

# St Malachy's Primary School Ballymoyer



## Pastoral Care Policy 2020-24

St Malachy's Primary School  
74 Ballymoyer Road  
Whitecross  
Co Armagh  
BT60 2LA

**Date Ratified by Board of Governors:** *January 2020*

**Chair of Governors:** *Pat O'Hanlon*

**Principal:** *Justin Toner*

## **INTRODUCTION**

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 our school community - children, parents and all other adults who contribute to the well being of each child.

The Pastoral Care dimension deals with the physical, social, emotional, moral and academic needs of pupils. The teachers care for the pupils in the school will be evident in all aspects of the child's school life.

It is the aim of our school to provide a warm and caring environment so that everyone associated with the school can feel safe and secure.

**Name of Designated Teacher is:**

**Mr. Justin Toner**

## **AIMS**

- To create an environment where children are safe and contented.
- To ensure the all-round development of each child.
- To help children grow in self-esteem, confidence and independence of thought.
- To promote values and beliefs, that are in keeping with our ethos.
- To protect children from harm and to provide them with the skills to cope with possible threats to their personal safety, both within and outside school.
- To encourage tolerance, understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others.
- To promote warm and positive relationships between children, staff and parents.

## **Statement of the school's core values in relation to pastoral care.**

### **CHILDREN**

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

We believe that every child should feel that their work and effort is valued.

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

We believe that every child should be helped to grow in confidence and positive self-esteem.

We believe that every child should be encouraged to develop independence of mind and take responsibility for their own actions.

### **STAFF (Teaching and Non-teaching)**

We believe that all members of staff deserve to be treated with courtesy and respect.

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

We believe that the staff should work together as a team, for the good of the pupils and the good of the school.

We believe that flexibility is an essential quality in a small school setting.

We believe that all members of staff should aim to create a caring environment in which pupils can feel safe and secure.

## **PARENTS**

We believe that parents are vital partners in providing the best possible education for children.

We believe that parents deserve to be kept well informed by the school of all matters relating to their child's education and welfare.

We believe that the school should be open in its approach to parents, so that they feel comfortable about communicating with the school.

## **THE WIDER COMMUNITY**

We believe that members of the local and wider community have an important contribution to make to the education which is provided in St. Malachy's Primary School, Ballymoyer.

The assistance of outside agencies will be sought to extend pupils' experiences e.g. Project work; GAA etc.

- a) Links will be established with neighbouring schools and cross community links will continue where possible.
- b) There will be links with statutory agencies involved in the health and welfare of children.

## **ORGANISATION OF PASTORAL CARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Board of Governors and Principal**

- Our Board of Governors will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the curriculum including monitoring the safety of each child in the school.
- The Principal and staff will ensure that pastoral care is given a high profile within the school development plan.
- Each member of staff will work to build up the pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to be to resist negative peer pressure.

#### **Responsibilities of staff members**

- Every member of staff in the school has responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and well being of pupils.
- Class teachers hold primary responsibility for the pastoral care of the pupils in their classes, although responsibility is also shared with the classroom assistants.
- 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 exercised.

#### **Designated Teachers: Mr Toner & Mrs Smith**

- Ensure liaison with teachers, parents and external support agencies.
- Attend relevant INSET.
- Arrange the provision of school based INSET (eg) Safeguarding, Medical trainings.
- Act as the designated teachers for the investigation of claims of child abuse.
- Providing information and advice in relation to Child Protection for all members of the school community.
- Maintaining all records in relation to Child Protection.

Mrs **C. Smith** is deputy designated teacher and will assume **Mr. Toner's** responsibilities in his absence.

## **Record keeping and administration**

An information form is kept for every child (Data Collection Form). This form is completed on admission by parents and provides information on pastoral and medical matters.

**The school maintains an 'Incident Book/File'**. This records the details of all contacts made by parents with the school in relation to pastoral matters, together with action taken by the school in response to these concerns.

## **Communication with parents**

All parents are provided with a policy giving details of the school's pastoral care arrangements. Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to contact their child's teacher or the Principal if they have any concerns or worries. Urgent concerns will be given immediate attention. We will encourage parents to share concerns about home circumstances or medical matters which may affect their child's work or behaviour in school. Any information disclosed will be treated as confidential. The Pastoral Care Policy will be reviewed every 2 years. The opinions of parents and children will be valued and where appropriate actions will be taken.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

As St Malachy's P.S is a small school, the following basic structure illustrates how incidents are dealt with:

**Class Teacher**

↓ *(Reports to)*

**Head of Pastoral Care/Child Protection**

Mr. Justin Toner / Principal

Whilst the class teacher is identified as the key person in impacting on the care of the pupils in his/her class, it is important that they work in co-operation with the Head of Pastoral Care who will provide support and leadership in the pastoral domain.

