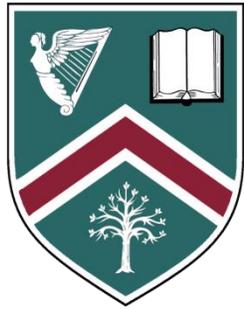


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**Strathearn Preparatory Department**  
PASTORAL POLICY

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# ***PASTORAL POLICY***

## **Rationale**

The Pastoral dimension is an expression of the care for the development, well being and progress of pupils which is a fundamental concern for schools and for teachers. It offers a means to realise the educational aims of the school, to integrate and give coherence to the many different aspects of a pupil's school experience and to enable pupils to gain maximum benefit from their time in school. Styles of teaching and learning, the ethos of the school, relationships, discipline, curricular and extra-curricular opportunities all come under the aegis of the pastoral dimension.

The pastoral dimension is an integral part of the curriculum and involves everyone in the school. As it is all embracing, it is important that a Pastoral Policy should be worked out which enables all the participants to understand their roles, and which creates a supportive atmosphere within the school for both staff and pupils.

It is also important that the Policy is based firmly on the school's vision for its pupils and is the shared responsibility of all teachers.

## **AIM**

The aim of the pastoral dimension is to provide all the necessary opportunities to enable pupils to set and achieve their personal, social and academic goals, and thus to gain maximum benefit from their time in school. It should meet the needs of individual pupils, and allow teachers to help pupils develop both their intellectual and social skills.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop a system of pastoral provision which will integrate all aspects of school experience.
  - 1.1 To engage the active support of all staff.
  - 1.2 To develop an understanding and appreciation of the positive pastoral role of each member of staff.
  - 1.3 To establish a structure which will give confidence to staff and pupils.
  - 1.4 To agree strategies to deal with routine and with unforeseen events.
  - 1.5 To ensure that issues and unforeseen problems are dealt with at an appropriate level.
  - 1.6 To ensure feedback and evaluation of pastoral provision,

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from pupils, teachers and parents and to modify provision in the light of regular review.

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2. To demonstrate care for the well being of each pupil at each stage of her development.
  - 2.1 To develop induction procedures which will prepare pupils for entrance to the school.
  - 2.2 To support and guide new pupils so as to give them confidence and a sense of security.
  - 2.3 To develop links with Strathearn, (secondary department).
  - 2.4 To develop a system of recording and disseminating necessary information about pupils so that each individual is treated appropriately.
  - 2.5 To create an environment in which pupils with special difficulties will receive support and guidance, so that they will be fully integrated members of the school and be enabled to reach their full potential.
  - 2.6 To monitor attendance
  - 2.7 To make effective arrangements for first aid and in cases of sickness and other emergencies.
  - 2.8 To develop informal links between home and school when a pupil has a long term illness and to ensure, where possible, that academic progress is maintained.
  
3. To recognise and value the potential of each individual pupil, encouraging her to reach this as fully as possible throughout her school career, with care for the growth of self-esteem in each pupil, recognising and acknowledging improvement and success in her achievements whenever possible.
  - 3.1 To help each pupil develop her learning.
  - 3.2 To enable each pupil to acquire the skills necessary for learning.
  - 3.3 To encourage positive achievement and to recognise talent and achievement in all aspects of school life.
  - 3.4 To encourage self-motivation and to formulate strategies to reverse lack of motivation.
  - 3.5 To develop systems which will ensure feedback for pupils and parents and encourage communication between teachers, pupils and parents.

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- 3.6 To establish a means whereby any pupil with anxieties or problems may approach a sympathetic adult for guidance or help.
  
4. To create an atmosphere and environment in which the growth of individual values, attitudes and beliefs is fostered, together with an awareness of personal responsibility and standards of accepted behaviour, and reinforced by teaching methodology and the relationships between pupils and staff.
  - 4.1 To develop and promote positive discipline.
  - 4.2 To ensure consistency and fairness in the implementation of the school codes of behaviour.
  - 4.3 To ensure that agreed sanctions contribute to positive discipline.
  - 4.4 To provide the best possible conditions and facilities for learning and for recreation.
  
5. To provide the widest possible range of extra-curricular activities so as to offer each pupil opportunity to develop her individual talents and personal qualities.
  - 5.1 To develop to the full each pupil's sporting, aesthetic and creative talents.
  - 5.2 To encourage teamship and a co-operative spirit amongst girls involved in activities of common interest.
  - 5.3 To foster in each pupil a sense of responsibility, initiative and a willingness to undertake tasks voluntarily and to carry them out to the best of her ability.
  - 5.4 To promote a caring and concerned attitude towards other pupils and towards the community at large.
  - 5.5 To enable each pupil to understand better the society in which she lives.
  - 5.6 To help each pupil reach a realistic appreciation of her own strengths and weaknesses.
  - 5.7 To develop leisure interests and to broaden each pupil's interests and experience.
  
6. To promote staff development, offering support and training opportunities to all staff to enable them to meet pastoral responsibilities with confidence and competence.

