

Borrisokane Community College

Pastoral Care Policy

Mission Statement

We seek to promote a caring and committed school community
*which will facilitate the education of our students
and where each individual is valued as a unique human being.*
“Is ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid”

Statement

We understand Pastoral Care *‘as an approach to education which endeavours to value and develop each member of the school community. It promotes learning at every level of the student.’* (The Year Head, Monahan 1998 IAPCE). This approach animates the nature of our pastoral care provision. All members of the school community – students, staff and parents have a role in implementing pastoral care in line with our mission statement. Each member of the school community has access to the relevant pastoral structures and procedures. More than anything else we seek to nurture positive relationships as the core resource in developing a pastoral approach. This policy endeavors to put in place the framework necessary to underpin and support this approach. The policy will address the following areas:

- ❖ Pastoral role: definitions and responsibilities
- ❖ Pastoral programmes
- ❖ Pastoral procedures
- ❖ Resources and professional development
- ❖ Monitoring and evaluation

Pastoral Roles

Year Head

- Monitor Academic Progress
- Setting up study plans for students
- Monitor Attendance
- Oversee in conjunction with Class Tutor – student lates and absences
- Get a copy of results of all exams and discuss with students
- Sign reports going home and put in a comment
- Regular contact with Parents – letter, phone and meetings.
- Student Personal Development
- Co-ordinate Parent/Teacher Meeting for year group
- Role in Implementing the Behaviour Code
- Involved in Positive Discipline
- Assemblies of year group important – motivation, reward system
- Track persistent offenders
- Time must be given to recognising the good student
- Monitor uniform and deal with offenders
- Year Head highlight issues in relation to year group to all staff at morning breaks
- Facilitating regular meetings of the team of tutors to review and plan
- Co-ordinating all information given to and received from year heads and tutors, and checking action has been taken

- Reporting to and liaising with, the Principal, Deputy Principal and pastoral team regarding the year group
- To know personally each student in the year group
- Keeping and overseeing records concerning students.
- Liaising with student representatives in the Year Group
- Assistant Principals supervise on corridors

Class Tutor

A Class Tutor is the teacher who, on behalf of the school community, undertakes the role of caring for a class group in order to promote learning at every level of the person.

- Builds a relationship with each student
- Explains the school behaviour code on a regular basis
- Encourages regular attendance and punctuality
- Has access to information on students
- Looks out for medical issues
- Encourages support of, and participation, in the ethos of the school
- Encourages development of study skills
- Promotes class spirit and cohesion – Trip, Talks.
- Encourages exam preparation
- Plays a part in induction
- Distributes school information to parents as necessary
- Collects funds and information from parents as necessary
- Meets monthly with year group of tutors and year heads
- Participates in annual review of pastoral care
- Passes information to subject teachers when necessary

Chaplain

The role of the Chaplain is to be a faith presence in the school community, available to all students and staff. The chaplain's non disciplinary role in the school enables her to develop a relationship of trust with the students, staff and parents. She works in conjunction with the staff within the mission statement of the school. The school has a holistic approach, promoting the moral, spiritual social and personal development of students. The Chaplain participates in activities which relate to the well-being and development of the school community e.g. Pastoral Care meetings, Crisis Response Group.

The School Chaplain exercises her role by

1. personal contact with individual students
2. access to class and small groups
3. helping with liturgical functions
4. maintaining a lively interest in recreational, cultural and outreach activities
5. responding to day – to – day pastoral needs of students

The Chaplain is qualified to work with students and young people as part of the Rainbows Loss and Bereavement Group.

Counsellor

A Counsellor is currently employed as a result of funding received from the Health Service Executive and Proctor & Gamble, Nenagh. Students are referred to the Counsellor by the principal, chaplain and pastoral team. All students before attending the Counsellor must have parental consent. This is a confidential service where only issues where a person is in danger or reports of abuse are referred to the School Principal. The Counsellor as part of the service

may involve parents if necessary. In some circumstances students may be referred to outside agencies for additional or specialised support. Parents will be informed if students are to be referred to an outside agency unless it would put the student in danger.

The Chaplain coordinates the system of students meeting the Counsellor.

Guidance Counsellor

The role of the Guidance Counsellor is to help students with decision making, problem solving and behavioural change in relation to their personal, social and career development.

This includes classroom guidance activities and one to one meetings with students. The Guidance Counsellor is also available to meet parents if required.

The guidance teacher for year groups attends Year Head Class tutor meetings to get and give feedback on students.

Pastoral Care Team

The Pastoral Care team meets on a weekly basis to review students who have care needs and put in place a programme of care for these students. Year Heads will complete a form to refer students to the Pastoral Care Team. Any staff who have concerns about students should refer them to the relevant Year Head.

