



Scoil Bhríde Pastoral Care Policy

Introduction

School Pastoral Care is an approach to education which endeavours to value and develop each member of the school community. As outlined in our Mission Statement- Pastoral Care is about nurturing *a caring environment in which respect for all is hallmark.*

Pastoral care is fundamental to Mercy Education and St. Brigid's School, consistent with its Mission Statement and is committed to the care of the whole school community.

Rationale

The Education Act (1998) provides that schools promote the social, personal and health education of all students.

Pastoral Care is a core dimension in the life of the school, as it is such a crucial expression of the characteristic spirit/ethos of the school.

Schools now face greater challenges to support students at every level and to put in place effective structures to address particular issues such as bullying, bereavement, special needs, crisis response, and pastoral roles.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is a vital element of the Social Personal and Health Education Programme and needs to be dealt within the whole context of the Pastoral Care in the school.

Pastoral Goals for the School

- To create an atmosphere of care in which all members of the school community feel valued, cared for and respected.
- To enable students to develop and learn in a secure and caring environment, with on-going monitoring of progress at every level.
- To nurture high quality teaching and learning relationships.
- To foster strong collaborative leaderships
- To offer a Pastoral Care structure which will enable students to receive help, support, advice and encouragement in all area of their growth and development.

- To build and maintain strong Home School Links and to support parents in their role.
- To support students in times of crisis, e.g. family bereavement or separation, suicide.
- To maintain a caring observance that will detect any underlying problems a student may have and to offer appropriate support and help.
- To encourage parents to work with the school in the best interests of the students and to inform the school of any difficulty which may be affecting the student's life.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management:

Ensures policy is drawn up, developed and evaluated from time to time.

Principal, Deputy Principal:

Monitors the implementation of policy.

Staff:

Develops and implements policy.

Other Pastoral Roles:

Year Heads:

- Liaises with the subject teachers, tutors, guidance counsellor, learning support and chaplain in the interest of the students and in support of the code of Discipline.
- Monitors and ensures completion of records on lates and absenteeism.
- Holds Year Group Assemblies and supports the organization of extra-curricular activities
- Implements the code of discipline in conjunction with the Principal, Deputy Principal and where necessary the Board of Management.
- Supports staff and parents in their care of the students.
- Communicates with parents.
- Informs staff on matters relating to Year Group.

Class Tutors:

- Builds a caring relationship with class.
- Supports behaviour code.
- Has access to information on students in her tutor group.

- Helps with study skills.
- Facilitates leadership.
- Promotes class spirit and cohesion.
- Helps students with exam preparation.
- Liaises with Year Head.
- Has regular meetings with Class Tutor group.

Pastoral Care Team

- To co-ordinate Pastoral Care in the school.
- To support and affirm the work of Year Heads, Class Tutors, Fifth Year Monitors, S.P.H.E teachers, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Learning Support.
- To lead evaluation of Pastoral Care Policy.
- To articulate and implement new developments in the pastoral care area with particular reference to the Pastoral Care Policy.
- To ensure, in consultation with the Principal that opportunities are provided for all staff members to be resourced through training and up-dating courses in pastoral roles.
- To co-ordinate the Fifth Year Monitors and clarify their role in relation to the First Year Students.

Linking with Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, and Learning Support.

The Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain and Learning Support are key people in Pastoral Care. They liaise with Year Heads, Class Tutors, teachers and parents and work with them to provide the best pastoral environment and holistic education for all students.

(See Policies on Learning Support, Guidance Counsellor, S.P.H.E.)

Pastoral Programmes and linking with S.P.H.E.

Social, Personal and Health Education is an integral part of the pastoral care system in the school. In addition to S.P.H.E. the school has other pastoral programmes such as: *induction to the school and its ethos; class and year group spirit; fifth year monitors for first years; study skills; justice and voluntary projects;*

school tours/outings; games and sport; music; art; drama; debates; competitions; guest speakers.

(For further details on S.P.H.E. programmes, resources etc. - see Subject Plan for S.P.H.E.)

Performance Criteria:

The Pastoral Policy will be deemed to be effective if

- Pastoral Care is high on the agenda of each staff member.
- Students and staff are happy and fulfilled and feel safe and secure.
- Students and staff work in an atmosphere free from bullying or harassment.
- Students develop spiritually, socially, morally
- Students progress academically
- Students attend school regularly and punctually.
- Disciplinary problems are lessened
- All students have equal access to the curriculum.
- Students continue in school until they complete the Leaving Cert.
- When students leave school they have the confidence to undertake a further course of study or apprenticeship or find fulfilling and meaningful employment.