



# Pastoral Care Policy



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*"Through pastoral care arrangements and provision, our school demonstrates its continuing concern for the personal and social development of all its pupils, regardless of age or ability, as individuals and as secure, successful and fully participating members of the school and its wider community."*

## PASTORAL CARE POLICY

### MISSION STATEMENT

In Newbuildings Primary School we believe that each child should be encouraged to become personally, emotionally, socially and physically effective to lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives. We want children to become confident and independent citizens, making informed and responsible choices throughout their lives. This thinking is in line with The Northern Ireland Curriculum and UNICEF, "The Rights of the Child".

Article 3 (best interests of the child) "The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children."

Personal development is an integral part of the curriculum for all pupils and through our pastoral care provision we aim to provide all pupils with a "tool-kit" to lead to the development of the skills, attitudes and knowledge that children require.

As educators we recognise that building good relationships between staff and pupils is important in creating the right atmosphere for effective teaching and learning. It is in such an atmosphere that pupils will grow in self-esteem and confidence and begin to examine their thoughts, feelings and life style.

At all times, but especially during this Coronavirus pandemic, we strive to help our children develop a strong sense of self-worth, a positive self-image, a high self-esteem and a feeling that School is a safe place to be in. If children develop in these ways we hope that they will become happy and fulfilled now and later as adults.

### AIMS: We try to ensure that all our children:

- ❖ see themselves as valued members of our school community, possessing unique talents and qualities, having a good level of self-esteem
- ❖ feel comfortable and confident in expressing themselves with others, and
- ❖ learn the skills which will enable them to maintain a sense of control over their lives.

**Child Centred Approach:** At Newbuildings Primary School, we are committed to a child centred approach. We aim to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils by helping them to develop a high level of self-esteem and self-worth.

### A child with high self-esteem:

- ❖ is proud of his or her accomplishments.
- ❖ can act independently.

- ❖ assumes responsibility.
- ❖ can tolerate frustration.
- ❖ approaches challenges with enthusiasm.
- ❖ feels capable of taking charge of situations in his or her own life.
- ❖ has a good sense of humour.
- ❖ has a sense of purpose.
- ❖ seeks help when needed.
- ❖ is confident and resourceful.
- ❖ is active, energetic and expresses his or her feelings.
- ❖ is relaxed and can manage stress.

#### **A child with low self-esteem:**

- ❖ plays it safe by avoiding situations that require taking risks.
- ❖ feels powerless.
- ❖ becomes easily frustrated.
- ❖ is overly sensitive.
- ❖ constantly seeks reassurance.
- ❖ is easily influenced by others.
- ❖ frequently says, "I don't know" or "I don't care."
- ❖ is withdrawn.
- ❖ blames others for his or her failures
- ❖ is isolated, has few friends, is preoccupied.
- ❖ is uncooperative, angry.
- ❖ is uncommunicative.
- ❖ is clingy, dependent.
- ❖ is constantly complaining.
- ❖ has a generally negative attitude.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

As Teachers/learning Support Assistants, we must always remember the tremendous influence which we have upon our children's development and we must try to ensure that we take every opportunity to positively reinforce our children's image of themselves and their worth. Within our classrooms and in school generally we should:

- ❖ help children discover that no two people are exactly alike and provide opportunities for children to explore and appreciate unique physical characteristics;
- ❖ help children affirm their positive traits within themselves and in others;
- ❖ encourage children to discuss their thoughts and feelings about a variety of topics;

- ❖ help children recognise and celebrate their own individual accomplishments at school;
- ❖ offer children opportunities to complete tasks in their own ways;
- ❖ enlist children's help in planning classroom activities;
- ❖ encourage children to share their abilities with and to appreciate the abilities of others;
- ❖ help children to appreciate their personal value through helping in the classroom;
- ❖ provide consistency for children in discipline and direction;
- ❖ encourage teamwork and co-operation;
- ❖ provide opportunities for children to make informed choices;
- ❖ listen to children's concerns;
- ❖ help children understand that it is important that they are trusted;
- ❖ focus on children's strengths;
- ❖ check to see that children understand school rules and the reasons for having them;
- ❖ help children to understand that rules have consequences when broken;
- ❖ enlist children's help in setting classroom rules and sharing in the responsibility for keeping them;
- ❖ helping children set realistic goals and develop a method for assessing their goals;
- ❖ provide opportunities for children to function successfully and feel important;
- ❖ establish a learning environment where children are free to learn from their mistakes;
- ❖ establish a realistic reward system for success, positive behaviour and change;
- ❖ encourage children to help one another.

