



# St. Mary's Limavady

*Scoil Mhuire Léim an Mhadaidh*

*Living Faith, Inspiring Learning, Shaping Futures*

## **PASTORAL CARE POLICY**

**St. Mary's Limavady**

Revised  
To be reviewed

May 2017  
May 2019

## Introduction

This document sets out to inform and clarify our Pastoral Care/Discipline policy as it operates in St Mary's. We hope that meaningful links can be firmly established in practice between our Pastoral Care system and our espoused aims as a school. The best aims and policies are likely to remain sterile unless:

- They have been worked out co-operatively and command the ascent of the entire staff.
- Are fully understood and acted upon by teachers and students.
- They are applied consistently and fairly.
- They are communicated to and understood by parents.
- They are underpinned by a positive, supportive ethos in the school worked upon by good relationships.

It is our intention to keep our disciplinary practices and procedures under review and hopefully together nurture a positive climate within St Mary's.

## Pastoral Care

### *Rationale.*

Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, states that the goals of education:

*"...must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment"*

Pastoral Care permeates all aspects of school life and requires the commitment of all members of the school community to create a secure, happy learning environment for all students. It is concerned with the total care of the student; it is both an attitude and a process, based upon a belief in the dignity of the person. Pastoral Care is expressed through the development of quality relationships, the provision of satisfying learning experiences and the establishment of an effective care network. It will embrace our stated aims as a Catholic school and will therefore attach great importance to:

- The spiritual and moral development of each child.
- Strengthening the partnership between the school, church, parents and community.

- Enabling each student to achieve their highest potential both academically and socially.
- Engendering a feeling of mutual respect between teacher and student, between student and student and between all supporting parties within the school community.

### **St Mary's Limavady School Aims**

St Mary's is guided by the Catholic faith to provide an environment which takes into account the dignity of each individual. To this end the school holds the following aims to be important:

- To promote a sense of achievement and self worth within the academic and non-academic experience of each student.
- To foster the spiritual and moral development of each student.
- To enable students to feel they belong to the school and can rely on support and guidance both in academic and personal matters.
- To promote responsible attitudes and values through which each individual can respect the contribution and views of others.
- To develop relationships between teachers and students based on fairness, honesty and consistency.
- To support high standards of Teaching and Learning within our school, in order to provide each student with a relevant, balanced and coherent curriculum.
- To strengthen the partnership between school, church, home and community and to foster a sense of mutual responsibility.
- To promote parental awareness of their responsibilities and commitment to the school aims and policies.

### **Teacher/Student Relationships**

Action to promote good behaviour should begin in the classroom and be developed within all teacher/student relationships. Therefore our common understanding is:

- Pastoral care is an integral part of the teacher's work and professional duties.
- We expect to give and receive respect.

- We create and sustain a positive, supportive, secure environment within the classroom.
- We compliment students on their work where genuine effort is evident.
- Achievement of all students both in and out of school is recognised, valued and celebrated by the school.
- We set high standards of behaviour, applying rules firmly and fairly, encouraging the use of positive approaches.
- We offer well prepared lessons which are well planned, differentiated and learning support provided where necessary (ref: Special Educational Needs Policy)
- We use informal situations to get to know the students as much as possible.

### **Home School Links**

It is our intention to establish and maintain strong links between school and home so that the student can be supported in the strongest possible way. These links will depend on an open and continuous communication system between parents and the school. This will be achieved through:

- The use of the student planner, phone calls, text messages letters, meetings and home visits when required.
- The opportunity for parents to meet and discuss their child's progress at least once per year with Form Teachers and Subject Teachers, or more frequently if requested.
- The provision of a termly information bulletin outlining important events, celebrations and achievements as they occur throughout the school year.
- Parents having access to copies of the Pastoral Care policies including Discipline, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection.
- Prompt reporting and discussion with parents on any serious matter of indiscipline in which their child may have been involved.
- The development of sympathetic and supportive relationships, in our mutual endeavour to promote the happiness and security of the child.

## Pastoral Organisation

Any formal structure which supports the pastoral work of the school is intended to benefit both students and staff. Participation and involvement with openness, honesty and communication, can make the system more effective. However, the work must be co-ordinated properly so that students are the main beneficiaries. At the core of the pastoral structure is the relationship between:

1. Form Teacher
2. Head of Year
3. Vice Principal
4. Principal

A system of Form Teachers/Head of Year operates with the support of the Senior Management Team and Middle Leaders:

- **Year 8 Head of Year:** Mrs J Walsh
- **Year 9/10 Head of Year:** Mrs D Mullan
- **Year 11/12 Head of Year:** Mrs J Guthrie and Mr M Khera
- **Sixth Form Head of Year:** Mrs C Hull

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Parents will:

- Be encouraged to participate in school life.
- Be informed through meetings, correspondences, newsletters and where needed, home visits, of the school aims and policies relating to Pastoral Care and of their responsibility in supporting them.
- Be informed of their child's progress and of any concerns which may arise.
- Be informed of their legal duty in ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Be informed of their legal duty to ensure their child does not cause injury or damage to others or to property.

### Students will:

- Be encouraged in the skills of self discipline, acceptable standards of behaviour and to have proper regard for authority.
- Have instruction on Health Education, Careers Education and Study Skills.

