equality of opportunity, regardless of their background, ability, religious belief or gender.

We believe that every child should learn to respect their school - their teachers and ancillary staff, their fellow pupils, visitors, property and the environment.

We believe that every pupil should be helped to recognise the responsibility which they have to contribute to the development of such an ethos.

## **STAFF**

We believe that all members of staff should be treated with courtesy, fairness and respect.

We believe that the opinions of all members of staff should be listened to and valued.

We believe that each staff member is entitled to a clear definition of their role and responsibilities within the school.

We believe that every staff member is entitled to support in their work, particularly in situations of difficulty or crisis.

As a staff, we are committed to working together for the good of the school. To this end, co-operation and teamwork will be promoted and developed where possible.

## **Pastoral Care in Practice**

**The school will seek to demonstrate its Pastoral Care system as follows:**

Greeting our children and welcoming them when they arrive at school as newly enrolled members of our school community and daily thereafter. Enhanced efforts will be made to integrate Newcomer children and their families to life of our school as appropriate to particular circumstances. Staff and children will proactively seek out opportunities to make children from cultures different to their own feel happy and secure within the school.

Chatting informally with the children, listening to their news, their concerns, etc.

Getting to know our children personally, becoming aware of their personal circumstances and showing sensitivity to their individual needs.

Supporting them as far as possible, in situations of need which may arise.

Ensuring that School Council members provide an active CHILDREN'S VOICE appropriately in school matters

Promoting their self-esteem and confidence.

Allowing children to assume responsibility through tasks/activities in class and around the school.

Addressing a range of pastoral issues via Assemblies and the school's Prayer Life

Providing Teaching & Learning which addresses issues related to pastoral care, in keeping with the PDMU programme.

Ensuring appropriate supervision of play areas at break and lunch time, with particular attention to the prevention of bullying.

Providing supervision of pupils at arrival and home-times, to ensure their personal safety on the school premises. Agreeing procedures for children's safe arrival/departure daily at main school entrances.

Developing partnership and communication between all members of staff, in order to facilitate the sharing of information and concerns about pupils.

Agreeing daily procedures between members of staff to ensure maximum safety & wellbeing for all our children.

Implementing the Staff and Visitors Codes of Conduct

- Keeping total cost of school/educational activities to a minimum to cover all expenditure incurred. Education Authority guidelines will be followed regarding Finance. Teachers will inform SLT if a child is unable to meet payment or presents unsubstantiated reasons for not wanting to participate in activities, so that appropriate pastoral arrangements may be made.

## **Support for pupils who are young carers**

The school will endeavour to be sensitive to the needs of children who have the responsibility of being carers; and will develop communication with relevant external agencies while maintaining effective home-school links.

## **Organisation of Pastoral Care within the school**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Board of Governors hold overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the Pastoral Care Policy. The Principal and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that Pastoral Care systems are implemented and are reflected in the School Development Plan. They will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Pastoral Care across the school. The Pastoral Care Coordinator (Mrs McGarvey) is responsible for informing and liaising with other relevant coordinators and outside agencies as well as providing resources and support. Every member of staff in the school has responsibility for ensuring the ongoing health, safety and wellbeing of our children.

### **How each teacher contributes to Pastoral Care.**

Class teachers hold primary responsibility for the daily pastoral care of the children in their classes. Teachers will seek to develop relationships of trust, empathy and understanding within the classroom. This will provide the ethos within which pastoral care can be strong and effective.

Additional responsibility is held by the Principal and Vice Principal, Mrs N Smith who work closely to ensure high standards of Pastoral Care at all levels. Mrs McGarvey/ Mrs Donaghy, (DT) are the main links between members of the school community and external agencies e.g. Social Services. Both members of staff are main sources of information and advice in relation to Child Protection for all members of the school community. They maintain all records in relation to Child Protection. Miss Hughes will take on responsibilities in Mrs Donaghy's absence. The duty of care towards children in relation to Child Protection issues pertains to all teaching, ancillary, supervisory and auxiliary staff.

### **Parental Involvement/Communication with parents**

In St. Francis of Assisi P.S we value the vital role parents play in the ongoing academic, spiritual and emotional development of their children and therefore seek always to work in effective partnership with parents and carers. Parents should always keep the school updated regarding any key changes in family life which may affect their child/children's wellbeing.

This policy will be available to parents both electronically or in hardcopy on request from the school office. Copies of all key documents are accessible on the school website at and are available on request from the School Office

All parents are provided with a hard copy of the school's Child Protection Procedures on enrolment and provided with a summary annually and invited to comment on policies on review or renewal.

Parents should make an appointment to see a teacher at a time that is mutually convenient to discuss pastoral or curricular matters relating to their child – Teaching & Learning Time may only be interrupted in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Principal/Vice Principal .

The school strives always to develop partnership and communications with parents, in order to facilitate the sharing of information and concerns about pupils.

Parents are invited to attend an Parent/ teacher meetings held by the class teacher in Term1 Outcomes of assessments are made available to parents. Annual Reviews for children having Statements of SEN are held in the Spring Term annually

Meetings related to Sacramental preparation are facilitated annually in liaison with Pastoral Council and a Programme of preparation is compiled and managed jointly. Reception and Primary One Induction Programmes are held in June for new entrants in the following September.

