

Dunclug Primary School

Policy

for

Pastoral Care

Annual Review carried out by Board of Governors in September 2017.

DUNCLUG PRIMARY SCHOOL

GUIDELINES ON PASTORAL CARE

“Pastoral Care is concern for the child as an individual, and an attempt (through a consideration of factors that affect and influence the child) to develop to a maximum, the all round potential that is inherent in every pupil”.

(From - “Your Pastoral Care in School” by J. Gosling and R. Weeks).

Pastoral Care affects and influences every aspect of our role as educators as well as the development process of the pupils in our care. It cannot be ignored by any teacher. Thus, to be effective in the often difficult social environment in which we work we must first accept the concept of pastoral care as an integral part of our work and second, try to let it show clearly through in our teaching style.

The roots of pastoral care lie in the recognition that children are individuals. They are unique beings with individual needs, potential, limitations, circumstances, feelings, opportunities and expectations.

Every child possesses some qualities worthy of recognition and teachers should always be aware of the part they can play in heightening pupils’ self esteem. Every child should also be stretched to perform to the best of his/her ability bearing in mind that it may not be right to make the same demands of a child who is intelligent and comes from a caring home background, as it is of a child who has obvious special needs or difficult home circumstances. Many children have the luxury of normality in terms of health, social background and development. Others, unfortunately, do not.

Although we as teachers cannot be expected to have the remedy for all ills, we should use our professional ears and eyes to detect where help is needed.

From what has been stated earlier, it can be seen that there should be no divide between the academic and pastoral dimensions. It is our clear responsibility to develop the children on both fronts so that their time spent at this school is fruitful and contented.

AIMS

The twin aims of our policy on pastoral care should be as follows:

1. The development of the whole child - academically and personally.
2. A high regard for the dignity and worth of each individual child.

In order to translate these aims into practice, it might be useful to split the pastoral dimension into a *general school focus* and a more *specialised classrooms focus* both of which should be complementary to each other.

THE GENERAL SCHOOL FOCUS

1. The general focus requires a caring commitment by all teachers to guide and advise pupils, either formally or informally, on personal and educational matters. The implication of this is that the pastoral dimension should permeate all activities in the school.
2. The physical environment of the school should be as clean, neat and attractive as possible. Classrooms and notice boards should have attractive and changing displays.
3. Our extra-curricular activities from Monday to Thursday and our Friday clubs should provide opportunities to foster better pupils' relationships.
4. It is important for pupils and parents to see that we, as members of staff, are committed to the school by our care for its physical attractiveness and our commitment beyond the end of the school day.
5. Parental involvement should be strongly encouraged and structures should be in place so that parents can liaise with the school and form a strong partnership. Examples of this involvement are:
 - ◆ our twice yearly parent/teacher consultations
 - ◆ parents as helpers e.g. on school visits
 - ◆ P.T.A. organised events
 - ◆ parents as visitors, e.g. Carol Services, concerts.
6. Discipline Procedures. Please refer to school guidelines on discipline.
7. (a) An induction programme for new P1's involving
 - pre-school visits
 - half-day attendance
 - partial attendance for the first four/six weeks(b) Links with local secondary schools for our P7 children including full or half-day visits.
8. Efficient monitoring of children's work and progress in order to
 - diagnose children's strengths and weaknesses
 - provide information for parents
 - provide information for other teachers

THE SPECIALIST CLASSROOM FOCUS

- A. In our classrooms we should strive to create an atmosphere that is conducive to academic work in an environment that is free from tension.
- B. The pre-requisites for the class teacher are that he/she should, as well as having sound discipline, be approachable, trusting, aware and caring. These may sound trite but they are evident in all good teachers.
- C. Difficult as it may be in larger classes, we must endeavour to cater for the needs and abilities of the individual pupil and have close oversight of his/her academic and personal progress.
- D. Through everyday occurrences in the classroom, teachers can promote positive attitudes, build self esteem and raise pupils' social awareness.
- E. Teachers should be involved each day in encouraging and motivating pupils or counselling individuals / groups.
- F. In the classrooms a variety of teaching methods and strategies is recommended, many of which should engage the pupils actively in their learning. Sometimes pupils may be working in groups, at other times as individuals while, at other times, the whole class may be working together. At times, the acquisition of knowledge may not be the main concern, with the acquisition of skills being to the forefront.
- G. Class assemblies, outings, competitions and projects provide many opportunities for the pastoral dimension to be encouraged.
- H. As schemes and lessons are prepared, it is worthwhile to spend some time considering how the pastoral dimension inherent in every lesson can be enhanced.
- I. A sense of achievement should be promoted in pupils through challenge and remediation.
- J. As children get older, they should begin to appreciate their own development and take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is to be hoped and expected that the pastoral dimension should contribute to a supportive atmosphere in the school for both teachers and pupils

EVALUATING PASTORAL CARE 1999 (DENI) SUMMARY

ETHOS - Effective when:-

Relationships are good. Between teachers / pupils, between teachers / parents, among staff, among pupils.

Pupils feel secure - free from emotional and physical harm

Self confidence and self esteem are promoted

Pupils are taught to work with their peers

Principal and staff use positive approaches

SYSTEM OF PASTORAL CARE - Effective when:-

- Staff knowledgeable about child abuse, bullying, drug abuse from relevant policies and circulars
- Pupils are developing useful personal and social skills
- Teachers are fair, firm, consistent, compassionate. High standards of behaviour are expected and are evident
- Indiscipline tackled by the school in partnership with parents and support agencies where appropriate
- Achievements of pupils are recognised and celebrated
- Individualised support and guidance
- Information from formal and informal assessment is used to improve the quality of teaching
- School's provision for pastoral care is monitored on a regular basis
- Pupils are confident that staff will make a determined effort to resolve their personal problems and concerns
- Parents can visit the school to discuss the progress and particular needs of their children
- Members of the local community with specific expertise provide the pupils and staff with information and guidance
- Pupils engage in educational and social activities with young people from other schools and cultures.
- Accommodation and resources promote pastoral care.