

Our Lady of Lourdes School Ballymoney

Caring, Sharing, Learning together to meet the future

Pastoral Care & Discipline Policy



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

In Our Lady of Lourdes School, Pastoral Care permeates all aspects of school life. It reflects the values, attitudes, beliefs and practices of our faith and involves all members of our school community – pupils, parents and all other adults who contribute to the care, safety and well-being of each child.



The atmosphere of the school is based upon good relationships between staff/pupils/parents. As a staff we work as a team, respecting each other's roles and recognising individual talents and expertise. We are concerned with the needs and well-being of each pupil and with the approaches and programmes we implement in order to develop the full potential of each individual pupil.

We recognise and value the important role that parents play in their child's education. Every effort is made to ensure that parents feel welcome, that they are made aware of the school's aims, objectives and policies and of their child's individual needs, progress and achievements. We expect our parents to co-operate fully with us in achieving these goals.

Our Lady of Lourdes School has a co-ordinated Pastoral Care programme with timetabled PSHE classes at Key Stages 3 and 4. This programme assists in providing pupils with the social skills to allow them to live a full and useful life and to contribute to society. Our Pastoral Care promotes and enhances pupil self-esteem and discipline. Our Form Teachers are the most important element in the Pastoral Care system. They are supported and co-ordinated by the Year Heads, the Co-ordinator of the Learning Resources Centre and the Head of Pastoral Care. Where necessary, additional support for pupils exists through a referral and counselling system.

Through our Pastoral Care Provision, we intend to create a warm and caring school climate, in which our pupils' personal, social, emotional and moral development can be enhanced and in which more effective language can take place.

Our Lady of Lourdes School regards the building of strong, supportive relationships as being vital to the creation of that caring ethos, in which learning can take place. The contributors to these relationships include the pupils, teaching and other staff, parents, governors and all others who make a regular contribution to school life.

The need for effective pastoral care in school is recognised in the climate of growing up in the 21st century. We recognise that many of our young people will have experienced family break-up and not enjoy the stability and support which the family unit can offer, that we have to be aware of the dangers of child abuse in its various guises; that many parents are experiencing difficulties in raising their children and that the community influences on their lives are not always positive.

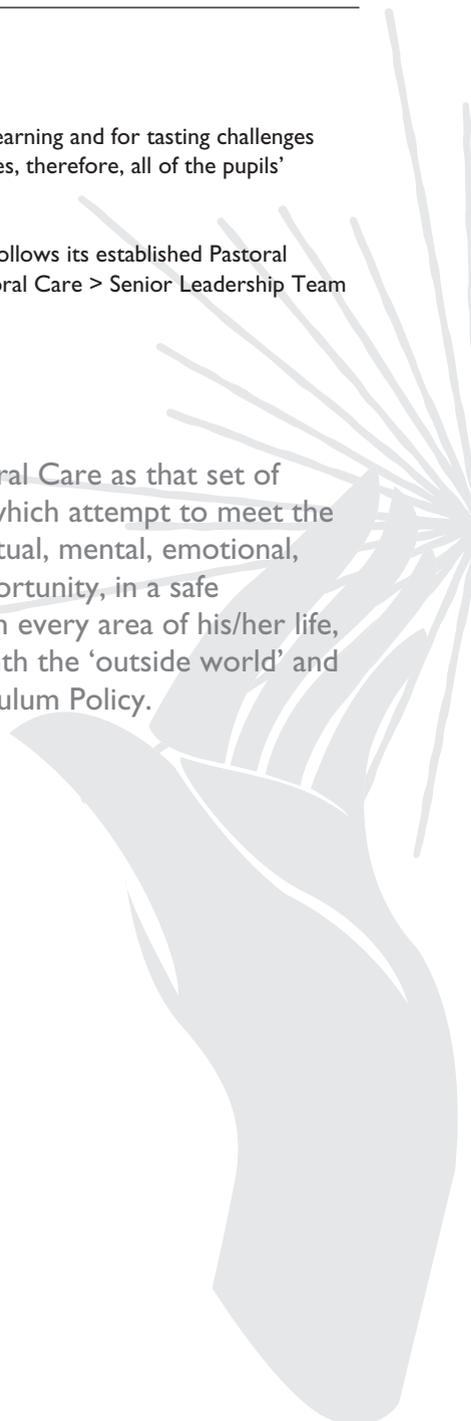
The school seeks to be a stable, supportive and positive influence on the lives of its pupils in an age of changing attitudes to sexual relationships, drug abuse, morality and the sanctity of life. There is a strong emphasis, therefore, on developing and celebrating the positive – positive ethos, positive behaviour and positive relationships are all encouraged through this policy.

In all this we hope to maximise the opportunities for learning and for tasting challenges and success. We believe that pastoral care encompasses, therefore, all of the pupils' experiences, activities, relationships and challenges.

In all matters Pastoral, including discipline, the school follows its established Pastoral System of Form Teacher > Year Head > Head of Pastoral Care > Senior Leadership Team > Principal.

Definition

Our Lady of Lourdes School views Pastoral Care as that set of relationships, systems and programmes which attempt to meet the totality of needs of its pupils (social, spiritual, mental, emotional, physical), so that every pupil has the opportunity, in a safe environment, to reach his/her potential in every area of his/her life, and is equipped with the skills to cope with the 'outside world' and in this way is closely linked to the Curriculum Policy.



Aims

Our school aims to promote the spiritual, moral, culture, intellectual and physical development of all pupils, and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. All pupils are treated fairly and respected equally as individuals regardless of creed, political opinion, age, sexual orientation, colour, racial group, marital status, gender or disability.

Our Lady of Lourdes School operates under the CCMS Equal Opportunity Policy which is applicable to the staff as employees.