Opportunities for regular, ongoing contact with the Early Years' teachers are provided at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents are encouraged to support the school as members of Friends of St. Francis Association .Social functions, fundraising events occur periodically throughout the school year.

### **Written Communication:**

Important Dates are issued termly

The School's Text Messaging Service is used effectively to communicate important information promptly

School News Updates/reminders/fliers are issued appropriately and are available on the School Website which also provides up to date key information. An email facility is available for communication

Informal notes/liaison books are used by teachers/parents appropriate to children's needs

### **Curriculum Provision**

Pastoral Care will be delivered primarily through our PDMU programme. Discrete time will be set aside to deliver the statements of minimum requirement relevant to each strand i.e. Personal Understanding and Health and Mutual Understanding in the local and wider community. However, Pastoral Care permeates whole school life and therefore cannot be completely addressed as a discrete curriculum area. Therefore, through the teaching of other certain discrete areas e.g. World Around Us and using a variety of teaching styles and strategies, children will have valuable experiences in aspects of themes which promote their holistic development.

Examples include:

- 'Grow in Love' and 'Alive O!' Religion Programmes
- Healthy Eating & Wellbeing e. g. Healthy Break;
- Promotion of ECO awareness and Environmental Issues
- Personal Safety – Sun, Electricity & Fireworks;
- Road Safety & Playing Safely outside
- Emergency Life Support Agencies e g Fire Service, Ambulance, PSNI.
- Internet Safety
- Anti-Bullying Week – Promotion of creative strategies
- Transition Programmes
- Circle Time

- St. Patrick's High School Curriculum Collaboration programme
- PDMU 'Living Learning Together' Programme
- Wide range of after-school activities involving Sport, Music & Culture
- E-Safety workshops for children and adults
- Health and Safety procedures in practice
- Bee Safe programme

This is not an exhaustive list and will be subject to change over time.

### **Positive Behaviour**

Our Positive Behaviour policy has been devised with the rights and feelings of our children in mind. Our pastoral support principle is to promote high standards of behaviour proactively and address issues of low standards fairly based on an agreed Code of Conduct for Children which has been developed in consultation with children, staff and parents.

It is essential that all staff respect and show a caring attitude to all our pupils. Care and respect must be shown at all times by teachers, classroom assistants and supervisory assistants. We also ask that parents show the same respect and care to our pupils, teachers, other staff and volunteers. As out-lined in our Staff Code of Conduct all members of staff are encouraged to show respect and care for each other.

### **Merit and Reward**

In considering the pastoral needs of our pupils we are committed to highlighting the positive nature of children's improvement, achievement and contribution to school life. In St. Francis of Assisi Primary School we promote a system of regular and annual awards/rewards which is intended to be fair and effective and aimed at promoting self-esteem and celebrating individual and group achievement. We encourage each child to take responsibility for his/her actions and to have their efforts recognised and rewarded.

### **School Policies to support Pastoral Care**

In addition to this overall Pastoral Care Policy document, the school has developed/is developing a range of other policies and procedures which support the implementation of Pastoral care. The key policies are detailed as follows:

1. Safeguarding and Child Protection
2. Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools
3. Anti Bullying
4. First Aid and Medication
5. Drugs & Substances Education
6. Special Educational Needs
7. Handling Complaints Procedures
8. Use of Reasonable Force and Safe Handling
9. Positive Behaviour

10. Pupil Attendance
11. Relationships and Sexuality Education
12. Intimate Care
13. Health & Safety
14. Staff Code of Conduct
15. E Safety

### **Training and Resources**

Inset training is provided for teaching and support staff as appropriate to changing needs and strategic developments. The Board of Governors and all staff will be encouraged to attend appropriate, external courses and In Service training days. The Pastoral Care Coordinator will keep all staff suitably updated and recommend amendments/changes to policy and procedures where necessary.

### **Links with community and outside agencies**

We are committed to developing good working relationships with relevant external support agencies to enhance, protect and support individual children's social and emotional welfare. Such agencies may include:

School Nurse/Nursery Health Visitor/ Local Pharmacist/Dentist  
Social Services Educational Psychology Service  
Educational Welfare Service Peripatetic Teachers  
CCMS/Dept. of Education/Education Authority/CCEA  
Occupational/Speech Therapists  
PSNI Emergency Services  
Sensory/Behaviour Support  
EA Music Service  
Post Primary Liaison Officers.  
Coaching/Sport/Art/Drama programmes e.g. GAA support  
Credit union  
Bank of Ireland  
Colleges of Further Education

Pupils engage in educational visits and trips to increase their knowledge of local activities and help them to support others in their community and further afield. Furthermore, regular links are maintained with parish and community groups.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

To ensure that Pastoral Care is working effectively in our school we continually monitor, evaluate and review the procedures and practice. We value the contribution made by our staff, parents and children to effect appropriate change when necessary. This will be achieved through:

- Teacher/parent interviews
- SEN Annual Reviews
- Curriculum evenings/Workshops



- Induction days
- Staff meetings, Board of Governors, FOSF meetings
- Periodical questionnaires/ audits/correspondence with parents.

This policy will be reviewed every two years and is due for updating January 2020

# St. Francis of Assisi Primary School

## RISK ASSESSMENT

ACTIVITY: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Hazard	To Whom	Severity	Likelihood	Risk
Existing Precautions		Additional Precautions	Who?	When?

