

**Moyne Community School
Pastoral Care Policy**

Scope of the Policy

Pastoral Care is an approach to education which seeks to value and develop the young person at every level. It implies caring for the quality of relationships between all the partners in the school community. It involves the engagement of all school polices, processes and programmes in the development of the appropriate structures, roles and resources to support the development of the emerging adult. This policy applies to the whole school community and the set of relationships that exist within that community between management, students, teachers, ancillary staff and parents.

Rationale:

- The Board of Management has a statutory obligation to ensure that a policy is in place that reflects the principles, values and the educational philosophy of the School
- The Department of Education and Science requires schools to have a written policy on Pastoral Care
- In order to fulfil this obligation, members of the school community have been involved in the development and review of this policy
- This policy is one aspect of a comprehensive approach to the health and safety of all members of the school community and is supported by a number of other policies: Admissions, Anti-Bullying, Substance Use, Code of Discipline, Special Needs, Homework, and School Trips/Tours.

Links to the Mission Statement

This policy is linked to the school Mission Statement, which states, *'Moyne Community School offers holistic education, upholding the Christian values and traditions of the communities from which the school evolved. We are committed to enabling students and staff to develop their full potential within the school's formal and informal curriculum, in a friendly, safe and caring environment.'*

The Pastoral Care Committee

The Pastoral Care Committee is made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain, Guidance Counsellors and other relevant teachers (Year Heads) as issues may arise.

Through our pastoral care policy we aim:

1. To create and maintain an atmosphere where all members of the school community feel that they are known, safe, valued, respected and happy.
2. To implement our Code of Discipline which considers the views of all members of the school community.
3. To maintain the highest standards of teaching and learning.
4. To build an atmosphere of trust.
5. To respond in a sympathetic way to the concerns, fears, worries of our pupils.
6. To promote the pupils' physical, mental and emotional health and well being through the teaching of Social, Personal and Health Education and other subjects.
7. To promote the pupils' spiritual and moral development through Religious Education and faith formation.
8. To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion enabling students to develop a framework for responsible decision making.
9. To ensure that all aspects of school life are firmly rooted in Christian principles.

A good relationship between pupils and staff is important in generating a positive atmosphere within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for at all times. Good relationships will be nurtured between:

- Staff and pupils
- Pupils and their peers
- Members of staff
- School staff and parents

Self-Esteem and Personal Development.

Personal and social development is a pre-requisite for successful learning: a young person who has a high degree of self-worth, a sense of security and a positive self image will be more predisposed to school life and to the variety of learning situations

it offers. Therefore Social, Personal and Health Education is included as a key element in the school curriculum.

The Guidance Counsellors

The Career Guidance Counsellors have a key role to play in the school. They aim to facilitate all students' career needs and assure them of continuous support and counselling. In the course of their lives, people are faced with the need to make significant decisions that affect both themselves and those around them. For second level students these choices are focused on three key areas:

- Personal and Social
- Educational
- Career

Parents are also invited to participate with the Career Guidance Counsellors in the guidance process through consultation and attendance at relevant information evenings relating to subject and career choices.

It is in this regard, care for the total well-being of the student – that guidance and counselling form an integral part of Pastoral Care.

Chaplaincy

The school Chaplain is a person of faith, who, on behalf of the school and church community, accompanies and supports each person on their journey through life. The Chaplain brings an extra "faith" perspective to the encounter with the person and has a holistic concern for the spiritual needs of the school community.

The Chaplain promotes the moral, spiritual and personal needs of the community (Educational Act 1998) and is of service to the students, staff and parents through;

- Active Listening
- Accompaniment
- One to One Sessions
- Prayer Services
- Liturgies and celebrations of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Supporting the Religion Department of the school.

The Chaplain maintains close links with the local church community.

Special Needs Policy

Our Pastoral Care Policy supports the school Special Needs Policy which ensures that all students fully participate in and achieve the best possible outcome from their schooling. The special needs policy states that the staff in co-operation with parents and external professionals will cater for students who may experience difficulties or who because of disability may need extra tuition or special arrangements at state exams.

The Year Head

The Year Head is in place to promote the best environment for learning at every level of the person.

The Year Head is the teacher who takes on the role of care for a year.

- (a) The Year Head has a responsibility to closely monitor the progress of his/her students in every area of school life.
- (b) They keep a record of points accumulated by individual students and impose appropriate sanctions as required.
- (c) They oversee the awarding of Exemplary Behaviour Awards at the end of the year to students who have accumulated less than ten points in the course of the year
- (d) They work in close co-operation with other members of the pastoral care structure to ensure the best solution is found to any difficulties that may arise.

The Student Council

The student council has an important role to play in the area of pastoral care. The council gives students a voice in the development of policy and affords students the opportunity to play an active and positive part in the life of the school. The council is designed to encourage students to become self-confident, responsible, caring and independent young people who are prepared to take on the challenge of adult life. As a representative body the student council liaises with other partners within the school community.

The School Mentors

The School Mentors working in conjunction with the Guidance Counsellors are a group of fifth year students who assist and support first year students to settle into school. They help the staff on Induction Day and Orientation Day and they have a proactive role to play in the prevention and reporting of any bullying incidents or behaviour that could be considered dangerous.

The Parents' Association

The Parents' Association offers valued support to the school community by:

- Organising parent nights
- Providing financial support to teachers in various subject areas
- Advising school management on school related issues
- Enhancement of the school environment
- Highlighting issues of concern to school management relating to the school and the school community

Personal Safety

Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own personal safety and helped to acquire skills to make the correct decisions and know where to get help if or when they are confronted with danger. The whole school community will be aware of the designated teacher who will be responsible for dealing with cases of child protection issues which come to light. In our school the Principal will act as the designated teacher. The Deputy Principal is the deputy designated teacher. They will also be aware of the procedures are for dealing with children who need first aid. Students are encouraged to speak to a teacher, Chaplain or Guidance Counsellor if they need help or are concerned.

Implementation

The Board of Management will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Pastoral Care Policy including monitoring the safety of each person in the school. The senior management team will ensure that pastoral care is given a high profile in the school development plan. The Principal and the Pastoral Care Committee will monitor and evaluate the implementation of the pastoral care policy. They will ensure that all staff are properly informed and adequately trained. They will ensure that the non-teaching staff are familiar with the pastoral care policy and will support it when needed. Each member of staff will work to build up pupils/students self esteem and encourage them to be assertive and to resist negative peer pressure. They will help the students to celebrate success and develop the ability to make moral decisions and to know the difference between right and wrong.

Supervision

Students will be supervised from 8.30a.m, during break times 11.00a.m. – 11.20a.m., 1.20p.m.-2.20p.m and 3.40p.m. – 4.00p.m. Full supervision also continues during all extra-curricular activities such as: sports training, school trips, tours, retreats, liturgies and related activities. No students may enter any classroom without adult supervision.

Conclusion:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal and relevant members of staff and the Pastoral Care Committee.

The effectiveness of this policy will be determined by the quality of care within and beyond the classroom and the effectiveness of the support arrangements for all members of the school community.