

# Pastoral Care Policy



## Rationale

An effective Pastoral Care system is required as a result of the rapid changes which are taking place in society.

Children require all the skills necessary to deal with the rising pressures of media, family, education and peer pressure that they encounter in their daily lives.

We in St Ronan's believe that effective Pastoral Care should contribute to the creation of a supportive atmosphere for the whole school community.

## **Definition**

Pastoral Care is composed of different policies, programmes and procedures which encourage each individual child to develop their full potential by catering for their spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual, physical and social needs, in a safe and secure environment. Each child will be encouraged to develop personal, social and academic skills to prepare them for the “outside world”.

## **Aims**

- 1 We at St. Ronan’s are aware of the need to help our children manage their present lives, as well as to help them prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, so we endeavour to provide

for the development of the pupil as a person as well as a learner.

- 2 We aim to develop our pupils “life skills” – critical thinking, decision making, effective communication, learning from mistakes, which are so necessary for their health and safety in today’s society.
- 3 We aim to provide a caring commitment to guide and advise our pupils on both personal and educational matters and we seek to build up a community of children who care about each other and show respect for themselves and others.
- 4 The staff of St. Ronan’s aim to build a special relationship with, and a knowledge of, the children in their care and thus endeavour to raise pupils’ social awareness, promote

positive attitudes and build their self-esteem.

- 5 Contributions to the pastoral work of the class teacher will come from their partnership with colleagues, local priests, educational welfare officers, community police, school nurse and other outside agencies.
- 6 We aim to promote a partnership and close working relationship with parents/guardians whose views and wishes as prime carers will be heard and respected to enable us to support their children's learning.
- 7 We aim to offer a framework of values and positive behaviour enabling our children to be self-reliant, motivated, self-disciplined and to make choices in a moral context.

# **Specific Issues**

## **Ethos**

In St Ronan's we promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and co-operation which will contribute to the learning process and generate a positive climate within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for.

## **Relationships**

Many people are interacting daily within the school and consequently a wide range of relationships exist. As a school we will endeavour to promote positive, open relationships in both formal and informal situations.

The school recognises that regular, effective communication is crucial in Pastoral Care and positive relationships will be promoted between:-

- Board of Governors – School
- Principal – Staff
- Staff – Staff
- Staff – Pupils
- Pupils – Pupils
- School – Parents
- School – External Agencies/  
Community.

**The experience of Pastoral Care for All**

**For our Children**

*The adult school personnel will:*

- 1 Encourage respect for self and others
- 2 Promote courteous behaviour to everyone

- 3 Develop positive relationships among peers and adults
- 4 Be consistent and fair so that children will feel secure and know the parameters within which they must behave.
- 5 Be an instrument for advice and guidance.
- 6 Be a support in times of difficulty
- 7 Accept and empathise with unique experience of each child.

### **For our Staff**

*All staff will be accorded consideration and respect at all times.*

- 1 Respect for their individual dignity.
- 2 A supportive affirming community of fellow workers.
- 3 Opportunities to develop personally and professionally.
- 4 A tolerance of their weaknesses.

5 A sharing of strengths and talents.

## **For our Parents/Guardians**

*Our parents/guardians will*

- be involved fully in the pastoral care of the school community.
- enjoy positive relationships with all school personnel.
- made aware of the arrangements whereby they may meet with staff.
- be confident of a welcoming spirit and mutual support.
- be partners with staff.

## **Values**

Every opportunity will be taken to praise our pupils for their contributions to the life of the school. Through positive daily experiences, in addition to

curricular activities, we aim to communicate the following positive values and beliefs:-

- Self-respect
- Honesty
- Tolerance
- Respect for others and their property
- Independence
- Co-operation
- Positive behaviour
- Reconciliation

## **Self-Esteem**

St Ronan's Primary School recognises that the most important aspect of education is the wholeness of the child. As a school we will encourage children to think positively about themselves and accept their own individuality.

We believe that when a child's self-esteem will be boosted then they feel valued in all aspects of school life.

