

St. Malachy's Primary School

St. Malachy's Primary School, Glencull

Pastoral Care Policy



Policy adopted by Board of Governors: December 2017

Policy review date: December 2019

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Rationale

Pastoral Care in St. Malachy's Primary School is a priority. It is acknowledged as playing a crucial role in the development of the ethos of the school. This ethos is based on Christian values with emphasis on the intellectual, moral, emotional and spiritual development of each pupil.

The Pastoral Care Policy supports the school in promoting a caring, supportive environment in which staff and pupils can work in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

It will inform and reassure parents that their children are being educated in a safe and caring environment. Pastoral Care in St. Malachy's is based on the principles of good relationships and mutual respect. The staff are acutely aware of the challenges and influences that children may encounter living in the 21st century i.e. varied models of family unit, the very real challenges in terms of child abuse, parental difficulties in raising children and the ever-changing messages and influences from society towards issues such as sex, drugs and leisure in relation to health, violence etc.

In St. Malachy's Primary School we recognise that central to the success of this is the involvement of parents and other outside agencies within the community. We strive to work in partnership with them to achieve our aims.

Aims

- To ensure that each pupil feels valued, special and unique and a member of the school community.
- To instil a sense of personal worth and dignity through intellectual, moral and spiritual development.
- To empower pupils in building and monitoring good relationships with pupils, teachers and others.
- To assist individuals to develop their lifestyles, appreciate life and respect the world in which they live.
- To encourage a sense of personal accountability for their own learning and actions.
- To promote our Catholic ethos, values and beliefs.

Supporting Policies

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

Cross referencing the following policies is essential in delivering the pastoral care policy.

These policies include:

- **Health and Safety**
- **Child Protection/Safeguarding**
- **Anti – Bullying**
- **E – Safety**
- **Intimate Care**
- **Use of Reasonable Force**
- **Complaints**
- **Positive Behaviour**
- **First Aid and the Administration of Medicines**
- **Special Educational Needs**
- **Settling in Policy**
- **Critical incident**

Inclusivity

St. Malachy's Primary School supports the fundamental principle that every pupil is entitled to be educated. In doing this, we ensure that pupils' individual needs are identified and supported by both internal resources and staff, as well as external agencies, to ensure they continue to feel part of the school community.

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:

- School website
- Annual parent/teacher meetings
- Prospectus
- Monthly newsletters
- Annual Progress Reports
- School Policies
- Induction Days
- Verbal Communication (Telephone Calls/Messages/Notes from Teacher)
- Verbal Communication (Initiated by Parents)
- Contact through external agencies including Education Welfare Officer (EWO), School Nurse, Educational Psychologist etc.

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- School Mass, Celebrating the Sacraments
- Friends of Glencull Community and Parent Association
- Extra-curricular activities
- Musical shows/Assemblies
- Grandparent days

Staff development and training

Pastoral care remains a permanent feature of our School Development Plan and subsequently staff development and training are considered essential to support this. Our ongoing development programme helps us identify the attitudes, values, skills and knowledge which will enable us carry out our pastoral roles.

Training will be provided through:

- School based courses/ dissemination of good practice
- External courses organised by the Education Authority Southern Region
- Other outside agencies where necessary e.g. Nurse, EWO, Psychologist etc.
- Visits to other schools/ cluster meetings

As the need arises training will be provided.

Resourcing

To ensure the implementation of the policy, the Principal ensures that adequate resources are available and that time will be made available to develop the programme throughout the school.

Most issues will be addressed within the classroom environment; however on occasions when time is required to follow up an issue, time will be given to the staff member to carry this through, e.g. interview, meeting, consultation etc.

Materials on Circle Time, Anti-Bullying, Promoting Positive Behaviour are available and can be requested from Principal/Designated Teacher.

Liaison with external agencies

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

These may include:

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DENI

CCMS

EA- Southern Region

CPSSS

Curriculum Advisory Support Services (changing January 2016 so a smooth transition with CASS service to be arranged)

Educational Psychologist

Education Welfare Officer

Peripetetic Teachers/Outreach Teachers

Road Safety

Behaviour Support Team – ACE team

School Nurse

Social Worker/s

Speech and Language Therapists

PSNI

Love for Life

Board of Governors

Parish Priest

Glencull Nursery School, Local Playgroups, Post Primary Schools

PCPP Programme (Cross Community Links)

Ballygawley Shared Education group

Cluster group/St Ciaran's Transition group

Developmental needs of pupils

Cognisance is taken of the needs of pupils as they develop and change during their time at school.