As a Catholic school we are committed to the Statement of Aims of Catholic Schools and the promotion of an ethos throughout the school which reflects the Christian teaching and values of the Church. We will foster greater understanding, respect and tolerance of those who are not members of the Catholic faith.

We see the school as part of the parishes, responsible to them and providing an important parish service. We take our links with the parishes seriously and will actively seek the involvement and interest of parents and others, not only in the welfare of individual children, but in the school as a whole. The school is seen as an extension of the home and children will be treated as they would be in their normal home environment.

We seek to provide a friendly and caring atmosphere that recognises the individuality of each child. Great emphasis is placed on the mutual relationship between teacher and parent that acts in the interest of the pupil.

We seek to provide an effective educational service that permits the greatest possible development of an individual's academic ability so that each pupil obtains the maximum amount of benefit from their experience at school.

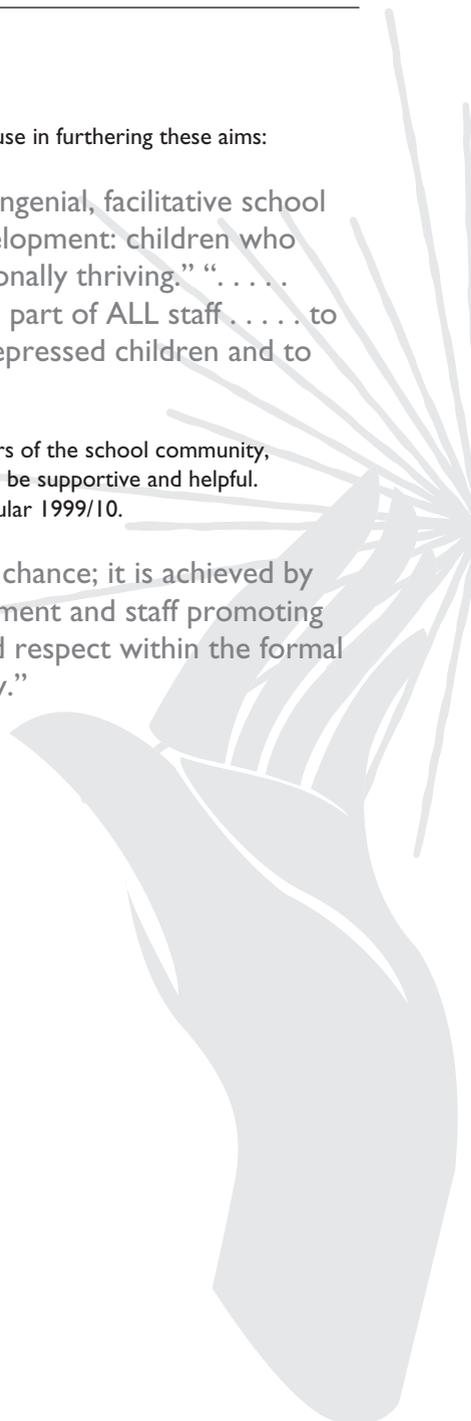
We seek to promote Irish culture through language, sport and music but work actively so that all will show equal respect and tolerance for other cultures and traditions.

An observation from a NAPCE conference may be of use in furthering these aims:

“The aim of the pastoral care within a congenial, facilitative school climate, is to ensure some all-round development: children who are contented, social at ease and educationally thriving.” “. The start point has to be vigilance on the part of ALL staff to notice unhappy, preoccupied, irritable, depressed children and to investigate unobtrusively.”

To this we would add, not only all staff, but all members of the school community, including the pupils themselves who are encouraged to be supportive and helpful. We agree fully with the observations made in DE Circular 1999/10.

“A Good Ethos does not come about by chance; it is achieved by the Principal, members of senior management and staff promoting and facilitating an atmosphere of care and respect within the formal and informal life of the school community.”



The implantation of this policy is also reflected in greater detail in the following related school policies and procedures:

- Attendance
- Child Protection
- Drugs Education
- Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Promotion of Sustaining of Good Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils
- Special Educational Needs

Complementary to the more formal implementation of this policy is the essential range of activities and experiences outside the classroom which promote confidence, self-esteem and responsibility. Some of these include:

- Choir Membership
- Education for Mutual Understanding Activities
- Fund Raising for Charitable Purposes
- Membership of School Student Council
- Prefects
- School Musical and other Productions
- School Trips and Residentials
- Senior School Formal
- Sports Teams
- Transfer and other Special Occasions
- Work Experience

Monitoring and Evaluation

The very nature of this and its associated policies is that it will, in practice, be constantly reviewed and updated as procedures are tried, tested and, possibly found wanting. It is a responsive policy which changes as new demands are placed on the school and the relationships within it.



Our Lady of Lourdes School Ballymoney

Caring, Sharing, Learning together to meet the future

School Poem

You're **unique** and **one of a kind**
Your life can be what you want
Take the days just one at a time
Count your blessings not your troubles
You'll make it through whatever comes along
Don't put limits on yourself
So many dreams are waiting to be realised
Decisions are too important to leave to chance
Reach for your **peak**, your **goal**, your **prize**
The longer one carries a problem the heavier it gets
Live a life of serenity not a life of regret
Remember that a **little love** goes a long way
A lot goes forever
Remember that **friendship** is a wise investment
Life's treasures are people...together
Realise that it is **never too late**
Do ordinary things in an extraordinary way
Have **health and happiness**
Take the time to **wish upon a star**
And don't forget – for even a day
How very **special** you are

Castle Street, Ballymoney, County Antrim BT53 6JX
Tel: 028 2766 2050 / 028 2766 5079
www.ourladyoflourdesballymoney.com