In the event of additional support being required the Principal will also arrange support for individual pupils when deemed appropriate.

## **Pastoral Care Code of Practice**

The school will seek to demonstrate its pastoral care in the following ways:

- Greeting pupils and welcoming them when they arrive at school.
- Encouraging a positive and happy atmosphere for learning. Examples include: Chatting informally with pupils, listening to their news, their concerns, etc.
- Getting to know pupils personally, becoming aware of their personal circumstances and showing sensitivity to their individual needs.
- Supporting pupils, as far as possible in situations of need which may arise.
- Ensuring inclusive learning experiences/approaches for children with SEN.
- Promoting an ethos of respect and caring within classrooms.
- Giving pupils praise and encouragement in relation to their work and behaviour, through verbal and written comments and awards systems.
- Promoting the self-esteem and confidence of pupils.
- Allowing pupils to take on responsibility, through jobs in class and around the school.
- Assemblies/Circle Times which address a range of pastoral issues.
- Teaching provision which addresses issues related to pastoral care.
- Providing a range of learning styles which promotes opportunity for active research and self-expression.
- Appropriate supervision of play areas at break and lunch time, with particular attention to the prevention of bullying.
- Supervision of pupils at home-time, to ensure safe departure from the school premises.
- Development of partnership and communication between all members of staff, in order to facilitate the sharing of information and concerns about pupils.
- Development of partnerships and communication with parents, in order to facilitate the sharing of information and concerns about pupils.

## **CURRICULUM PROVISION FOR PASTORAL CARE**

Our whole curriculum should be such that children recognize, promote and help develop their own talents and the talents of those around them. It should promote high educational, social and moral standards whilst fostering independence, self-discipline and positive self-esteem.

In the day to day life of the school, children should be acknowledged and valued for the important role they play. They should be made aware that they must be responsible for their own actions and the effects these have on others. They should be encouraged to recognize and be sensitive to the needs of all members of the school community.

Class teachers should be aware of the many and varied needs of the children in their care. This should be reflected in their planning, teaching approaches, groupings and use of resources. They should strive to help children develop to their full academic, social and personal potential, to take pride in their work and to value the contributions made by their peers.

Assessment should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It should be challenging, yet take account of children's ability, thus creating opportunities for success. Assessment outcomes should be used to improve teaching and learning to provide opportunities, where necessary, to modify content and strategies.

Classroom displays in the school should be bright and stimulating. All children should have a chance to have their work displayed thereby promoting self-confidence and self-worth. A structure for monitoring Pastoral Care arrangements should operate within the school. All staff should liaise with children, parents and non-teaching staff to monitor the effectiveness of provision.



In planning curricular provision for pastoral care, the school has taken CCEA's draft guidance on Personal Development as a framework.

This addresses curricular provision in three main areas:

### Personal Understanding

Self-esteem & self awareness	Addressed through Religious Education programme; aspects of work in English; promotion of pupils' self confidence through participation in assemblies, weekly masses, Pupil of the Week Award, Certificates, Comments. School promotes individual talents (e.g. Dance, Drama, Sport etc.
Interpersonal & social skills	The school promotes the development of social skills including good manners, paired working, group-working, meeting and greeting people, taking on responsibility (ECO Committee). On school outings, pupils will be encouraged to respect people and property.
Emotional literacy	This area is addressed through discussions, literature and opportunities which arise in the course of day to day classroom activity. The school uses circle time.

## Personal Health

Developing a healthy lifestyle	This is addressed through the school's programme for PDMU at KS1 and 2. This includes drugs education. The school also follows a 'Boost better breaks' policy. Extra-curricular activities provided include: (football, drama, and cycling)
Personal safety	This is addressed through the PDMU, WAU Curriculum, and religious education
Safety in the environment	Fire safety is addressed through a teaching programme in P5. Cycling proficiency training is offered to pupils in P6-P7.
Relationship and sexuality education	Appropriate aspects of this theme are addressed through the WAU, PDMU and religious education teaching programmes.

## Living in the local and wider community (Citizenship)

People in the community	A range of visitors come into the school from the wider community to contribute to topics such as 'People who help us'. Industry Links - farming, history.
Culture in the community	The school has close association with local schools and organisations. Pupils participate in local festivals and musical events. Extended Schools Activities, Cross Community Visits / Education.
The wider community	Pupils participate in a range of school visits to places of historical, cultural and environmental interest. The school takes part in inter-school events such as sports competitions. The school selects two charities to support each year.
Environmental issues	These issues are addressed through WAU Curriculum. The school was awarded the second ECO-Green Flag in May 2015. The ECO Committee is responsible for completing duties to promote environmental issues.