Taught curriculum

A taught PD & MU programme is delivered to all classes. It aims to empower young people with the knowledge, values/attitudes and skills required to make good choices in their lives. Active learning strategies are employed to ensure the delivery of the programme.

Role of the co-ordinator

The Principal has overall responsibility for Pastoral Care in St. Malachy's. The Principal is also the co-ordinator. When necessary, he advises staff on curriculum content and relevant issues relating to Pastoral Care. Pastoral care is a shared responsibility.

Role of the class teacher

- Having a clear understanding of the vision of the school in respect of its children, its community and its point of development.
- Contributing to the development of policies which establish principles for action throughout the school.
- Promoting a caring environment where children's learning is developed within the context of their individual needs and abilities.
- Availing of opportunities for professional development.
- Establishing appropriate structures of time and support for those in need.
- Being aware of the children's individual "backgrounds" and experiences and individual "needs and aspirations".
- Fostering relationships where children feel happy and secure and find staff approachable at all times.

Encouraging and motivating pupils at class level

Each class teacher is responsible for knowing the children they teach and for delivering the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Teachers will provide a listening ear and provide reassurance.

It is the classroom teacher who will create a climate in which the children feel safe and secure and the teacher will encourage pupil motivation and commitment.

The personal and social development of pupils will grow from the close relationship between the teacher and the pupils, e.g. recognising personal achievement.

Through daily classroom practice, the self – esteem of children will be developed, positive attitudes will be promoted and teacher will raise pupils' social awareness, e.g. Quality Circle Time, greeting time, stickers and stamps. There will be an opportunity to explore attitudes and those of others.

The class teacher will endeavour to provide time for the children to reflect on what they have learned and provide opportunities for children to evaluate their own learning so that children will appreciate their own development and adopt a positive attitude to learning.

Together teacher and children will discuss and develop class rules and these, together with the school rules, will be reinforced each academic year.

Encouraging and motivating pupils at a whole- school level

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Children will also be encouraged on a wider whole school level by:

- Acknowledging personal achievement at assembly – activities inside/outside school and communicating this in the weekly newsletter which is sent home
- Work/ photo on school website
- Celebration Assembly
- Promoting good behaviour
- Giving children praise for their efforts e.g. keeping school tidy, saving energy, behaving on the bus
- Acknowledging participation in extra-curricular activities and events
- Celebrating success – Communion, Confirmation etc.
- Local Press
- Participation in Sports Day
- Inviting guest speakers into school, e.g Dog Trust. etc
- Involving the children in community events e.g. Sporting Tournaments. Parish Activity
- Re-enforcing the opportunity for children to talk to someone when they are worried or concerned
- Hosting internal activities e.g. World Book Day Fancy Dress, Sports Day etc

This list is not exhaustive.

Monitoring, recording and evaluating

Class teachers will monitor the progress of each child in their care, both academically and pastorally. Any concerns will be reported to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Principal.

Role of classroom assistant/ volunteers/ students

- Understanding and having empathy with the general ethos of the school
- Being a partner with the teacher in providing a caring approach
- Helping the children achieve their personal goals
- Developing a team approach where each member has a particular role to play
- Being aware of the children's individual "backgrounds" and experiences and individual "needs and aspirations."

Role of the parish priest

The Parish Priest, Father O Dwyer, supports the primary school providing friendship to the children and staff. He is supported by Fr Hackett P.E. who assists in the parish. He meets the staff and children very regularly, visiting classes, during the end of year Mass, Ash Wednesday, preparing for the Sacraments and arranged visits to the Church.

Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors play a very active role in the management of the school and the pastoral care of all of the children is at the centre of all their decisions. The principal's report in each meeting outlines the activities and programmes undertaken by the school and they are informed about all Child Protection issues at each meeting.

Partnership with Parents

The school as a community should be seen as an extended family where everyone works for the common good. Parents will always be made welcome and encouraged to feel that their role is important and appreciated. Parents, teachers and all staff will share duties as part of a mutual team. This partnership with good communication and cooperation will be necessary for the all round development of each child.

Review and Monitoring

The Board of Governors reviews this policy every two years. The school staff regularly review the policy with regard to its implementation. The Principal ensures that the policy is implemented on a day to day basis and that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them.

Date Policy Amended (in light of personnel changes): _____

Signed:  (Principal)

 (Chair of Board of Governors)

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