At all times we should be aware of the importance of the role models which we offer through our behaviour and attitudes towards children, each other and all the other adults in school.

There will be occasions when individual children will require our special care and attention. We should be alert to such times which may become apparent in many ways, such as through changes in a child's behaviour, attendance, attitude to work, being unprepared for school, losing and forgetting things, getting into 'trouble', being fretful and generally appearing unhappy. It may be that the cause of concern lies outside school, but we nevertheless have to deal with the consequences. Recognising that there is a problem and identifying its source is vital if we are to do anything positive to alleviate it. We hope that in our school children will trust us enough to bring their concerns to us and know that we will take them seriously and do our best to help them.

As class teachers we should not feel isolated when dealing with pupil concerns. When teachers feel support is needed they should in the first instance discuss the matter with a colleague and/or Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. If further support within school is needed, then the Principal should be informed. Where it

is necessary to provide support from outside the school (parents, EWO, school nurse, social services, psychological service, counselling services) then the Principal must always be informed and will oversee the necessary arrangements. We should always take prompt action when we feel a child needs our help.

We promote equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity.

**The school follows:**

- ❖ The United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child Principles and Articles ;
- ❖ Disability access arrangements and open enrolment with an inclusive admissions criteria;
- ❖ UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools guidance as detailed in the school Anti Bullying Policy:
- ❖ Involvement with a Shared Education Community Project.

UNICEF Article 1 (definition of the child)      *"Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention."*

UNICEF Article 2 (non-discrimination)      *"The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background."*

UNICEF Article 29 (goals of education)      *"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."*

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of Pastoral Care Practices:**

- ❖ Through reviewing the school's performance regularly in line with our School Development Plan;
- ❖ The whole school implementation of the Pastoral Care Action Plan;
- ❖ Classroom Observations: monitoring and evaluation of Pastoral care provision (Appendix 1)
- ❖ SIMS monitoring attendance and its relation to performance;
- ❖ AfL practices - Use of plenary sessions and pupil feedback to teachers about teaching and learning;
- ❖ Involving Schools Council in monitoring and evaluating pastoral care;
- ❖ Pupil and parent questionnaires or other information gathering activities.

## **Pastoral Care: An overview**

## **Appendix 1**

- Infusion of and adherence to all aspects of our core Pastoral Care policies should be reflected in the classroom environment i.e. Pastoral Care, Positive Behaviour, Teaching and Learning, Child-Protection and Anti-bullying.
- All adults to be regarded as "pastoral" role models for pupils.
- Pastoral Care activities are age appropriate, reflective of individual teaching styles and strengths.
- Class Charter - Class Codes of Conduct and Respectful actions: clearly displayed, discussed with pupils and communicated to parents.
- Reward Systems in place: can pupils talk about what these are?
- Message Box: where is this located in the classroom? Knowledge that there is a "locked" message box outside Mrs Walker's office which they can use at any time.
- Rights Respecting School: We are a bronze award school, working towards our silver award. All aspects of classroom life should reflect the RRS ethos e.g. Pupils should be able to talk about their right to use their voice and be listened to by adults; to have the best education possible; link to World Around Us/News topics. Relevant Rights on display in the classroom.
- PASS: Which pupils are being targeted? How is this being monitored?
- PATHS programme (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)/ Mindfulness/Growth Mind set/Circle Time/Sensory System Exercises - at least two activities per week. Teaching/Learning activities reflected in planners/planner reviews.
- School Council: Follow up sessions after school council meetings. Emphasis on the voice of all pupils being heard, not just that of the two school Councillors.
- Monthly whole School Positive affirmation - on display and regularly referred to.
- Biannually focus group "learning conversations" to be held with targeted pupils.