- Be encouraged and supported in developing Personal and Social Skills through the Pastoral and PSE programme.
- Be encouraged to participate in school life including e.g. sport, drama, music, and any other extra curricular/enrichment programme

The Class Teacher will in accordance with Statutory Rule 1987/267 Schedule 3 (3.7)

- Maintain good order and discipline among students both when they are authorised to be on the school premises and when they are engaged in authorised school activities elsewhere.
- Act in “ loci parentis”
- Know and act in accordance with the policies laid down by the Principal regarding discipline in the school.
- Be aware of their legal responsibilities through participation in formulating, implementing and reviewing the discipline policy, through in-service training and communication from the Principal, CCMS and /or DENI.

The Form Teacher will:

- Be responsible for monitoring attendance, punctuality, general behaviour, academic progress and recommending students for praise/rewards when appropriate.
- Work closely with the Head of Year and Senior Management to ensure high standards are achieved in all areas of school life.
- Check student planner to ensure students are recording homework.
- Motivate and influence students by encouraging a good community spirit within the school.
- Complete reports by given dates and communicate with parents on parents' evening.
- Present information for the Student Profile and help students with their personal statement.
- Highlight for the benefit of other students and colleagues, the achievements (personal, social, cultural or sporting) through the staff bulletin/morning assembly.
- Encourage the students to acquire and maintain a high standard of dress coming to school.
- Reiterate and reinforce points which arise from weekly assembly.
- Provide where necessary, information, reports etc, which may be required by outside agencies.
- Attend as required, meetings convened by the Head of Year and Senior Management

The Head of Year will:

Work closely with Subject Teachers, Form Teachers and Senior Management to:

- Ensure that a high standard of discipline is maintained within the Year Group by monitoring consistency by staff and addressing breaches of school discipline, taking appropriate steps to resolve any issues.
- Record serious incidents of indiscipline in the Year Ledger/SIMS and consult where necessary with the Form Teacher, Subject Teacher, Senior Leadership and parents.
- Where major problems of indiscipline occur, to arrange and supervise after school detention, having previously informed parents by letter.
- Inform Year Group and parents of general school policies, examination arrangements, and arrangements for special occasions.
- Prepare and conduct weekly assemblies to affirm good attendance, behaviour and achievement of students.
- Liaise with Form Teachers to ensure students are punctual at all times.
- Liaise with Form Teachers, Senior Management and EWO to address serious attendance/welfare issues within Year Group. Forward names of persistent poor attenders to Senior Leadership/EWO
- Ensure reports are proof read/ completed carefully by agreed date and delivered to the Principal for signing.
- Liaise with Senior Leadership, to arrange movement of students across classes when necessary.
- Arrange for the placement of new students into their relevant classes and Form Group.
- Attend weekly Pastoral Meeting with Senior Leadership, in order to monitor and review the Pastoral Care Programme, target students, and attendance.
- Organise monthly meetings with Form Teachers and provide minutes to Senior Leadership.
- Assist in the organisation of parents' evenings.
- Provide information for end of year review at prize giving.
- Arrange, when necessary, reports for students within the Year Group transferring to another school.

Senior Teacher (Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management) will:

- Have overall responsibility for Pastoral Care within the school, ensuring satisfactory standards of student progress, behaviour and attendance are maintained.
- Work closely with all staff, particularly the Head of Year to ensure that effective structures and strategies are in place to secure an effective network of care and support for all students.
- Deal with all serious matters of indiscipline referred by staff and decide what action needs to be taken.
- Liaise with Head of Year in arranging interviews with parents.

- Decide what meetings or Pastoral programmes have to be undertaken to benefit students and strengthen the work of the Year Team.
- Co-ordinate the rewards system.
- Oversee the use of Lesson Monitor by staff and liaise with the school attendance administrator.
- Hold regular meetings with the Education Welfare Officer
- Draw up, implement and review the Pastoral Care Policy.
- Develop and review policy on Child Protection.
- Take appropriate action on all concerns brought by staff on suspected cases of Child Protection.
- Plan, implement and review procedures for reporting suspected cases of abuse.
- Liaise with Senior Management, Pastoral Team and outside agencies.
- Provide training/guidance and support for all staff and students.

#### External Support Agencies

- Education Welfare Officer deals with all aspects of attendance.
- Social Services provide support for identified students.
- External agencies provide special tuition, including vocational courses, for particular students e.g. EOTAS, Laurel Centre.
- Professional support/advice is sought from agencies such as Family Works Counselling Service, NSPCC, CRUSE, CAMHS, Education Psychology Service Gateway Team etc. as and when required.

#### The Chaplain

- Provides spiritual and/or practical guidance for the students.

#### Senior Management Team

The Principal and Senior Management are responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place which will enable all staff to contribute effectively to establishing and maintaining a climate of good relationships and mutual respect:

- Affirms and supports staff in promoting positive behaviour.
- Ensures that standards of behaviour are acceptable.
- Ensures that there are arrangements to protect children from physical, social, emotional and intellectual harm.
- Brings serious discipline issues to the Board of Governors.
- Deals with suspensions and expulsions.

#### The Board of Governors



- Has overall responsibility for the Pastoral Care Programme.
- Assists and supports the Principal with the internal management and discipline.
- Are involved in disciplinary meetings and are informed of suspensions and expulsions.

### **Training and Support**

- Staff needs relating to Pastoral Care will be identified through the annual identification of needs carried out by the Staff Development Co-ordinator and Line Managers.
- Training needs will be collated by Senior Leadership and appropriate training will be accessed in line with the School Development Plan.
- Staff will have access to information on issues such as Child Protection procedures, Health and Safety etc. They will be made aware of their legal responsibilities and the requirements and recommendations of relevant DENI circulars.

### **Review**

The Pastoral Care Policy will be reviewed as part of the policy review cycle every two years.

