



Donhead Preparatory School

Pastoral Care Policy

Introduction

This policy fits in with the core purposes of the school and is a direct result of detailed conversations with staff and governors. Pastoral care is, in essence, the school's ethos in action. However, this ethos will not come about by chance. It must be achieved by the Head, Senior Leadership Team and Staff promoting an atmosphere of care and respect for all. In particular, and of key importance, is the quality of interaction between teacher and pupil and the creation of a positive climate within the school community where every individual feels valued and cared for at all times. In addition to the quality of relationships between staff and pupils, the importance of the vigilance of staff is paramount.

The Pastoral Care encompasses and emphasises all aspects of the school's Mission Statement.

Beliefs

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well.

- We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. We recognise the God-given right of every child to be treated with dignity, respect, tolerance and understanding and appreciate that our discipline policy must fully reflect this.
- We believe that good discipline stems more from active encouragement and praise than it does from an effective system of sanctions. We look to recognise and reward the contribution of the children to the life of Donhead and fully understand that young people require encouragement, support and guidance in their own individual learning and in managing their relationships with others

Jesuit Education

Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ who became Jesuit General in 1965, gave a new impetus to Jesuit Education with the publication of a document called 'The Characteristics of Jesuit Education'. This sets out the philosophy which underlies all Jesuit Education. Following on from this, and based on this, the British Province of the Society of Jesus published, in 2002, the 'School Vision Statement' which set out the criteria for evaluating the ethos of a Jesuit school.

The vision for all Jesuit schools is that:

'Jesuit schools exist to promote improvement in learning and living for the greater glory of God'.

And there are seven key criteria:

Finding God in All Things

- i) A religious and ethical context is present in the curriculum.
- ii) Every aspect of its work can affirm the goodness and presence of God.

- iii) A respect for all persons characterises the attitudes of staff and pupils, reflecting the belief that God is present in the life of each individual.
- iv) Opportunities for retreats and reflection are provided.

Caring for the Individual

- i) The pastoral structures of the school reflect an ethos of care for all members of the school community.
- ii) The curriculum responds to individual needs.
- iii) Disciplinary procedures embody this sense of care for individual promotion within the common good.

Showing Love in Deeds

- i) A spirit of generosity is evident amongst the pupils in the school who help each other.
- ii) Adult members of the school community demonstrate love in deeds by their professionalism and generosity in support of pupils, the school and one another.

Building Christian Community

- i) The school proclaims its Catholic identity and strives to develop a faith commitment to Christ, and an understanding and practice of personal and public prayer, appropriate to the developmental stages of the pupils.
- ii) A specific feature of the school is the priority given to chaplaincy provision serving the pastoral and spiritual needs of staff and pupils.
- iii) Religious Education is seen as a subject with comparable academic rigour to other areas of the curriculum and is resourced accordingly.

Engaging with the Wider World

- i) The school enables pupils to understand the need to contribute actively to wider society and affords opportunities to develop a commitment to the common good.
- ii) Not only does the school teach justice but it also acts justly, for example, in efforts to recruit, support and retain pupils from families of limited means or who require additional learning or other support.
- iii) Whilst the school affirms the basic goodness in human society, it also helps pupils to analyse injustices in modern culture critically and enables them to witness to Christ's presence in that society.

Encouraging Excellence

- i) The ambience of the school is such that all are encouraged to develop their talents as fully as possible and to use those gifts for others in the spirit of 'what more can I do, what more can I give?'
- ii) Excellence is pursued in all areas of school life, with human excellence being valued above all.
- iii) Staff and pupils witness to excellence by their diligence, their generosity in time and energy, their compassion and their care for others.

At Donhead we strive to ensure that:

1. We provide our children with opportunities to develop a faith commitment to Christ.
2. We understand that nothing exists in an ethical vacuum and that we show a strong commitment to justice within the curriculum, appropriate to the age of the pupils here.
3. A strong sense of community exists within the school, in which everyone is included and all are valued.
4. The pupils are always valued and treated as individuals. 'Cura Personalis'.
5. Every teacher is a mentor, both in and out of the classroom.
6. The children are taught how to think, not simply what to think.
7. We attempt to develop in the children a strong sense of service, appropriate to their age; placing service to others above merely personal gain. An understanding that we are attempting to educate 'teachers in service'.