The school will aim to promote positive self-esteem and confidence as these promote learning. Pupils will be involved in a range of activities to all to experience success and thus giving the teachers an opportunity to praise each child.

## **Personal Safety**

Childhood is a time of joy and discovery when children should be nurtured and loved so they can grow into caring adults. Part of the process of discovery and growth must also help children to learn how to cope with potential dangers.

The safe use of technology is an increasing challenge e.g. internet and mobile phones. St Ronan's aims to equip children with the knowledge and skills to make them less vulnerable and more self-confident.

## **Home/School Partnership**

- 1 School should be seen as an extension of the family.
- 2 School and home should be committed to a common ideal namely the holistic development of each individual.
- 3 Adults at home and in school will be a positive role model for our children by working to the same end and displaying respect for each other at all times.

4 Links with other schools will be fostered to ensure the easy induction of our Primary 1 children and for the transition of our Primary 7 children to second level education.

## **The School in the Community.**

Our aim will be to foster in our children an awareness of the wider community

- 1 We will involve children in the support of charities and care for others
- 2 We will encourage participation in community activities
- 3 For example:
  - Newry Parish church activities
  - Cultural activities such as Newry Feis
  - Sporting activities such as community games

- 4 Our children will add to the life of the community e.g.
- By reading at Mass
  - By presenting a Christmas Play or carol service in Newry hospital or old peoples' home.

## **Personal Development**

Personal Development will be taught through the delivery of Religious Education/P.D.M.U./Pastoral Care Provision.

Contact will be made with outside agencies such as P.S.N.I. Community Officers with a view to further developing “The Case Programme.”

This programme will contribute to the development of personal skills which are necessary for effective operation at

an individual level and interpersonal skills which are necessary for effective interaction with others. P.7. pupils will also participate in “I’m Special – You’re Special” programme organised by S.E.L.B. Pastoral Care Team.

Drama Groups, Speakers etc. dealing with Pastoral Care Issues such as Bullying, Respecting Diversity will be invited in to school.

## **Discipline**

Our Pastoral Care Policy will enhance discipline by promoting:

- 1 Respect for self and others
- 2 Tolerance
- 3 Self-discipline

# **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for Pastoral Care in the school
- The Principal, Mr Dawson, has overall responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care and fostering positive relationships.  
In addition, he will review and update the policy, inform and liaise with parents and initiate and ensure Pastoral Care is forefront in the School's Development Plan.
- Teachers have responsibility for promoting Pastoral Care by:
  - Helping children to make informed decisions.
  - Celebrating success.
  - Building up children's self-esteem
  - Encouraging assertiveness.

- Encouraging sensitivity.
- Developing effective communication.

Teachers build up a knowledge of pupils as individuals and take an interest in their special needs and all round development.

Support staff will contribute to the promotion of Pastoral Care consistent with our policy.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

To ensure the Pastoral Care Policy is working effectively in our school, the policy procedures and practice will be kept under review. We value the contribution that can be made by our teachers, parents and pupils to effect the appropriate change when necessary.

This will be achieved by:-

- Listening to staff and pupils concerns and acting on them.
- Parents being encouraged to inform the school immediately if they have any concerns.
- Parent/Teacher Interview meetings.
- Staff and Board of Governors meetings.
- S.E.N. Review meetings.
- Open Days.
- Induction Days.
- Information Evenings.
- “The Monday Note.”

## **Staff Training**

Training will be updated in relation to policies, procedures and pastoral issues and staff will be informed of Department of Education changes.

Support staff will be updated on policies and procedures by the Principal.

Staff will attend relevant courses provided by CASS and external agencies.

“Baker Days” and directed time will be used for training as required.

## **Resourcing**

Pastoral Care encompasses all areas of school life and is important in the development of the “whole” child. To ensure the implementation of the policy:-

- Relevant resources will be purchased for use in class.
- Time is allocated for review, training and implementation change.

- Pastoral Care is part of the School Development Plan.
- The Board of Governors and Principal ensure the maintenance of the school environment.