## **SUPPORTING POLICIES**

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

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In St. Malachy's P.S. we believe that Special Needs can be of an emotional, behavioural, social, physical or educational nature and that we should make relevant provision for individual children for as long as they need it.

In keeping with the Code of Practice for Special Needs, class teachers and SENCO should work together to provide a suitable, planned programme designed to meet children's specific needs. In doing so they should liaise with and enlist the help of relevant external agencies to assist in this process and should ensure that adequate lines of communication are established.

If there is a concern about a child's emotional, social or physical needs, the class teacher should liaise closely with the parents, and principal to discuss and plan for the most effective provision to meet the child's needs. The school should ensure that all children with special physical needs are treated with dignity and respect.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Positive behaviour is a necessary part of the provisions we make to create and maintain an orderly working environment in which all members of the school community feel safe and secure.

All members of the school community share a collective responsibility for promoting positive behaviour.

Teachers should make children aware that in order for learning to take place there is a need for self-discipline and responsible behaviour.

Teaching and non-teaching staff should implement the agreed set of school rules consistently, fairly and sympathetically.

The set of rules should be made known both to the children and the parents. Parents are expected to support the school in implementing it.

Good behaviour on the part of the individual or groups should be acknowledged both formally and informally.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

In accordance with the school's policy and procedures for Child Protection, concerns regarding the safety and protection of individual children should be referred to Mr Toner, the designated teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Smith, the deputy designated teacher for Child Protection.

## **SUPPORTING POLICIES**

Whilst all policies and procedures within the school take cognizance of the pastoral care of pupils and staff some specifically support it in very specific areas.

Cross referencing is essential in delivering the pastoral care policy.

These policies included

- Child Protection
- Acceptable use of the Internet
- Special Education Needs
- Concerns & complaints (Refer to school prospectus)
- Performance Review and Staff Development
- Discipline

## **LIAISON WITH BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

For GOVERNORS of the school this means:

- a) providing a safe learning environment
- b) encouraging the professional development of all the staff
- c) being aware of all relevant legislation
- d) being fair employers
- e) dealing with all cases of grievances and/or discipline, fairly and effectively
- f) involving themselves in the life of the school as far as their time permits

## **LIAISON WITH PARENTS**

We see ourselves as partners with parents in the education of pupils. Mutual support and co-operation is an essential element in achieving our objectives. On-going activities to ensure communication and parental involvement include:

- Regular parent/teacher meetings
- P1 Induction booklet, News, Letters, Correspondence
- Pupil Reports
- Sporting events/Sports Day
- Fundraising activities
- Extra-curricular activities
- Christmas Performance
- Special Masses through the School Year
- Penitential Services
- First Holy Communion/Confirmation
- Enrolment Services
- Curriculum meetings
- Halloween Fancy Dress Parade
- Flower arranging classes.

## **LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

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

## INFORMATION ON THE PROCESS FOR REPORTING CONCERNS

If you have any concerns about any aspect of your child's education you should:

Firstly

Talk to the Class teacher

Secondly

Talk to the Principal  
School Tel. 02837507428

If still unresolved:

Write to the Chairperson of the Board  
of Governors.

**Pat O'Hanlon**  
**Creggan West Road**  
**Whitecross**  
**Co Armagh**  
**BT60 2FA**

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **Monitoring**

On-going monitoring is an integral part of our policy. The Pastoral Care and other policies are discussed at regular staff meetings to ensure that the policies are implemented as planned. Support is given to those teachers, (including substitute teachers) who require assistance in carrying out any aspect of their pastoral role.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation procedures are in place to discover ways of improving the quality of provision in the school for the benefit of all pupils and teachers.

All aspects of the policy are evaluated on an on-going basis with parents', pupils' and staff views being requested through questionnaires, informal interviews and focus groups. Recent Circulars from DENI, EA Southern Region, CCMS AND CCEA will be taken into consideration when reviewing our pastoral care policy. Whilst the Head of Pastoral Care has overall responsibility for evaluation, self-evaluation is a feature of every teacher's role.

### **Conclusion**

The evaluation of the school's system of pastoral care is effective when the school policy and planning for pastoral care are fully implemented and reflected in the quality of provision within and beyond the classroom and the effectiveness of the support arrangements for individual pupils.

At all levels of the caring process all staff and pupils need to feel valued, safe and secure.