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- 6.1 To develop teaching methods and styles which give opportunity for the aims of the pastoral programme to be realised.
- 6.2 To develop teachers' knowledge of the processes through which children learn.
- 6.3 To reach consensus among the staff on accepted standards of order and discipline and develop strategies for the promotion of positive discipline.
- 6.4 To provide positive support for colleagues who are experiencing difficulty with a class or with individual pupils.

### **ORGANISATION**

#### **(a) Responsibilities and Roles**

The pastoral dimension is the concern of all teachers, and the pastoral policy should reflect this overall responsibility. Class teachers are key figures in the pastoral system and they should have a detailed knowledge of the needs, emotional development, progress and academic attainments of each pupil in their class.

Some members of staff have specific responsibilities within the pastoral context. The designated teacher for Pastoral Care in Strathearn Preparatory Department is Mrs Erin Andrews and the deputy designated teacher is Mrs Barbara Mawhinney.

#### **(b) Structures**

It is essential that teachers are aware of the structures and lines of communication set up within the school to enable them to fulfil their roles with confidence. Agreed procedures have been established for a variety of specific areas; confidential records, positive discipline, child protection, drugs, bullying, under-achievement, special needs, health issues.

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### **(c) Activities**

It can never be emphasised enough that every teacher is involved in the pastoral dimension both inside and outside the classroom. The relationship between pupil and teacher lies at the heart of all effective learning; indeed it is fair to say that the best pastoral provision is the good lesson well taught. In addition, however, so that pupils may widen their experience and find opportunities for social and personal development the school provides certain specific activities clearly designed to achieve these ends. These may be summarised as follows:

- The class structure through which each class teacher has oversight of each pupil's progress and well-being.
- Individual interviews between pupil and P7 class teacher through the Record of Achievement programme.
- Class activities (eg charity efforts, assembly readings, etc)
- The House system
- Extra-curricular activities.
- Involvement in the community.
- Posts of responsibility (eg class helpers, class librarians, form captains and prefects).
- Educational visits (eg field trips, gallery and theatre visits, residential visits).
- Public performances in music and drama.
- Sports competitions.
- Liaison with parents through individual interviews and parent evenings.

### **LIAISON WITH PARENTS**

The school wishes to enter into partnership with parents to promote the welfare of the pupils. Contact can be made in an informal and a formal way; parents should feel they can get in touch with school through the class teacher, the Head of Department or Mrs E Andrews, should a pastoral problem arise, and school should be able to do the same with parents. Parent/teacher consultations provide more formal and structured occasions for discussion. Parent information evenings take place at the beginning of each academic year with the special needs of each year group in mind. This focus is reviewed and evaluated annually.

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**The current arrangements are:**

## **P1**

**Informal interview with each new pupil and her parents in May prior to entry to school. (class teacher)**

- A parents' information evening in September prior to entry to school. (class teacher; Head of Department)
- Consultations by appointment in October and June for parents, with the class teacher, on academic and social progress.

## **P2**

- A parents' information evening at the beginning of the academic year. (usually September) Consultations by appointment in October and June for parents, with the class teacher, on academic and social progress.

## **P3 – P6**

- A parents' information evening at the beginning of the academic year. (usually September) Consultations by appointment in January and June for parents, with the class teachers, on academic and social progress.

## **P7**

- A parents' information evening at the beginning of the academic year. (usually September) Head of Department and School Principal attend.
- An informal meeting with parents regarding information and arrangements for the yearly residential school trip. (approximately 4 weeks before trip)
- Following transfer test results in February the Head of Department and Principal meet with parents to complete Transfer Report Form. Parents may request a follow up meeting if necessary.
- Consultation by appointment in June for parents with the P7 teacher, on academic and social progress.

## **All Classes**

- An Open Morning for current and prospective pupils and parents, is held at the beginning of the second term.
- Parents are issued with a calendar of events and a schedule of extra-curricular dates at the beginning of each term.
- There is a great deal of informal contact between teaching staff and parents at the beginning and end of each school day. Also, parents or teachers may request a formal interview at any stage throughout the school year.
- The class teachers will have a formal interview with the parents of the new pupils before half-term, (if the pupil started in September) or within six weeks if she started at a later date.

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### **Links between home and school incases of long-term absence.**

Occasionally there are instances where a pupil has to be away from school for a long period due to illness. Parents would always be anxious to forewarn us of such a situation. In those circumstances the class teacher will have regular contact with the parents keeping them up-to-date with anything they would need to know and supplying work if the child's health permits her to do it. If it is necessary for the child to be taught at home or in hospital, the school will be prepared to make and maintain contact with any outside agencies who are seeking to keep the pupil "ticking over" academically until return to school is possible. Another important period is the time a pupil returns to school after protracted periods of absence. The teacher will provide all the help and reassurance she needs until the pupil has settled down again to the normal classroom routine.

### **LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES**

As a school we have approved relationships with certain voluntary and statutory agencies who support young people and we reserve the right to contact them when necessary.

The school does not operate in isolation and has many contacts with outside agencies such as those listed below:

Outside agencies with which the school has contact.

- School Health Services.
- Social Services.
- PSNI
- BELB (Education and Welfare Officer; Special Needs; Psychology)
- Peripatetic Services (through the Psychologist at BELB)
- NSPCC