## **Pastoral Activities**

As a school we encourage pupils to participate in a range of activities to develop self-esteem and self-confidence. Activities include: sport, music, cycling proficiency and competitions.

## **Supervision -Primary School**

School starts at 9.00am. In the morning children should assemble directly at their classroom door until the doors open at 8.45am. Parents should be aware that if pupils arrive earlier than

8.45am there will be no supervision therefore it is vitally important that children should not be running around the school grounds but wait quietly at their classroom.

Classroom assistants and duty teachers will supervise the pupils at break time. Supervisory assistants and the Principal (P3-P7 ), and the Vice-Principal (P1-P2) will supervise the pupils at lunchtime.

After school parents/carers will collect P1 – P3 pupils from the front of the building at 2.00pm. ( P3's at 3pm from January to June ).

If pupils are not collected after a short time they will be supervised by the classroom assistant, teacher or Principal until a “named” collector can be contacted.

If a parent requires their child to leave school between 9.00am – 3.00pm the teacher should be informed in writing and the child collected from the school office at the appropriate time.

All staff are involved in the supervision of children to ensure safety at all times between 9.00am and 3.00pm each day.

Duty teachers and the Principal accompany classes from P4-P7 down the walker's line to the front gates of the school at 3pm.

All children are informed that if they are not picked up by their parent/carer they are to come back to the school office where their parents will be contacted.

## **Induction -Primary One**

In St. Ronan's we recognise that coming to school for the first time is a very important and emotional step for parents and children alike.

To assist in this transition P.1. children and their parents are invited to visit the school in June – prior to starting school in September. They are given a welcome pack which contains all relevant information for their parents including the name of their P1 teacher.

Pupils coming into Primary 1 and their parents are then invited in for an individual meeting with their class teacher in September prior to them starting the next day. This allows the children to meet their teacher, become

familiar with their new school and thus ease the transition from home or pre-school setting to Primary School. Children beginning in P1 are admitted on a staggered entry basis. Parents are then invited for a further induction evening in the first term.

This induction programme also provides an opportunity for parents to meet each other, and to become familiar with relevant school policies and procedures and discuss how they can assist and support their children in Primary 1.

Individual arrangements can be made to facilitate prospective parents and their children if the above mentioned programme is inconvenient.

## **New Pupils**

Parents of children transferring to St Ronan's are given an appointment during which the parents will meet the Principal. They will receive a Prospectus, a tour of the school and any other documentation required. Parents who do not speak English will be provided with an interpreter if this is requested.

The child/children changing schools are invited to attend a meeting with their new teacher and then begin the next day where they are introduced to their classmates.

At their first assembly, the child/children are greeted and their greeting is extended to the "Monday Note" in which their name is published.

## **School Trips**

The Health and Safety Provision for children participating in School Trips is of the utmost importance. Guidelines from D.O.E. will be adhered to.

## **Medication**

The Principal and Staff are committed to supporting pupils with specific Medication Needs. D.O.E. Guidelines will be adhered to in regard to the administration of medicine.

## **Charities**

Statement of Raising funds for Charities

## **Aims**

- To encourage a spirit of generosity and care for others.
- To encourage children to look outside of their own needs and to think of others.
- To give children a practical way of expressing Christian charity.

## **Strategy**

We will have one major appeal per term. Other incidental charitable causes may also be supported e.g. Food Aid – one day appeal but on a smaller scale. The decision to support other appeals on a smaller scale will be taken by the charities sub-committee which consists of: The Principal, the pastoral care co-ordinator and an assistant teacher.

We will have a balanced approach between a local charity, a third world charity and one other. The other may be the result of an outside agency e.g. N.S.P.C.C. approaching school, or may be in response to an emergency or crisis situation e.g. a famine, or a charity suggested by a member of staff/parent. The selection of the charity for our third appeal of the year will be made on a whole staff basis early in the third term.

## **Plan for Charitable Collections**

Term 1: St Vincent de Paul

Term 2: Tracer

Term 3: One other charity.