8. We pursue excellence in all areas of school life, with human excellence being the highest goal.
9. We help those who need our help most.

To the children we urge them to do the following:

1. To follow Christ as the model for human life.
2. To weave prayer and worship through their school day.
3. To welcome and include everyone.
4. To care for everyone.
5. To value community.
6. To respect everyone.
7. To help those who need our help most.
8. To strive for excellence in all things.
9. To celebrate the gifts and talents of everyone.
10. To respect our environment.

Pastoral Care Management Structure

Clear communication and structure is essential to effective pastoral care, to ensure that all members of staff involved with a particular pupil are kept fully informed of any particular concerns and the action being taken.

The Head has overall responsibility for the quality of Pastoral Care within the school. The Head's role is to review procedures and ensure that:

- i) the Pastoral Care Policy is clear and is being implemented in practice;
- ii) staffing ratios are adequate and;
- iii) there is sufficient staff training in pastoral matters.

The Assistant Head (Wellbeing) has responsibility for the day to day management of the Pastoral Care Policy, including discipline and behaviour management. She should be the first point of contact for form teachers with a pastoral concern that requires additional intervention or support beyond that supplied by the form teacher. She reports to Leadership Team meetings and to Staff Meetings on matters of a pastoral nature.

The Form Teacher is a further key figure in our pastoral care structure. The form teacher is normally the first point of contact for the children. It is hoped that the pupil will feel confident enough to approach his form teacher with any problems he may have and that the form teacher will be able to deal with the vast majority of these problems quickly and effectively. In the Prep School, the form teacher will consult with the Assistant Head (Pastoral) should any matters of a pastoral nature need to be discussed; in the Pre-Prep the form teacher will consult with the Assistant Head (Pre-Prep).

Subject teachers also have a pastoral responsibility. Subject Teachers should make themselves aware of any personal problems raised at staff meetings. They should also pay attention to any trends developing regarding sickness and absence. It is hoped that most immediate matters can be dealt with effectively at the time. However, should matters need to be passed on, then the form teacher should be the first point of contact. Form teachers should also be kept informed of any incidents.

Non-teaching Staff have similar pastoral responsibilities as subject teachers in being aware of personal problems and monitoring of trends in sickness and absence. Non-teaching staff also have responsibility for dealing with immediate matters but should inform the form teacher of any such incidents.

The Chaplain also plays a key role in the pastoral structure of the school. The Lay Chaplain is also a counsellor to whom the children can turn for confidential help and advice. The Lay Chaplain is available and pupils are free to visit, relax, chat or discuss any matters of concern to them.

Children Must:

- Show respect for each other, their teachers, other adults and their environment, at all times
- Show courtesy to one another, staff and visitors
- Give of their best in all areas of school life
- Stand when an adult enters the classroom
- Be punctual and be so organised as to bring the correct equipment for all lessons and activities
- Line up outside the classroom in a quiet and orderly fashion
- Look smart with a short, acceptable haircut; ties done up and shirt tucked in
- Long hair tied back
- Wear the correct clothing for games and PE
- Observe silence before, during and after Assembly and Mass
- Greet adults as they pass
- Keep hands out of pockets
- Hold doors open for others

Other Policies Related to Pastoral Care

The information contained in this Pastoral Care Policy runs in parallel with other relevant information included in a number of other School Policies, including policies relating to:

1. Educational Visits Policy
2. Anti Bullying Policy
3. Behaviour and Sanctions Policy (inc EFYS) and exclusion
4. Health & Safety Policy
5. Risk Assessment Policy
6. Child Protection & Staff Behaviour Policy
7. RHE/PSHEE Policy

The Pastoral Care provision within the school, therefore, should be seen in relation to the content of the Pastoral Care Policy itself and to the pastoral care elements contained within the aforementioned school policies.

March 2024 (subject to annual review)