The Pastoral Care team discuss student's issues and may refer students to internal school personnel – Guidance Counsellor, Teachers with Guidance hours, Chaplain, Home School Liaison Teacher. Students may also be referred to the Counsellor who is employed on a temporary basis as a result of funding received from the HSE and other sources. In some cases, students are referred to outside agencies such as the H.S.E.

The Pastoral Care team also forms the Crisis Response Team and has a role in ensuring a process is in place to bring the school through a crisis situation and in the event of a crisis, to coordinate the process.

Rainbows

Rainbows is a Peer Support Programme for children aged 6 – 18 years, who are grieving loss in their lives usually as a result of bereavement or separation. Groups of three to five children of the same age group take part in the programme. The sessions are run by trained, caring adult facilitators. The sessions are usually held once a week over a number of weeks and on the final night a prayer service or mass is held for the children in the group and their families and friends. This is a confidential service and further information is available from Mrs Duggan or Sr. Nora at the Community College.

Cairde

Cairde are a group of Transition Year students selected every year to Mentor the first year students. The Cairde are invited to apply for the role. The core duty of the Cairde is to make the transition from Primary to Post Primary school as easy as possible. This is carried out by arranging a Cairde to be in charge of a small group of first years. The Cairde then help the first years by getting to know them, help them with any issues that arise by guiding them towards help and they monitor bullying.

Pastoral Programmes

SPHE

The SPHE policy should be referred to for the content and implementation of the SPHE Programme.

Religion

Each class group from first year to fifth year has an allocation of two class periods of religious education per week. Sixth year students have an allocation of one class period per week. The programme studies the Christian Church's, creeds/beliefs, code/moral laws and worship. An experiential approach to religious education is promoted. The aim is to develop the spiritual dimension of the individual and of the school itself. Classes are supplemented by the school retreat and the work of the Church of Ireland and Catholic Chaplains. Religious services take place throughout the year to celebrate special occasions in the church and school.

Aims of Religious Education

- to provide the opportunity for students to worship God
- to consider spiritual and moral issues
- to explore their own beliefs
- to encourage participation in services
- to develop community spirit
- to promote a common ethos and shared values
- to reinforce positive attitudes

Youth Group

Sixteen students are selected to take part in the Youth Group. These students selected are second year students and students from the Autism Centre. One component of this is a personal development programme which aims to develop self-esteem, leadership, team building and assertiveness skills. The students also take part in extracurricular activities to enhance self-esteem and to give new experiences. Students receive two certificates of achievement – one for personal development and another for achievement on extracurricular activities.

Pastoral Procedures

Record Keeping

A file is kept on all students. This contains information on the students – personal details, Psychological Reports, Discipline Reports, Doctors notes, Attendance, etc. The Class Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Principal and Principal have access to this file. Year Heads also have details on student's achievements in examinations. Special Needs information is stored by the Special Needs coordinator in a confidential file and relevant information is made available to teachers as necessary. Parents may request access to information held in the school on their child.

Crisis Response – A policy has being developed in this area.

Summary Checklist

1. Gather the facts – Who? What? When? Where?
2. Contact appropriate agencies
3. Convene the Crisis Response Team
4. Organise for supervision of students
5. Inform Staff
6. Agree on a statement of facts
7. Identify high risk students
8. Appoint someone to deal with phone enquiries

9. Organise timetable for the day
10. Inform parents/guardians
11. Inform students
12. Make contact with the bereaved family
13. Organise support
14. Respond to the media.

Linking with parents

The Year Head is the formal link between the school and parents. Parents are encouraged to contact the Year Head in relation to any issues concerning their child. The school journal is used as a link between home and school. Parents and staff should use the relevant pages in the journal for two-way communication. Parents are welcome to contact the school to discuss with school personnel issues in relation to their child. If parents wish to arrange a meeting with school staff they should refer to the school policy on Meetings with Teachers. A copy of this is available in the student's journal.

Linking with student's council

The student's council were consulted in relation to drawing up this policy and will be encouraged to give feedback on any issues affecting students. A useful tool for feedback from students is the morning notes system. Students are regularly asked to write a note at roll call primarily in relation to bullying issues and also any other issues they may wish to highlight. These notes are treated in confidence and are read only by the Principal or Deputy Principal. Any issues highlighted in the notes are investigated.

Resources and professional development

The school is committed to providing the necessary resources to underpin this pastoral policy. In particular, we are committed to providing where possible tailored professional development programmes for Class Tutors and Year Heads and other roles mentioned in the policy. There will also be annual opportunities for the full staff to review the effectiveness of these roles and other pastoral issues.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy was drawn up during the school year 2007/2008. It was reviewed by the staff, parent's association, students council and adopted by the Board of Management on 18th February 2008. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Pastoral Care Team and all the partners will be consulted in relation to any changes to the policy.

