



*Learn to Love, Love to Learn*

## Pastoral Care Policy

*Reviewed 2020/ 2021*

*Review Date: 2023/2024*

At St Mary's on the Hill, pastoral care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our Catholic faith and involves all members of the school community - children, parents, teachers, and all other adults who contribute to the well-being of each child.

In St Mary's on the Hill each teacher strives to assure pupils that we are deeply concerned not only with their educational progress but also about their total well-being as unique individuals. We take the view that effective teaching is the highest form of care, and that good teacher-pupil relationships lie at the heart of effective teaching.

Each teacher in the school works very hard to create and maintain a caring and supportive environment in which all pupils can develop the personal and social skills which they need to play a confident and responsible role in society. We are also very aware of the need to help pupils manage their lives as well as helping them prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We recognise and value the important role which parents play in their child's education. Every effort is made to ensure that parents feel welcomed into the school, that they are aware of the school's aims, objectives and policies, and of their child's needs, progress and achievements. Parents are encouraged to take a keen interest in the affairs of the school, and your support in attending various school functions is very much appreciated. We would ask parents to support our pastoral care policies and procedures we have developed.

## Aims

- A well-educated child, interested in learning and with a keen sense of personal worth.
- A child who is confident in relationships with peers, parents, teachers and other adults
- A child who is able to cope with success and failure; joy and sorrow; the ups and downs of everyday life
- A child who is able to manage their personal safety
- A child with a responsible attitude towards self and others
- A child with a fundamental understanding of social skills necessary for adult life
- A child who has an awareness of their own emotions and can recognise the emotions of others and has strategies to regulate their own emotions.

## **Implementation of Pastoral Care Policy**

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors hold overall responsibility for the development and implementation of the Pastoral Care Policy. The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that Pastoral Care is forefront in School Development Plan agenda and will monitor and evaluate its effectiveness. The Principal is responsible for informing and liaising with other relevant policy co-ordinators, outside agencies, providing resources and being available to the inspectorate.

In addition, the Pastoral Care Leader will have the responsibility of initiating appropriate staff training.

### Resources

The Principal has overall responsibility for maintaining and acquiring resources to deliver the policies effectively.

The maintenance of the school environment and the provision of a safe accommodation will ultimately be with the Board of Governors and the Principal.

### Staff Training

Inset training will be given to teaching and support staff when required. Board of Governors and all staff will be encouraged to attend appropriate external courses and in-service training days. Through the Pastoral Care Leader, all staff will be informed of all DENI recommended changes.

### **How each teacher can contribute to pastoral care?**

All staff will contribute by helping children to make informed decisions, about issues in terms of 'right' and 'wrong' remaining sensitive to the beliefs of others. They will build up pupils' self-esteem, encourage them to be assertive to resist peer pressure. Teachers must avoid sarcasm, belittling, humiliation etc. and help pupils to achieve success.

The pastoral care of our pupils will be developed and enhanced through a wide range of activities, incorporated into and alongside the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

The activities and opportunities include:

- Delivery Grow in Love Programmes
- The Wonder of My Being Programme
- Weekly Assemblies
- Whole School and Class Masses
- Recognition of achievements in and out of school
- Display of children's work
- Playground Pals
- Class responsibilities
- Digital Leaders
- ECO Warriors
- School/Class Council

- Supporting charities
- Achievements celebrated in school events
- Provision of extra-curricular activities
- Circle time/ PDMU Programme
- Education Trips and Visits
- Involvement in Anti-Bullying Week
- Breakfast Club
- Waiting Club
- Wrap Around Care
- Catholic Schools Week
- Via the School's Monthly Newsletter

Much time and effort is devoted to ensuring the development of each pupil as a person, as well as a learner.

The school also engages the support services provided by:

- Education Authority
- CCMS
- The school nurse and health visitor
- Speech therapist
- Educational Psychologist
- Educational Welfare Officer
- NSPCC
- RISE
- Charitable Associations
- Board of Governors
- Covid Link Officer

For a complete list of Trips, Educational Visitors Support Services and see Annual Community Links document.

### **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:

- annual teacher / parent interviews,
- continued open-door policy for further interviews.
- SEN reviews
- Open Days
- information nights
- induction days
- staff meetings,
- questionnaires / audits/correspondence with parents.

A frequent visitor to the school is the school chaplain, Fr. Pat Sheehan, who takes a keen interest in the development and welfare of the children.

We will review Procedures and Practices in light of restrictions due to Covid – 19 and the school's Risk Assessment.

Key Personnel involved with Pastoral Care Coordination in the school are:

Mr Matthew O'Brien, Principal, Special Educational Needs Coordinator

Mrs Barbara Niblock, Vice Principal, Designated Child Protection Officer

Mrs Karen Carey, ICT Co-ordinator, Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer

Mr David McEvoy, Arts Coordinator, Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer

Mrs Margaret Magee, Religious Education Coordinator, Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer